

Shattered Dreams

By Larry Crabb

The impact this book had on me is going to be cheated by words. Crabb's refreshing acceptance of pain on the pathway to God's chosen joy for us is not only freeing but also (in an odd sort of way) encouraging. With the backdrop of the book of Ruth, Crabb dissects the impact of shattered dreams, the common response of the church and our culture, and the hope that only comes from the surrender of only searching the Holy God. With tears welling my eyes more than once, the images of a loving God who is longing to give us His Plan overwhelmed me. Not the blessings of happiness in this life, but rather the peace of His Presence with we feel lonely, disowned, and where God even seems distant. He is there. He's creating the opportunity for His passion for us to be experienced as we learn that nothing can compare to our passion for Him. We wallow through the blockage of despair only to find that He is there, always has been there, always will be there.

The portion of chapter 3 where Crabb talks of God sending the angel to Jesus gives us a gut-wrenching look into God's heart. While in the Garden, Jesus was praying before being arrested. The fact that the angel came, comforted Him, and then Jesus wept blood is overwhelming. The pain didn't go. It stayed. It clung on to him. The hope was heaven. Not being saved.

Also, the idea of Jesus breaking down at the time of greatest need for His disciples crushes the perspectives we have on leadership. I could (might) write a book on the warped way Jesus would look following today's leadership principles.

The power in the chapter about God wanting, hoping, and longing to pour out blessings in His perfect timing left me grasping for words. "...empowering you to believe that Jesus' restraint is a greater mystery than your suffering." And all of a sudden I wanted to pray, "I get it..." Not everything, not all of it... but I get it. He always sees the big picture. He always wants to love and care for us as best possible. He is, however, creating and preparing for our perfect union in heaven.

The beauty of this book is the avoidance of the typical "How To" that we want in Christian literature today. We want solid formula and time frames and clarity and all of the business BS that has infiltrated the church. God can't be contained. God can't be limited. And we dishonor Him to even think of such. Crabb's honesty in the struggles he faces even in the Truths he is presenting not only validates the words, but enriches them with his personal emotions. This is a masterful book of understanding the freedom within "Shattered Dreams."