

THE DREAM LIVES: 3 Powerful Lessons I Learned on the Road to Publishing

“Hi Preston, I’m interested in taking on your project and representing you.”

Those are the exhilarating words I’d longed to hear. But the journey to that shining moment was trying. You see, a few months ago, my former agent stepped away from the literary agency and publishing world. He dropped me like a hot potato.

Seeking new representation, I sent out several agency inquiries with no response. I began thinking I was running out of options to publish my book traditionally. I felt broken, rejected, and disheartened. I’d worked on *Discipled Leader* (DL) for ten years and began to question God. Here’s what I wrote in my journal last month:

I’m depressed. I feel it in my bones. So much to do but little enthusiasm. I’m experiencing the “Black Dog,” as Winston Churchill called it. Why? I’m struggling with DL. Should I keep on or move on? Am I wasting my time? I keep telling myself that God gave me the message, the calling to write. Not so sure. Maybe it’s all in my head.

So, what does life look like if I stop pursuing DL? Why did I start in the first place? I feel alone on this journey. God’s been quiet and seems absent. I lashed out at God a couple of days ago and told him how frustrated I am. First honest comments in a while. Not sure how he takes me.

I don’t want to shrink back, but I feel like I’m losing my vision, my vigor. I don’t want to retire and live a secluded life. I want to answer God’s call to make disciples. Somehow,

someway. I want to be found faithful with the time, talents, and resources he's given me. I must be in the "messy middle," the "now and not yet."

Just stop? No more blogging, no more speaking, no more platform building? Oh Lord, this will require your intervention for it to succeed. But what does success look like? Helping someone grow in Christ and become a positive influence in their world. It's not about a creed or a cause. It's about Christ. It's all about him. It's not about me.

If I self-publish the book, then what? Sell a few copies, then what? I can say I'm a published author. Big deal. Is it about my resume? Or is it about discipling people? What's my vision? Is it bigger than just publishing a book? Is it about helping people reach their potential in Christ? DL's content provides a framework for Christians to connect their spiritual and secular lives. Christ works in them and through them, changing them and changing the world around them.

I believe Jesus transforms our lives and transformed lives transform cultures. No specific cause. It's about stemming the tide of evil in today's society. Healing relationships, families, being a positive force in our businesses, schools, communities, and churches.

I get all of this, but I feel like a fish swimming upstream – only one man. Lord, I can't do this on my own. I'm fearful of success. I have many self-limiting beliefs. I propose, but you dispose. You engineer all circumstances. You work all things for the good of those who love you. May you receive the credit, the glory, the praise. I crave affirmation, but I pray my affirmation comes from you, not the world.

Lord, if you're listening this morning, at 5:56 am, would you please fill me, lift my spirits, allow me to walk with you, to hear from you, to be in your presence. I seek you. I need you. Please.

That day, encouragement began coming out of the blue. I received affirming emails and texts from friends who didn't know I struggled.

Then, Jay called.

Jay's a business associate who'd read some of my blogs. He asked me about the content, why I wrote them and then shared that he was also a believer. He told me that he struggled with being a Christian in the workplace and found value in what I wrote. He felt encouraged by the messages.

I thanked him for his comments and then told him about my recent setback. I shared with him that God seemed very quiet and had abandoned me. I wasn't sure that I wanted to continue pursuing my dream.

Jay said, "God is often quiet when he's already told us what to do. Be obedient to his calling. It will happen in his timing. And know that God hasn't abandoned you. He will finish what he started. I think the world needs to hear what you have to say."

Wow!

I hung up the phone and cried in my office. I got on my knees and thanked God for his encouragement through others. I was inspired, determined not to give up.

About a week later, I was sitting at my desk, working away, when the phone rang. The caller ID said "Lancaster, CA." I figured it was another robocall, and I shouldn't answer. But, for some reason, I picked up the phone, and on the other end was Steve, a literary agent.

He said, "Hi Preston, I'm interested in taking on your project and representing you."

Wow!

Steve and I talked about DL's platform and my vision for the book. After our conversation, he said he'd call in a few days.

Well, a few days passed, and I got anxious. I figured, "what the heck," so I called him. Steve answered the phone and said he'd like to represent me. I thanked him, and as we hung up the phone, I began jumping for joy.

The dream is alive, and I can't be more grateful.

The journey to find another agent was wearisome. I doubted God and was honest with him. He heard my cry, and when I was just about to give up, he responded beyond my imagination. I am so thankful for the opportunity and the journey to date.

Speaking of the journey, here are three powerful lessons I've learned during my recent circumstances...

The Power of Prayer. Prayer is powerful because of the one we pray to. I continue relearning this, and that I need to constantly bring my worries, doubts, and fears to God. When I express my concerns, share what's on my heart, and am honest with God, he hears me and fills me with peace. The Bible says, "Don't fret or worry. Instead of worrying, pray. Let petitions and praises shape your worries into prayers, letting God know your concerns. Before you know it, a sense of God's wholeness, everything coming together for good, will come and settle you down. It's wonderful what happens when Christ displaces worry at the center of your life." (Philippians 4:6–7 The Message).

The Power of Patience. Waiting is hard. It takes patience. There is an old maxim, "patience is a virtue, which all admire, but few attain." [1] But the Bible says, "He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted, but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint." (Isaiah 40:29–31 English Standard Version) I

learned that if I wait on God and am patient, he'll strengthen me in trying times.

The Power of Encouragement. Congressman George M. Adams once said encouragement is “oxygen to the soul.” So true! Encouragement provides energy and enthusiasm. It builds others up and helps them overcome adversity. Mark Twain wrote, “I can live two months on a good compliment.” The Bible says, “Gracious speech is like clover honey– good taste to the soul, quick energy for the body. “(Proverbs 16.24 The Message). Positive, uplifting words matter and make a difference. God encouraged me through others. I found hope and was inspired to keep on working toward my dream.

If you're struggling to realize your dream and feel like giving up, I charge you to seek God and tap into the power of prayer, patience, and encouragement. If you do, you'll find peace, strength, and hope to keep going.

Want to discover how to level up your leadership skills and become someone others will gladly follow? Visit my website, prestonpoore.com, today!

Cheers,

Preston

^[1]Carpenter, E. E., & Comfort, P. W. (2000). In [*Holman treasury of key Bible words: 200 Greek and 200 Hebrew words defined and explained*](#)(p. 357). Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers.