

Whenever I hear the opening verse to the 126th Psalm, the line that says, “we were like those who dream,” it reminds me of a song I heard for the first time my freshman year of college. It had been produced only a few years before, but it was already making its rounds in high school auditoriums and college concert halls, because the lyrics were a perfect description for what young people were ingrained into believing. It was just part of the usual growing-up routine: we have been told by every commencement speaker since the beginning of time to pour out our hearts out into fulfilling our dreams, no matter how dreamy they may have been. We were drilled into believing that we had so much to offer, the whole world was at our fingertips; anything was possible if we simply set our mind to do so.

So, this song was a perfect breeding ground for us young dreamers. It seemed like it should be set on repeat to play in the open-convertible car, while making a cross-country road trip with the endless breeze passing by. The words are included on page...in your bulletin, if you wish to turn to it and follow along. Now, it is much better if you take the time to find this on the internet, and listen not just to the singing, but the piano part that sets the

full-of-possibility mood so incredibly well. Nevertheless, the words go like this (and I promise there is a God-connection to be made, in the end):

I met a man without a dollar to his name
Who had no traits of any value, but his smile
I met a man who had no yearn or claim to fame
Who was content to let life pass him for a while
And I was sure that all I ever wanted
Was a life like the movie stars led
And he kissed me right here
And said,

“I’ll give you stars and the moon
And this soul to guide you
And the promise I’ll never go
I’ll give you hope to bring out
All the life inside you
And the strength that’ll help you grow
I’ll give you truth and a future that’s twenty times better
Than any Hollywood plot.”
And I thought, “You know,
I’d rather have a yacht.”

I met a man who lived his life out on the road
Who left a wife and kids in Portland on a whim
I met a man whose fire and passion always showed
Who asked if I could spare a week to ride with him
But I was sure that all I ever wanted
Was a life that was scripted and planned
And he said, “But you don’t understand -

I’ll give you stars and the moon
And the open highway
And the river beneath your feet

I'll give you days full of dreams
If you travel my way
And a summer you can't repeat
I'll give you nights full of passion and days of adventure
No strings - just warm summer rain."
And I thought, "You know,
I'd rather have champagne."

I met a man who had a fortune in the bank
Who had retired at age thirty, set for life
I met a man and didn't know which stars to thank
And then he asked one day if I would be his wife
And I looked up, and all I could think of
Was the life I had dreamt I would live
And I said to him, "What will you give?"

"I'll give you cars and a townhouse
In Turtle Bay
And a fur and a diamond ring
And we'll get married in Spain
On my yacht today
And honeymoon in Beijing
And you'll meet stars at the parties I throw in my villas
In Nice and Paris in June."

And I thought, "Ok."
And I took a breath
And I got my yacht
And the years went by
And it never changed
And it never grew
And I never dreamed
And I woke one day
And I looked around

And thought, “My God,
I’ll never have the moon.” - “The Stars & the Moon”

Now, there are some issues with the song that us young dreamers may not have cared too much about when we were wrapped up by the dreamy music. For starters, women do not require men to fulfill their dreams. And, of course, not all dreams are based on things like yachts and champagne. But, sometimes, the best art in the world, whether that be a painting or a song or a book, is not only meant to entertain us for a brief moment of time; it’s, also, to project a mirror, in a sense, of our humanity: to help us realize something about ourselves that we may not otherwise.

And the song has a way of reminding us that satisfaction does not come easy for us human beings. It’s not just that we want more money or time or things. It’s that even when achieve that more...whatever it is, there is a different kind of *more* we want next. Once we have the money, we need the things, we need to travel to the next place. Life just isn’t wired to be anything of the satisfied sort. Sometimes the dreams we humans hold, actually, hold us back from caring for ourselves, our families, our friends, not to mention those in far more desperate-need circumstances.

However, the song, also, has something to offer on another man who came into the lives of people thousands of years ago. Because, there was this man from Nazareth, who promised them the God Who would be right there with them through the thick and thin of life. He promised a Kingdom where there would be no more violence or hatred or weeping, unless they would be uncontrollable tears of joy. He was the true fulfiller of that second stanza in the song, by being “this Holy-Spirit-driven soul to guide [us]/And the [Gospel] promise that [He will] never go...[the eternal] hope to bring out/All the [utter depth of] life inside [us]/And the strength that [would help us grow in faith in fighting the good fight with all our might]. [He was the One] to give [us the ultimate] truth and a future that’s twenty times better/Than any Hollywood plot.”

Instead, they didn’t just want a king to take down some Romans. They wanted supremacy, too. They wanted to legitimize superiority over anyone who was different from them. They wanted someone who could promise them no more suffering of any sort in their life right there and then, with no questions asked. They, even we, may not say such things out loud, but satisfaction just isn’t part of our humanity, after all. This man from Nazareth

just couldn't give them the yacht-like quality of life or celebratory champagne excitement or even all the moon and the stars. He just offered His life, instead.

So, come this time next week, we will be reminded of the journey that man from Nazareth took that ended up costing Him that life, giving us all much, much more than all the stars and the moon combined. He, even, gave us more than satisfaction. He gave us the greatest joy of all, knowing that this God cared for us so much that not only would God join us in our unsatisfactory humanity, but be willing to enter the very place where all dreams cease to exist, into the death that only God knew the way to take care of it forever: not with a thing, but with the One with all of life to give. Next week, we are reminded that the ultimate dream of all humanity has more than been fulfilled already, not just through some man from Nazareth, but our Lord, our Savior, our Emmanuel: God-with-us still and will be forevermore. And for that holy dream that has come true for all of us, we give thanks to God indeed. Amen!