

1 Corinthians 1:22-25

3rd Sunday in Lent

March 6, 1988

Once a ~~man~~^{boy} named Joseph had a dream, a dream sent from God, that the sun and the moon and the stars bowed down to him. That was God's dream for Joseph, not one he chose himself and God made that dream come true. One day that boy, grown into a man was second in command in the great land of Egypt, with great power and authority.

Now Joseph is not the only ~~man~~^{boy} who has dreamed that dream. I used to dream it with the setting in Municipal Stadium, and eighty thousand cheering as I trotted the bases having just stroked a grand slam home run in the bottom of the ninth. Of course the difference between my dream and Joseph's is that God chose Joseph's dream for him, I was the author of my dream.

I think many of you boys and men know what it is to dream that kind of dream, maybe you women too. If things were as they should be, then I would be on top my heart says, and everyone would see. and cheer, and love me.

Now that is quite a dream, ~~taxharyx~~ to think I belong on top and every one else put on this earth to play supporting roles in my play.

Power. My building is taller than yours, my office on a higher floor. My boat longer wider faster. My car shinier, more expensive. Look at me w world, worship me world. Love me world. ~~Am I the greatest?~~ ^{Am I not the greatest?}

I noticed something about my dream as I grew up. The lonlier I was, the more afraid, the emptier I felt inside, the more I needed to be on top. the more I felt like the worst, the more I dreamed of being the best.

God has a dream. For you. For me. His dream is that we might no longer be alone. Lonely. His dream is that we might be gathered together to bow down to him. To worship him. To praise him.

He sent his son Jesus Christ to make that dream come true. And when the world refused to worship the only Son of God, when all the world said, Let us kill Jesus and then we can have the power and the glory and the kingdom forever, God let all the world do exactly that. He did not stop the world, any more than he stops me when my heart grasps for the place reserved for

God alone. God suffers that just as Jesus did.

That is God's wisdom, God's power. That he suffers our sin. Like a parent seeking to smother a child in the insane anger of a tantrum, God absorbs all our blows all of our rage at not being God. He does not fight me, restrain me, punish me, destroy me, but he takes all the abuse of the children who aren't as big as their dreams and says, I love you still.

This is God's wisdom, God's power. Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

To the world, and that means you and I so much of the time, this is foolishness. The super lotto, or a few compliments about my clothing or my seron, or any of a host of other things are the sparks that set my dreams of my greatness burning bright again. And I am lonlier, and more afraid, because I just don't have what it takes to be god.

Yes it is foolish that God should be so weak and powerless to take all the abuse and unfaithful ness ~~and~~ that I heap upon him. It is foolish that he should be so weak as to let me come home to him again and again, and never demand that I earn the right. ^{is foolish that I start after him again.} But the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

I pray that God will get his way with us. I pray that all our dreams of greatness, all our lusting after power and authority and being god over one another will be put to death there on the cross.

Here is where we belong, empty hands extended to receive what God has given for us. Bowed down, on our knees, worshipping him whom the sun and the moon and all the stars rightly worship, our Lord ^{who} gave his life for us.

May he you are x k i k e m e x x x i x s i t i x m e h n k e h x a n d x g r e a t x d e e m x x o f x m y x g k o r y x x x x