

### What if we were to venture to be open to dreams and visions once again?

Let us be willing to redirect our attention away from the world around us and towards the world within us - daring to let God reveal new images within us, and then viewing them together with Him so that they become so very real and meaningful to us.

Paul encourages us to fix our eyes not on what is seen but on what is unseen (2 Corinthians 4:18). Whenever we turn our attention inward, we step out of the visible realm - out of our usual analysis, judgment and evaluation of ourselves and others. We enter the realm of God which has no limit! We were created for this and here we can dream together with God. Here God reveals to us by his Spirit things we have never heard or seen before (1 Corinthians 2:9). With the eyes of the heart, with our imagination, we gain access to God's thoughts and his plans for us. (Ephesians 1:18; 1 Corinthians 2:16). Both day and night, God speaks to us in dreams and visions through which he reveals wonderful new things to us.

We make so many decisions based on our past experiences and thus remain limited by our usual and somewhat automatic way of thinking. But God wants to rescue us from this (Psalm 18:19), because his thoughts have no limits! He is constantly creating new things and has endless dreams for us all, in which he holds hope and a future for us (Jeremiah 29:11). And we are invited to be as creative as our God, our Creator, by dreaming, imagining, and experiencing these new things together with him. All doors are wide open for this.

When we dream, we do in fact show something of ourselves that reveals who we really are. This takes courage. We often look for God and His glory outside of us. But it is His glory within us, as earthly vessels, that needs to be revealed (2 Corinthians 4:7). When we dream, we are confronted with our real selves and what is on our hearts. For us, this is often like a "dark, inaccessible place", but where we in fact find who we really are – and experience our deepest thoughts and feelings. That is exactly where we can find our God, as we are completely open and release any previous thoughts that would stand in the way. Here God wants to reveal the mystery and beauty that he has placed within us.

Let us venture to be open to dreams and visions once again and allow God to lead us to those places where his possibilities have no limits. Let us open our eyes to this new reality. We have access to God's thoughts and will discover that, closely connected to God's ultimate riches and power, we can be creative with every breath we take and bring forth wonderful new things in this world.

Alexander Schlüter

### Ukrainian War – Future and Hope

We all know about the current situation in the Ukrainian war. The sanctions against Russia are not having the expected results in the weakening of their war efforts and the military front lines in Ukraine are moving very little. What is next? And how can there be peace again? Let us once again pray earnestly that there will be an end to the conflict; and even more so for reconciliation between Ukraine and Russia.

Like the prophet Habakkuk, we want to stand at "our watch" in prayer and look – not with natural eyes, but with the eyes of the Spirit, which are indeed able to draw the future into the present. What thoughts and plans do we sense God has for both nations, and how can we release these in prayer together with heaven? Let us be quiet and listen and watch attentively within ourselves! What do we hear and see? What sound are you particularly aware of? Maybe you can see with your mind's eye how enemy soldiers are meeting on the front lines, taking off their helmets and falling on their knees? How the Holy Spirit is building bridges between people and nations and is opening some new paths for reconciliation? How something new is growing on scorched ground and is coming into bloom?

Together with both nations, we want to bow our knees before the mighty hand of God (1 Peter 5:6) and be united according to his word (Proverbs 19:21; Psalm 33:10). We can count on a God who does the impossible - beyond all political ambitions! Think of the wall of division he brought down in our land of Germany and the many victories won at his hand in the Bible. We want to bind both nations together with God's thoughts and plans for the future and for hope (Jeremiah 29:11), and pray that hardened minds and hearts are gently touched by the Holy Spirit of the Sovereign Lord (Isaiah 48:16-18).

Alexander Schlüter

### Media

The media are now commonly referred to as the "fourth power" in our society within the nation. The media which are regulated by public law were created after the Second World War in order to be government-independent organisations critical of politics and of those in power, and thus to be a central pillar for freedom to form our individual and public opinions. Stamping forcefully through the institutions of politics, education and media was a key strategy of Neo-Marxism in 1968 for its long-term cultural revolution.

Today, left-green journalists largely dominate the leading media, and since the traffic-light (red/yellow/green–socialist/liberal/environmental) government came to power, the very necessary critical distance between media content and government policy is decreasing more and more. This is now failing to provide the necessary corrective measures required not only for democracy. The media is also not living up to its mission to provide unbiased independent education of the people with correct information. Comments often overshadow the facts.

Looking to the future, catastrophic scenarios about climate, weather and health dominate the media, while at the same time there is silence about other major dangers; not to mention the educational instructions on what to do, what not to do and what to accept. This makes the media the mouthpiece of politics instead of being a source of creative ideas for the future. Such ideas exist and they should also be given space and a voice in the media. Let us call for journalists who bring vital, life-sustaining perspectives for our society into the discussion, and let Christian media develop exemplary guiding principles for the country.

