

Dynamics of the Dream

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Concepts associated with the dynamics of successful dreaming ... taking a vision and structuring it so that it comes to fruition in spite of the dreamer's humble circumstances.

Summarized in three phrases the concepts would be:

1. Vision attracts resources.
2. Sacrifice inspires others to participate.
3. Perseverance gives God time to work the miracles. *(Every true dreamer knows the realities of the "death of the dream". It takes a miracle for it to happen ... to resurrect the dream.)*

I learned these concepts from a very humble Mexican pastor. Not that he "taught" the concepts ... but that rather he "modeled" the concepts. Maneadero, Mexico is some 10 miles south of Ensenada on Hiway #1.

Tribute To A Pastor

Pastor Lorenzo Quintero accepted the pastorate there with a small "temple" made of adobe bricks. The plaster was cracked off exposing most of the bricks to the weather. The roof was of corrugated iron ... well rusted and full of holes. While the congregation was very limited, the potential congregation was awesome as the surrounding area was planted to olive trees, fields of broccoli, tomatoes, etc. Literally hundreds of migrant workers from all over Mexico were living in shelters made of blue plastic tarps strung on poles and tied to the olive trees.

While these workers were poor and often tired, they were open to his ministry. In fact, they were open to multiplying his ministry. After harvest, they returned to their homes across Mexico, carrying that message of transforming love. (It is for these we must continue funding world missions, creatively raising world mission support, making sure that World Missions drives our church fund raising!)

The Dream of Something Significant

Circumscribed by his limited facilities, he dreamed the dream of something significant ... even though they hardly had funds for tortillas and frijoles ... and nothing to fix the roof.

In the city of Ensenada is a very significant church building belonging to the Church of the Nazarene. In fact, it appears as a landmark on the tourist maps one gets when one purchases car insurance at the border.

The exterior is made of unique tan colored cement blocks that have a faceted face. The roof is made of Styrofoam sandwiched between sheets of enameled aluminum.

On a scorching hot day, inside it's nice. On a cold day ... inside it's nice. Either way, the insulated construction keeps it comfortable without heat or air conditioning.

Pastor Quintero knew that without a plan ... he had no project. So he contacted an architect who I suspect was "hungry". He asked the architect if he could reduce the scale of the Enseñada facility to fit his lot in Maneadero. When he was assured that it could be done, he confessed to the architect that he had no funding ... and that without a plan, he had no project.

Creatively Funding World Missions

So the architect agreed to do the drawings on the promise that as construction funds became available, he would get a percentage to be compensated for his work.

One day Pastor Quintero got out there with a bucket of white lime, a long string, some stakes and a pick and shovel. He laid out the lines for the new foundation and began to dig the trench ... It encompassed the old building.

People from the congregation came and asked him, "¿Qué estas haciendo?" (What are you doing?)

"Estoy cavando para los cimientos del nuevo templo." (I am digging the footings for the new temple.)

They exclaimed, "Oh! Are there funds available for the construction?" (They are about to learn secrets to funding world missions, ideas for raising world mission support, and creative church fund raising.)

His response was, "No, but there is another pick and shovel if you want to help."

Retirement and World Missions

One afternoon as he was out there digging, a small caravan of RVs came down Hiway #1 headed for Cabo San Lucas. They were driven by retirees from the Santa Ana Church of the Nazarene.

As they made the sharp bend in the road and came up the steep incline, they noticed the activity as well as the logo on the church sign, so they stopped to rest and chat a moment.

They knew a few words in Spanish and Lorenzo had studied at the Spanish Seminary in San Antonio, Texas, so he knew some street English. He communicated, "Wait a moment," and ran inside for the plans. (Another opportunity to teach principals of funding world missions, ideas for raising world mission support, and creative church fund raising.)

Now we all know that for some people, plans are a bunch of lines on a big paper ... and generates a "Ho-hum." Others, seeing those same lines ... experience a "Wow!" down in their hearts.

Partners In Raising World Mission Support

As they traveled on south, the Lord began to deal with their hearts and after discussing it among themselves, on the way back they made a deal with Pastor Quintero to bring a team down and help pour the foundation. (Thus, vision attracts resources ... and sacrifice inspires others to participate.)

Later a group from Santa Rosa, California, having heard about the project, came down, demolished the old structure, and helped pour the slab floor. Meanwhile Pastor Quintero had borrowed a tent from the district as temporary housing for the congregation.

Soon after, a visitor attending my church in San Diego by the name of Sevy invited me to go down to Maneadero to see the site. That same visitor had made a deal with his own pastor up in Bloomington to invite Pastor Quintero "some day" to share the vision of the project in their church.

