



Small Group Curriculum

Dreaming Wide Awake: the death of a dream • WEEK 2 • Genesis 37:12-36

In week two of Dreaming Wide Awake, we are continuing in the life of Joseph and examining the Scripture account where he is betrayed by his brothers and sold into slavery. The former dysfunction of his family rears its head and becomes abusive and exploitative. For Joseph, the abandonment was sudden and violent and longlasting. *Why would God give him a dream and then seemingly take away its possibility?*

A gentle reminder that when stepping into conversations about dreams, unmet expectations, waiting on God, and other related topics, we are also stepping into potentially tender and painful territory. Wade into the waters slowly and gently, knowing that each person in your group will show up to a conversation like this differently.

While it is certainly true that adversity and suffering are patterns and tools that God uses to develop character further the good news of the Gospel, we must be careful to not conflate suffering and God's hand; such over-simplification is not helpful. When engaging with suffering, stay away from platitudes such as "it must be happening for a reason," because while God *can and will* bring meaning out of suffering, it does not lessen the reality of harm and pain. When bearing witness to another's story, be quick to listen and slow to speak. Be willing to sit in the uncomfortable and painful with them and not rush them through it or out of it.

Speak truth and life over them: pray for them and anchor in the good news that we serve a God Who is *outside* of suffering and offers us a hope beyond *all* circumstances.

REMINDERS

- Dreaming Wide Awake Journals
- Register for this Thursday's Food Pantry at awakeningchurch.com/outreach
- Help is needed for our Meals Ministry. Email Carri at carrie.freedom.usa@gmail.com.

ICEBREAKER

How did you answer the question "*what do you want to be when you grow up*" when you were 5? 10? 15?

INTRODUCTION

Two routes your group can take:

#1:

Consider A.W. Tozer's famous quote, "*What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.*" Why is an accurate understanding of Who God is important? How does this influence how we view success? Suffering? Goals and dreams? Set-backs?

AWAKENING

For followers of Jesus, a robust theology of suffering is imperative; Jesus Himself told us *"in this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."* (John 16:33) Suffering is guaranteed and Jesus' victory is secured, but how we navigate the in between is in our hands and flows from our hearts. Platitudes or blind faith will not sustain us.

For your group: what comes to mind when you think about God? Consider this earnestly: when you have been in a season of suffering, was your answer different? How does this affect your faith and heart in the waiting?

#2

On Sunday, Chip connected God's dream for our life with the things that make us deeply angry or otherwise move us emotionally. What is the connection between your passions and God's dream for your life? What makes you deeply angry or sad? What might God want to do through you in relation to these?

DISCUSSION

READ: Genesis 37:12-36

Note: according to Leviticus 27:5, 20 pieces of silver was the typical value for a young male slave in this historical-cultural context

1. Share any initial observations about the Scripture. What stands out? Any questions?
2. What role did deception play in this narrative?
 - a. Is this a pattern in the family of Jacob? Why or why not?
 - b. Do you see similar patterns in your family?
3. Once encountering his brothers, we do not hear Joseph speak at all in this narrative account. What are we to imagine he is feeling or experiencing?
 - a. Where in Joseph's suffering do you hear echoes of your own life?
4. How do we see a person's character and their actions intertwined in this narrative?

READ: Psalm 105:17-19

5. This Psalm assures us that God was present and active in Joseph's life, including when he was betrayed by his family, but God is not directly mentioned in the Genesis text. What does this tell us about God? What does this tell us about His movement?
6. Why is God concerned with working in us before working through us?

RESPONSE

1. How can you as a group carry each others' burdens?

AWAKENING

2. How can you as a group have faith with and *for* each other?
3. What do *you* need to place in God's hands? (*example: a dream, an area of sin, a circumstance, doubt, anger, etc.*)
 - a. Asked another way, what might God want to be doing in you?

GROUP PRAYER

"Prayer is the only entryway into genuine self-knowledge. It is also the main way we experience deep change—the reordering of our loves. Prayer is how God gives us so many of the unimaginable things he has for us. Indeed, prayer makes it safe for God to give us many of the things we most desire. It is the way we know God, the way we finally treat God as God. Prayer is simply the key to everything we need to do and be in life."

Tim Keller

Engage in the *"reordering of our loves"* together by praying using the ACTS method.

Adoration (praising God for who He is and always will be)

Confession (confession sins and need for forgiveness)

Thanksgiving (expressing gratitude to God)

Supplication (making requests to God for your own and others' needs)

DREAM JOURNAL PRAYER PROMPT

God - what do You want to do in me in this season?

God - how are you leading me to dream bigger?

God - what burdens have you placed on my heart?

God - what do You want to do through me in this season?