

JESUS, RESTORER OF DREAMS

INTRODUCTION

When we are young, we don't plan for our life to be a failure. We look to the future with great hope and expectation. We dream big. Children when asked what they want to become will say, "I want to be a teacher", "I want to be a doctor" and so on. You will never hear a child say, "I want to be unemployed, or I want to be a criminal."

Even adults have great dreams, dreams to have a successful career, dreams to have a great marriage and be a good parent, dreams to achieve things in the secular world, or even dreams of a Christian calling.

This church has a dream to be a church of irresistible influence. I believe, God has given me a dream for us to "Take this City". This is our focus for 2018.

Sadly, life carries many challenges, and as we look back at our lives, some of us here today may say, "the dreams I used to have are no longer." Maybe as time has passed, we have lost sight of our dreams, whether secular or spiritual, and we have given up on them.

As we stand at the dawn of 2018, we look forward to a great new year. We trust God for new things, we want to leave the past in the past and dream new dreams, but I believe God wants to encourage us to not just to start dreaming new dreams, but to pick up those dreams that are lying in the dust at our feet, those dreams that we have given up on, those dreams that quite possibly were birthed in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, and to ask Him to bring restoration.

On Thursday morning, the Holy Spirit placed these words on my heart, "Jesus, Restorer of Dreams" and that's what I want to speak to you about today.

MESSAGE

WHAT CAUSES LOST DREAMS?

We may lose sight of our dreams for many different reasons. For example,

- **Time** – so much time has passed since our dream was birthed that we have given up, thinking it will never happen.
- **Circumstances** – finances, family challenges and health issues can have a negative influence on achieving our dreams.
- **Choices** – certain choices we make will definitely impact our dreams. These choices are even more influenced when they relate to our relationship with Jesus Christ.
- **Sin** – sin is a great tool the enemy will use to rob us of our relationship with God and separate us from God's favour which we need to achieve our God-given dreams.

- **Unbelief, or lack of faith** – There is a saying that if our dreams and goals are no so big that they seem unattainable, then they are too small for God. It takes faith to achieve our dreams.

These are some example of things that will rob us of our dreams. I'm sure you can think of many more. The good news is that Jesus is the answer for every one of these circumstances. He made it clear in **John 10:10** when He said, "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."

In Jesus, we can live the abundant life, and that applies to realising our dreams too. The enemy wants to rob us of our dreams but if we are willing to trust Jesus, He will be our "Restorer of Dreams".

THE TIME IT TAKES

When we give up on our dreams because of time, we have lost sight of the nature of God. Our God is not limited by time, His is constantly present, in the past, the present and the future.

2 Peter 3:8 (NKJV) But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

To us the wait may seem unending, but for God, the period is just a speck in time.

Our God is a God of perfect timing. Even Jesus had to come at the perfect time! **Galatians 4:4** (NKJV) But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son...

Likewise, in the fullness of time, God will fulfill our dream, and when He does, it will be beautiful: **Ecclesiastes 3:11** (NKJV) He has made everything beautiful in its time.

If we are struggling with the wait, we need to ask the Lord to magnify the fruit of the Spirit in our lives: Love, joy, peace, patience or long suffering...

Abraham made a mistake, God was taking too long to give him and Sarah the promised son, so he slept with Hagar, his wife's slave and Ishmael was born. To this day the world suffers from this act of impatience as Islam ravages and hurts the world we live in.

Have you got a dream you have given up on because it's taking too long? Ask Jesus Christ the Restorer of Dreams to grant you the patience it requires to realise that dream because it will be beautiful in it's time.

WHEN OUR CIRCUMSTANCES CLOUD OUR DREAMS

Sometimes circumstances rob us of our dreams, through no fault of our own. Think of Job. Things were great, he was healthy and wealthy, and he had a fantastic family. Suddenly everything changed, and Job's dreams died.

A few months ago when the tornado hit in our area, we had a family who lost the use of their home. They suffered great damage and it wasn't their fault, it just happened...

What about you? Do you have a dream, but the finances are just not there? Were you retrenched? Are you facing health issues which make achieving your dream seem impossible? Is your dream of a happy family falling apart due to marriage problems?

