CHARIS YOUTH

Series: Divine Imagination

Lesson 4: Like Those Who Dream

About This Lesson

Youth often dream but don't expect their dreams to come true, and lack guidance to fulfill them. This lesson lays the foundation that godly dreams and God's wisdom will inspire action to see fulfillment or a harvest of the seeds planted. The importance of thankfulness and removing all bitterness are keys that can be implemented whether things are going well or not.

Key Takeaway: Divine dreams and wisdom from Jesus will bring a harvest that brings glory to God. Being thankful and avoiding bitterness will nurture your dreams.

Key Verse: Psalm 126:1 *When the LORD brought back the captivity of Zion, we were like those who dream.*

Teaching Outline:

I. WHAT IS IT LIKE TO DREAM?

Hebrews 9:9 *It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience.*

Psalm 126: 1–3 *When the LORD brought back the captivity of Zion,*
We were like those who dream.
2 Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
And our tongue with singing.
Then they said among the nations,
"The LORD has done great things for them."
3 The LORD has done great things for us,
And we are glad.

A. The setting for these verses was that the Israelites had been captives and were finally allowed to return to their homeland.
   1. V. 1 Redemption, being purchased or bought back, will cause you to dream, laugh, and sing again!
   2. V. 2 The world will notice there is something different about you.

B. God wants to make you an advertisement for how He treats His kids! When people look at you, they should see that you are living your best life—no matter what struggles you have.

II. TAKE ACTION!

Psalm 126:6 *He who continually goes forth weeping, bearing seed for sowing, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.*

A. Dreamers continually sow because they believe there will be a harvest!
   1. Dreamers keep bringing back the harvest—even in times of trouble. Don't faint before the harvest.

B. Take action by sowing because there will be a harvest. The fields are ready for harvest.
   John 4:35 *Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!*
   1. Don't wait for something to happen. In the off-season, farmers work in the fields so they can have a harvest.
   2. Dream and sow into the dream. If you dream about sharing the Gospel with a friend, start sowing seeds and invite the friend to church.

C. A true God-given dream will be followed by the opportunity to take action!
   1. Dreams that come from the divine imagination will not lead to passivity. They will lead to activity!
   2. Some dreams are not from the divine imagination. You need to discern if the dream came from God or was random.

D. Divine dreams need divine wisdom. Find people of wisdom and learn from them.
   There will be divine wisdom from Jesus as you walk towards that dream!
   Proverbs 9:3-5 *She has sent out her maidens,*
   She cries out from the highest places of the city,

4 "Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!"
As for him who lacks understanding, she says to him,
5 "Come, eat of my bread
And drink of the wine I have mixed.

E. Divine dreams and divine wisdom go hand in hand. Some people dream, but don't have wisdom to go with those dreams. Make sure your dreams and wisdom come from God.

III. DON'T FAINT BEFORE YOUR HARVEST! KEEP DREAMING!

Joel 2:23–24 *Be glad then, you children of Zion,*
And rejoice in the LORD your God;
For He has given you the former rain faithfully,
And He will cause the rain to come down for you—
The former rain,
And the latter rain in the first month.
24 The threshing floors shall be full of wheat,
And the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil.

A. Remember that God has done marvelous things and is faithful to keep His promises!
   1. V. 23 He has given you the former rain faithfully. The former, early rain helps the seed sprout.
   2. V. 23 The latter rain is here! The rain that brings in the full harvest!

B. The latter rain is marked by a great outpouring from the Holy Spirit! The latter rain is marked by God speaking to people's hearts. The Holy Spirit will ignite the divine imagination with dreams, visions, and inspiration!
   Joel 2:28 *And it shall come to pass afterward*
   That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh;
   Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
   Your old men shall dream dreams,
   Your young men shall see visions.
   1. Sons, daughters, and old men shall have dreams and visions in the latter rain, which is now!
   2. We are anointed with dreams, visions, and also with divine wisdom!

IV. AVOID THE #1 DREAMKILLER

A. Joseph was a great dreamer. His life shows an amazing story of redemption and God's divine destiny. The most significant testimony from his life story is that he chose not to be bitter at his brothers, Potiphar's wife, and the butler. That's why his dream never died!

