

GOD DREAMS: When Dreams Are Broken

February 20, 2022

Overarching Theme: 2022 – *The Year of the Lord’s Favor* (Luke 4:19)

Instructions:

When using this material as teacher, feel free to pick and choose the point you want to emphasize in the lesson. *The format of the curriculum is designed to have an abundance of information in which to refer as desired.*

Core Point:

As the world awakens from almost 2 years of pandemic stupor, the words of Jesus proclaiming “the year of the Lord’s favor” is a dream that we need in 2022. But what do we do when experience Broken Dreams?

Reflect on this Scripture:

Luke 24:13-24 ¹³ Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles^[a] from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. ¹⁵ As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; ¹⁶ but they were kept from recognizing him.

¹⁷ He asked them, “What are you discussing together as you walk along?”

They stood still, their faces downcast. ¹⁸ One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, “Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?”

¹⁹ “What things?” he asked.

“About Jesus of Nazareth,” they replied. “He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. ²⁰ The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; ²¹ but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. ²² In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning ²³ but didn’t find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. ²⁴ Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus.”

This Week: Luke 24:13-24

Jesus had kindled hope and new dreams in the lives of the disciples. At the birth of John the Baptist, Zechariah prophesied that the Lord God of Israel had “looked favorably on his people and redeemed them” (1:68). Simeon had spent his life “looking forward to the consolation of Israel” (2:25), and Anna was a witness “to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem” (2:38). By speaking of Jesus as the hoped-for Redeemer of Israel, Cleopas echoes the words of Isaiah (41:14, 43:14). They had hoped that the promises of the Scriptures were about to be fulfilled. Again, Cleopas and his companion do not get the irony; they had hoped that Jesus would fulfill the Scriptures, but they saw his death – which was indeed the fulfillment – as only the frustration of their hope. But Jesus’ act of suffering with us and rising again actually becomes the source of divine comfort and hope in the midst of human broken dreams.

-Adapted from New Interpreters Commentary, Vol IX, p. 478

Questions to Ponder for Accountability in the Group:

1. In bringing the mysterious traveler up to speed, Cleopas said “but we had hoped...” Can you relate? Have you ever had a broken dream experience that led you to a sense of hopelessness like Cleopas?
2. Later in the story as the two have dinner with the mysterious traveler, their eyes are opened to recognize the crucified and risen Christ as he gives thanks and breaks the bread. What do you think opened their eyes as he broke the bread?
3. Reflecting on the crucified Christ as he awaited martyrdom in a Nazi concentration camp in 1945, German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer declares “*only a suffering God can help.*” What do you think he means by that statement? When you think of your own experiences of deferred or broken dreams, how does the reality of Jesus’ suffering relate to you?
4. How can the community of faith better embody the sacrificial love of Christ as we encounter the broken dreams of others in the world around us? Is it possible to help others (or even one another) dream again? How?

Activity for the Life of a Disciple:

1. Remember to find encouragement for the day by reading the daily devotional from FUMCC.
2. Read and reflect through your **God Dreams** journal (beginning on page 30).

3. Remember to bring your 'dream star' with you to worship next Sunday, February 27.
4. Ponder and pray on this scripture this week: Luke24:21a *"but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel"*