The Priority of World Missions

One Sunday morning Sevy was working as a "Greeter" in the parking lot of the church up in Bloomington. Up came a beat up old car with a "Frontera" license plate, pulling into the lot. To Sevy's delight, out jumped Pastor Quintero! After greeting him with a big "abrazo", Sevy took his friend into the church facility and introduced him to his pastor.

Rather innocently, Sevy remarked, "Remember, you said it would be OK some day if Quintero could come and share with the congregation?" (Aha! When it comes to vision, you take every opportunity to teach secrets to funding world missions, share ideas for raising world mission support, and creative church fund raising.)

Unknown to Sevy, the pastor had to raise \$16,000 that Sunday morning for their bond payment due at the bank on Monday. Without spooking, he simply said, "Wait for me a moment, I need to go into my office."

Inside he flopped onto the floor and begged to the Lord, "Oh Lord, what should I do?" Soon satisfied, he came back out and took Pastor Quintero to the platform where he invited him to share their ministry experiences with those hundreds of migrant workers and the challenges of their construction project.

When he finished, they received a special offering to have a contractor install the huge steel I-beams for the superstructure of that new facility. It came to \$16,000.

Before pronouncing the benediction, the pastor indicated they had one more item that needed attention ... and they raised another \$16,000 to make the bond payment at the bank on Monday. *Probably an experience that folks in that church will never forget.*

God Can Use Inflation For Making Miracles Happen

Meanwhile, back in Mexico in the mid 80's they were experiencing tremendous inflation. Such rapid inflation that each week in their church fund raising, they took the special offerings for construction and went to the brick factory on Monday to buy bricks, as the price would be impacted before the week was up. Soon they had piles of those beautiful faceted bricks lying all around the construction site.

In God's good providence, those retired RVers from Santa Ana made another trip to Cabo San Lucas. As they passed the site, they were attracted by the piles of bricks ... and they stopped and made a deal to bring a team again during Easter vacation to lay bricks. About two-thirds the way up the wall, they ran out of bricks. One old boy nudged another with his elbow and said, "Let's go down to the brick factory." Before long, the trucks were on site, unloading bricks.

But the truth is, none of that would have happened if the folks in the church had not been sacrificing every week to buy a few bricks. Later we had the privilege of helping to raise funds for and installing that Styrofoam roof sandwiched between enameled aluminum sheets. Meanwhile they had three paid masons who were doing the "pointing" and finish trim work ... finishing over the transition from the steel beams to the bricks with colored cement.

Prayer and A Sacrificial Offering

It was the Sunday night after Christmas and they had an all night prayer meeting as they had exhausted all of their funds. They hated to lose these three workers midway on the finish work ... and so at midnight they took a *hunker down* sacrificial offering and came up with enough to keep them on the job for one more week.

Unknown to them on that same Sunday morning, in our church I had indicated that ... being the last Sunday of the year, if there was anyone who wanted to give a last minute donation to impact their charitable deductions for taxes, would they remember the project in Maneadero, Mexico. A visitor that day ... nudged by God's Spirit, responded by dropping in a check for \$2000.

On Tuesday, we delivered 20 unsigned \$100 Traveler's Checks to that church board ... so they would not have to exchange them to pesos before they needed

the cash and thus become vulnerable to the weekly devaluation. You would have thought we were angels from heaven when we showed up. Actually, I'm sure that we were indeed an answer to prayer.

If the full story were known, there were scores of other answers to prayer relating to that project ... including the conversion of the architect and his family. It took them three years ... but we saw a humble group with no apparent resources and without a mission budget allocation ... take a vision ... couple it with lots of sacrifice ... and bring it to fruition with God's help.

I never heard Pastor Quintero verbally articulate the concepts ... but I saw him model them:

1. Vision attracts resources.
2. Sacrifice inspires others to participate.
3. Perseverance gives God time to work on our behalf.

Purpose Driven Retirement

For me, the greatest joys of my life have come since retirement ... and with it the freedom to communicate these concepts to some very humble Bolivian pastors ... without apparent resources ... and see what God has chosen to do with their vision coupled with deep sacrifice and perseverance.

(Seems that once you learn these secrets to funding world missions, observe creative ideas for raising world mission support, and see in action faith empowered church fund raising, you share them with others.)

We've seen some beautiful miracles ... and we thrill that God has permitted our Maverick Work and Witness groups to be part of those miracles. We call ourselves Mavericks because we are not from one single church but come from many congregations throughout the country, 10 to 15 of us, to work on a specific building project in Bolivia, where I served as a missionary before my retirement.

The Faith Factor In Funding World Missions

Dynamics of the Dream reveals the faith factor needed to make those things hoped for reality. As you face the challenge of funding world missions, raising world mission support, and ongoing church fund raising, what step of faith do you need to take to release new resources for your ministry?