B. Joseph was a dreamer, could interpret dreams, and had divine wisdom! He was given divine dreams and divine wisdom in equal measure!
   1. Genesis 37:5 As a boy, he had a dream.
   2. Genesis 37:19 His brothers called him a "dreamer."
   3. Genesis 41 Joseph interpreted Pharaoh's dreams.
      Genesis 41:39 *Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Inasmuch as God has shown you all this, there is no one as discerning and wise as you."*

C. His divine dreams and divine wisdom, both elements of the soul, were not killed by bitterness!
   1. Bitterness will kill your dreams and nullify the wisdom God wants to give you.
   2. Bitter people stop dreaming and often do foolish things.

D. The best way to avoid bitterness is to remain thankful!
   1. Thankfulness directs your dreams. Thankfulness will cause you to be wise beyond your years.

E. To partner with God and dream divine dreams, you need to have a relationship with Him. End the time by inviting anyone who has not yet received salvation to pray with you.

Bottom Line:
Now is the time of the latter rain. It's time for harvest! Be thankful, not bitter. Keep dreaming. Keep sowing, reaping, laughing, singing, and rejoicing because the Lord has done great things!

Small Group Time:

1. In Psalm 126, we read about the Israelites leaving captivity. They felt like they were dreaming because for so long they couldn't imagine that they would ever see their homeland again. They knew God was faithful, but they weren't faithful in dreaming that He would fulfill His promises.

- When have you had a tough time and didn't feel like things would ever improve? Which of God's promises might have helped you dream and be stuck in the situation?
- What do you think God wants you to be dreaming and doing as you imagine your God-given purpose and calling?

2. Joseph could have let years of bitterness build, destroying his opportunity to interpret Pharaoh's dream and receive the promotion that allowed him to save people during a famine.

- How do you think Joseph kept sowing seeds during the years in prison before he reaped his reward?
- Is there an area of your life where bitterness is holding you back? Take time to pray as you confess holding onto bitterness, and forgive.
- How will letting go of bitterness free you to dream God's dreams for your life?

Declaration:

"I choose to dream and use Jesus' wisdom to guide me to take action towards fulfilling God's dreams for my life."

Youth Weekly Journal:

Handout, Email, or Download

- **Question:** What action is God leading you to take this week towards sowing into your divine dreams?
- **Pray:** Ask God to reveal any areas of bitterness that might be holding you back from fulfilling your dreams.
- **Read:** Psalm 126:1–6 describes the Israelites returning from their years of captivity and how they felt like dreamers seeing their homeland. They praised God. Think about all the blessings God has given you and tell someone about them!

- **Live It:** Take that action step toward your God-given dream. Document it in some way and plan out the next step. Keep taking steps toward what God is leading you though your imagination and dreams.
- **Create:** Write "divine imagination" down the side of a paper. Use each letter to begin a sentence or phrase describing something you learned in this series or what God is showing you about your imagination.

EXTENDING THE LESSON

Icebreaker Question: Which historical person would you like to sit down and talk to for one hour, and why?

Opening Activity Suggestion: Point out that it is good to use your divine imagination to dream godly dreams. Invite volunteers to share their answers to these questions: What is your dream job after graduation? What dream do you have for the type of person you will marry? What dream do you feel God has given you for your future?

Opening Affirmation: "I thank God for my divine imagination and will use it to bring Him glory."

Giving Time: Proverbs 11:25 *The generous soul will be made rich, and he who waters will also be watered himself.*

Just like bitterness is a dream killer, stinginess is a crop killer when it comes to reaping a harvest of blessings. Dreamers are generous, and that's why they reap plentiful harvests. Dream of being generous and blessing others—take action now by sowing those seeds.

BEYOND –
ADDITIONAL APPLICATION FOR CHURCH OR HOME

Challenge: If you have a vision board, bring it to show the group. This week's challenge is to create a vision board using words, pictures, and phrases from magazines or printed from the computer that represent a godly dream they have. Invite them to bring the vision board next week and share it with the group.

Biblical Worldview: Today's lesson showed the power of divine dreams guided by godly wisdom. Without using the Bible as a guidebook, people don't know that God gives wisdom to help them dream of fulfilling His plan for their lives. When the young people follow God's ways and use His wisdom, the world will see that the Lord has done great things for them and want to know how to get it, too. Encourage the young people to share their godly dreams and the source—surrender their lives to Jesus and follow Him.

Outreach/Missions: Many missionaries work with refugees, who like the Israelites in Psalm 126, have stopped dreaming. Pray for the Christians working with refugees to show them the hope that Jesus gives.