



Dream Big...Live Better | Shawn Johnson | 1.6.19

LG Weekly

START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer the following question:

What is your New Year's resolution and why?

SHARE

“Dream Big.”

As we begin a new year, we all have dreams of what we hope it will become. Whether last year was painful or the best year of your life, we all anticipate what's next, it is human nature. For some of us, this year, we are dreaming of that promotion that we have worked so hard to see materialize. For others, it is an opportunity on the horizon, but we just need some things to line up, maybe it will be any day now.

We have big plans and we set our gaze on that big idea...that distant formless-hope, when right in front of us is a tangible reality we can touch and embrace. Right smack in front of us are actual people, oxygen to breathe, friendships, family members, resources, giftedness and a God that wants you to get to know Him and His plans for you, right now.

There is nothing wrong with dreaming big dreams and to pursue the God given ones, but the moment we make the dream more important than the God who gives them, we create a lifeless idol for ourselves and grow distant from the living God who loves us. Our dream job is the one we have right now, that dream spouse is the one you live with, that dream opportunity is the one you have each day you walk out your front door.

We can dream big, but live better.

As Christ followers, we need to be wide awake to the reality all around us. Instead of believing that there has to be something better way out there in the future, we can live with purpose, power, and joy today through the power of God at work within us. We can live awake to life in all of its fullness each and every day.

Read Ephesians 3:20

At times, do you think you miss out on the life right in front of you? If so, what distracts you from being fully present?

According to God's word, who is able to do "immeasurably more" than we can ask or imagine? Why is this significant?

G R O W

Read Psalm 118:24

Who made the day and why is that...of the utmost importance for us to understand?

Each and every day of life that we receive from the Lord is a blessing and we can choose to be glad in it.

That means today, as you read this, you are blessed to be alive. So biblically speaking, how do we define a 'blessing'? Throughout the New Testament, we see the term used in the Greek as *Makarios*, which means "happiness" and when Jesus spoke of blessing or those that are blessed in the beatitudes, it refers to the happy state of those who find their purpose and fulfillment in God.

One day, crowds of people gathered on a mountainside to hear Jesus speak, all clamoring to hear His profound teaching. The disciples came to Jesus and he began to explain who are those that are truly blessed.

Read Matthew 5:1-12

What stands out to you within this profound teaching of Jesus?

Jesus identifies many types of people and situations? Can you relate to a few of them?

M O V E

Sometimes we can be so focused on what's next in life that we miss enjoying the life right in front of us. The day we have before us is a blessing made by God. Before each of us, there are opportunities to put some life and passion into the mundane things. Bring new life and encouragement to a difficult work environment or to a neighbor who may just be struggling. No matter what type of persecution and trials you are going through, send that letter, read a Bible story to the kids, encourage a friend, post a picture of someone other than yourself on Instagram, write a list of the things you are thankful for tonight and thank God for each one. We can live differently than those without hope regardless of our circumstances.

Dream big, but live better now.

Let's live better, embrace the reality in front of us with people right by our sides. Let us be wide awake to the opportunities around us.

Let's end by reading Romans 8:28 and Philippians 1:6

Regardless of your circumstances, can you see how God has been working in your life and in the lives of those around you, if so how?

What is one change you need to make or one area of your life that you need to change the way you view it to fully embrace God's purpose in your daily life?

P R A Y

As you spend some time praying for each other this week, consider taking the filter off your request. What is really on your heart? What do you really need help with? How are you really

feeling about God and about life?

If you are in a coed group, consider breaking up into men and women's groups to share more freely.

T O G O

Jeremiah 29:11

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

