



PASTOR'S PAGE



Pastor John Lawrence

My name is John Lawrence (Pastor John) and I am blessed to be the Interim Pastor for Mount Zwingli Church. I write sermons, poetry, music, and blogs.

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February 2023 His name was Gandhi. His given surname was Mohandas, yet he became so well respected (even revered) that he was more commonly known as Mahatma, or "Great Soul". How does that sort of thing happen? How does a person achieve such exalted status and widespread admiration? I believe it was in the way that he followed his dream. You see, Gandhi had a dream for his homeland of India...a dream to be freed from British rule, and for all people groups within its borders to live in tolerance with each other. In the end, historians agree that he single-handedly brought the British Empire to its knees and forged a new and independent India.

Was this done through great military force? No, it was quite the opposite. His dream of a free and tolerant country was finally realized in 1947 through his now famous events of nonviolence and passive resistance. He was saddened, however, by the fact that Britain had carved out a separate Muslim nation (Pakistan) which further enforced the separation of people groups; but Gandhi's dream was mostly realized in his lifetime.

I want a legacy like Gandhi's. When my life is done, I want to be known as one who made a huge difference in people's lives, a man who showed love and respect to every person he met. I want people to be in heaven because of me. I want my life to remind them of that man who forsook riches and became homeless; that same man who was the greatest leader of all, because he was a servant to all. Most of all, I want people to see the genuine love affair I have with my Lord and then to want this amazing power and peace for themselves.

For your dream to live, you must die.

That's a bold statement, so let me explain. The "you" of today is not the same "you" of ten years ago, or even ten days ago. We all change, and the way we change is by *allowing* ourselves to be shaped by the patterns in our lives. Some patterns (or habits) are intentionally created by us, and some are created by others; and we choose whether or not we will participate in these patterns, and for how long. Examples of these patterns are TV shows (e.g., Seinfeld on Thursday nights), bowling on Tuesdays, and church on Sundays. While it is true that we have power over them, it is also true that these habits can come to have power over us.

To have a "Gandhi-like" impact on our world, then, we need to be focused. This means we need to be focused on our dream, which also means *we need to know our dream!* What gave Gandhi a powerful focus was the power of his chosen habits and patterns. He needed a regular time of dreaming and meditating, so he chose to be completely silent on Mondays. To become undistracted by illness, he found a diet that was most agreeable with his body and chose to be confined within these dietary limits. To remain focused and avoid distractions, he chose to give up sex at the age of thirty-six. Good habits are hard to establish, but they soon are in harmony with the other parts of our lives.

What is your dream? Uncover it, for it is a gift from God. Once you have it, it is time to go to work changing the patterns of your life to be in alignment with your dream. God put that dream deep inside of you and you will never be completely in harmony with yourself until you make it happen. **Reference: Philippians 3:12-14.**