**Prayer:**

- **That in private and public media, journalists will produce material based on God's ideas for our world, and have a significant influence on many others. (Jeremiah 29:11-14)**
- **That freedom of information is not suppressed, but rather that the media will be filled with accurate reports and creative articles. (Zechariah 8:16f)**
- **We pray that public broadcasters do research for the real facts, present the truth with objectivity, and in this way always follow through with godly solutions. (Acts 4:7-12)**

Karin Heepen

**Life in the information age**

Every German uses some form of media for an average of ten hours every day, eight and a half hours of which are with the daily media of television, radio, newspapers, and the Internet. That is about 32 years of our lifetime! According to a study by Techniker Krankenkasse (Health Insurance for Technicians) (2021), only 5% of the population are never or rarely online. While there are many positive aspects of media use, which, for example, enable us to network and communicate worldwide, such a high usage also has an impact on our health. According to the study, there is a clear connection between increased Internet use and physical and psychological stress. Mass media have long since seized power over our everyday lives and seek to influence how we think, feel, and evaluate everything. By intensive reporting on certain issues, the media are raising issues that receive particular attention from the public. Media scientists speak of "setting the agenda". In addition to using the media wisely when it comes to our time and health, we need the help of the Holy Spirit in how we respond to news and information from the media and how it is influencing our thoughts and behaviour (John 16:13). Jesus said we will face temptation (Matthew 24:4f).

Let us ask for the spirit of discernment and invite the Holy Spirit to teach us how to respond with a flood of information and to remain firmly in the truth.

Alexander Schlüter

**The changing world of work**

In recent years, digitalisation (computing/software/networks) and globalisation have initiated a structural change in the world of work, which has rapidly gained momentum as a result of the pandemic-related surge in digitalisation. This is accompanied by a total change in how the employee values the work and a change in the needs and requirements. Soft factors such as the rationale and sense of purpose in the work, the opportunities for creative, innovative participation and flexibility in the balancing of work and private life are becoming increasingly important. The changing world of work actually encompasses much more than the freedom to decide where to work from. For many companies, the changing world of work also demands a completely new mindset, requiring a new type of collaboration and leadership, in terms of structures, an adequate understanding of the new work requirements and upgrading the traditional forms of employee promotion, motivation and retention. Working places will not be replaced by home offices, but will be appropriately redefined and then be redesigned into places in which the corporate culture is lived out and creative cooperation becomes a breeding ground for innovation, and the old real and the new digital (networking) working space merge into one another.

Employers are faced with the challenge to actively shape this change in a way that suits their company, in order to continue to be attractive to skilled workers and at the same time to act in an economically foresighted manner.

Employees who do not practice good time and self-management are experiencing the pressure of being over-burdened due to the increasing personal responsibility that comes with the new way of working. And so the changing world of work offers, as well as great opportunities for increasing productivity and full employee engagement, challenges in the implementation of the changes, in practical terms and partly due to the necessary commitment and the major effort required.

**Prayer:**

- **For wisdom and foresight for employees, managers, and businesses in implementing and operating this change in a healthy way for all concerned. (Ecclesiastes 7:19)**
- **For a mutually benevolent and growing cooperation between employers and employees. (Matthew 7:12, Philippians 2:3f).**
- **For Germany as an attractive business location for skilled workers. (Jeremiah 29:11)**

Tanja Frank

**Harvest thanksgiving – we celebrate life!**

This month we celebrate God's good provision in our lives. The God who is more than enough (El Shaddai) shares his entire life with us. That is why Jesus is also not just enough, for in him we have life and have it to the full (John 10:10b) and we can even participate in his divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). This means that we have access to absolutely all that we need.

Also creation, with its ever-expanding universe, reflects something of God's abundance in life. When you have eyes for the beauty of creation, you cannot help but hold your breath. My God is the Creator of all this!

We are also grateful for our farmers. The "Lord of the Harvest" uses them to bring food to our tables. We are deeply grateful for their work which is often arduous under difficult circumstances. Thank you, dear farmers!

Gratitude creates a huge change in the atmosphere. The path to the future leads across a sea of gratitude. Let us become more and more grateful and let our praise to God continually increase! We can rely on him for everything. This should help us to renew our thinking. So often we are overtaken by an awareness of what we do not have. While the news and media are constantly telling us about what is missing, let us redirect our thoughts to God, who is full of resources, energy, finance, and ideas. What would it be like, if we were to develop a constant awareness of what we have in God's wealth and abundance!

Finally, we can generously share the good things that we have received from God and help others to "till their fields" and to reap a harvest. We can invest in their future and see new life spring up. Let us live generously, not holding on fearfully, rather letting go, trusting, giving further, opening hearts and homes, and celebrating life together. To life! To our good God, whose grace will never end (Psalm 136)!

Alexander Schlüter

***With thanks for God's loving care for us!***

Alexander Schlüter and team