Job asked God questions, but he never gave up on God and there was a day when the "Restorer of Dreams" honoured Job:

Job 42:12-16(NKJV) Now the Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning; for he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and one thousand female donkeys. 13 He also had seven sons and three daughters. 14 And he called the name of the first Jemimah, the name of the second Keziah, and the name of the third Keren-Happuch. 15 In all the land were found no women so beautiful as the daughters of Job; and their father gave them an inheritance among their brothers. 16 After this Job lived one hundred and forty years, and saw his children and grandchildren for four generations.

What an amazing example of the overwhelming blessing of restoration which God is willing to bless His people with.

Have we been questioning God about our circumstances? Is there a why in the way of our dreams? Can we say with Job today, Job 13:15a (NKJV) Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him...

God never changes. If He did it for Job, He can do it for you and I too. Our circumstances may seem overwhelming to us, but for God, nothing is impossible, He can restore our dreams in an instant. We need to simply trust Him.

WHEN SIN ROBBS US OF OUR DREAMS

Time and again the Israelites lost focus on their dream. They were plucked out of their Promised Land because of sin. They longed for that land, they longed for the temple and the presence of God. It was in the depths of these circumstances that some of the most encouraging prophecies were uttered by the prophets.

One of my favourite messianic prophecies is Isaiah 61:

Isaiah 61:1-3 (NKJV) "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because the Lord has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; 2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, 3 To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called **trees of righteousness**, The planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified."

In Christ Jesus, our sins are forgiven. When we mourn over our sins with a heart of repentance then this prophecy about Jesus becomes a reality to us. Look it says, "That they may be called **trees of righteousness**". This speaks of restoration of righteousness. Isn't it wonderful that our God's mercies and kindness are new every morning! **1 John 1:9** (NKJV) If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

And with restoration of righteousness comes restoration of dreams... Isaiah 61 continues with these words: **Isaiah 61:1-3** (NKJV) And they shall rebuild the old ruins, They shall raise up the former desolations, And they shall repair the ruined cities,

Remember the parable of the Prodigal son. When he returned his father was waiting. With great joy he received a beautiful robe, a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet and he partook in a great feast. What restoration!

Has sin crept into your life and resulted in lost dreams, confess your sin today, allow Jesus to break chains of bondage, let Him take the ashes of your life and restore the beauty of a future with restored dreams.

WHEN FAITHLESSNESS AND UNBELIEF ROB US OF OUR DREAMS

Unbelief and faithlessness are "dream stealers". Jesus disciple Thomas had had his faith shattered when Jesus was crucified. He had believed the dream that Jesus was the Messiah. He had surrendered the life he was living and had chosen to follow Jesus, but his dream died on the cross with Jesus.

Even when He saw Jesus, he didn't want to believe until Jesus said, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing."

Immediately Thomas answered "My Lord and my God!" Jesus had restored his faith and his dream.

James 1:5-8 (NKJV) If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the

sea driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

Has unbelief and lack of faith have resulted in doubt and robbed you of your God-given dream? Its time to decide to believe God. Jesus, our Restorer of Dreams can help us deal with these challenges through the indwelling presence and power of Hos Holy Spirit.

CONCLUSION

Joel 2:25 (KJV) And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you.

Kenneth Hagin, in speaking on this subject said, "Some of you have been down with a lot of "worms" in your life. Some of you have lost years to a bad marriage. Some of you have lost years to health problems. But the Lord put something in my heart. He said, "**My mercy is greater than your mistakes, and I am a Master at fixing any disaster.** God loves us that much. Whether we've done things that are our own fault, or whether it is the enemy who has stolen from us, God is still the Restorer!"

Whether it is time, circumstances, choices we have made, sin or unbelief and lack of faith that has robbed us of our dreams, is not important. Jesus Christ is the Restorer of our Dreams

As we enter 2018, God wants us to have our dreams restored and even fulfilled. He wants us to have joy. He wants us to have health in our body. God is a good God! And He's got good things in store for us. Don't let the devil steal anything from us. Today we need to declare restoration over our life! We need to take what belongs to us, in the Name of Jesus Christ, The Restorer of Dreams!