

DAYDREAM (Inspired by The Lovin' Spoonful Song)

Week #2 of a 7-Week "Songs of Life" Series

Rev. Richard Maraj

Sunday, May 4, 2025

LYRICS to "Daydream"

What a day for a daydream

What a day for a daydreamin' boy

And I'm lost in a daydream

Dreamin' 'bout my bundle of joy

And even if time ain't really on my side

It's one of those days for takin' a walk outside

I'm blowin' the day to take a walk in the sun

And fall on my face on somebody's new-mowed lawn

I've been havin' a sweet dream

I been dreamin' since I woke up today

It's starrin' me and my sweet thing

'Cause she's the one makes me feel this way

And even if time is passin' me by a lot

I couldn't care less about the dues you say I got

Tomorrow I'll pay the dues for droppin' my load

A pie in the face for bein' a sleepy bull toad

And you can be sure that if you're feelin' right

A daydream will last long into the night

Tomorrow at breakfast you may prick up your ears

Or you may be daydreamin' for a thousand years

What a day for a daydream

Custom-made for a daydreamin' boy

And I'm lost in a daydream

Dreamin' 'bout my bundle of joy

MESSAGE

So, a college professor tells his students that, if you say a word 10 times, it is yours for life. If you say a word 10 times, it's yours for life.

At the back, a young woman was gazing out the window and just silently whispering to herself, "Tony, Tony, Tony, Tony." [Laughs] They didn't laugh at the first one either. [Congregants laugh] And, uh ...

How many people daydream? Anybody daydream? You know, everybody daydreams. You know what daydreaming is? Daydreaming is when we kind of detach mentally from our physical environment and what's going on, and our mind wanders and kind of transports us to various scenes and possibilities, fantasies, and ideas.

How many people have ever daydreamed negative stuff? Stuff that was frustrating and upsetting, like repeating an argument that you had just over and over again? Or that you ruminate over a mistake you've made or something stupid you said? Or dwelling on some negative scenario you think might happen?

How many people ever daydream about something that makes you feel good? The pleasant ... you know, like winning the lottery and never having to work again? Or meeting the right person and living happily ever after? Or imagining that you could fly; that you could just fly above the sky?

Daydreaming can be positive or negative. It can be helpful or harmful, depending on how we use it. Sometimes when we daydream too much or daydream negative things, it can actually be distracting. And we can lose our focus and not be as productive or effective at work. Daydreaming too much can also impact our relationships -- of not being present, not paying attention, not listening, not being engaged in the conversations.

You know, daydreams really can produce some very, very good things. They can make our mood lighter and brighter; make us more joyful. They can actually help us understand situations better and problem solve better. They can improve our creativity. They can help us have breakthroughs and insights. And they can actually increase our brain plasticity -- with our brain's thinking in various ways and various forms actually helps our brains be more malleable and adapt to certain situations.

Leonardo da Vinci was considered the greatest genius of all time. And he was one of the greatest minds of all time. And he believed that his genius came from the fact that he had a curious mind, a creative mind, and that he was a bigtime daydreamer. You know, he believed that day dreaming is the key to creativity, and creativity is the key to success.

So, he lived in the late 1400s, and everybody knows him as a painter ... like he painted the "Mona Lisa" and "The Last Supper." But he invented countless things, including the prototype for the helicopter; the glider; weapons like a crossbow, a tank, cannons; the parachute, a self-propelled cart that was a precursor to a car. He invented the blender; he invented the submarine; and he also invented a tool that could measure the speed of wind.

He had one of those minds that said, *"How could we do this differently? How could we do it better? What if we did this? Why not try that?"* Daydreaming can actually bring out the best in ourselves and help us create and bring forth more good for our lives and more good in the world.

You know, we are in Week #2 of our seven-week "Songs of Life" series. Because we just love music! How many people have been to the MIM: the Musical Instrument Museum? One of the things I love about the MIM is that it shows that all cultures have music. All cultures love music; all cultures celebrate music. All cultures have stringed instruments. All cultures have percussion instruments and woodwind instruments. It shows that music is universal: that it can touch us; it can calm; it can heal; it can uplift; it can motivate; it can transform us.

We all have favorite songs that take us back to certain times in our lives and maybe have helped us through tough times. I love the "Songs of Life" series because it helps us learn spiritual truths in a fun way while we hear songs we really like.

Last week we started with Jackson Brown's "Doctor My Eyes." Today we're going to look at "Daydream" by Lovin' Spoonful and written by the lead singer John Sebastian.

This song went to number two on the Billboard Top 100 charts in 1966. It was number two. Interestingly, the number one song also had the word "daydream" in it. It was "Daydream Believer" by the Monkees, and number two was "Daydream" by Lovin' Spoonful. John Sebastian wrote a lot of great songs, and this is the best: "Daydreamer" and "Do You Believe in Magic?" But he's also known for a song that was not on the charts, and it was a theme from a TV show. And the show was *Welcome Back, Kotter*. Remember that? That song, "Welcome Back?" That was John Sebastian who wrote it and also who sang it

So, let's go to the context for this particular song. In 1966, Lovin' Spoonful was on tour in South America. And it was a grueling tour and, for some reason, he felt worn down. He felt like he was really struggling. He felt like he was even a bit depressed. He was having a really hard time. He was missing his girlfriend. Usually touring was not that tough on him but, for some reason, he really struggled on this tour. And he wrote this song to cheer himself up. He wrote this song to try and uplift himself.

And so, interestingly, they were on tour with Diana Ross and the Supremes. And he loved their song, "Baby Love." So he thought he'd write himself a song to cheer himself up based on -- or inspired by -- "Baby Love." And he wrote "Daydream" in 20 minutes when he started writing.

Interestingly, the Beatles released a song that year called "Good Day Sunshine." And it was "Daydream" that Paul McCartney said inspired him to do that. And in the same way, he was inspired by "Baby Love" to write "Daydream."

"Daydream," to me, is like a playful, happy, feel-good song. It kind of has this kind of lazy, chill-out, skipping-school kind of feeling beat about it. And it's got some fun, interesting lyrics that I think are kind of cool.

And so here are the three spiritual message or life lessons from John Sebastian's "Daydream."

The first one is **THE IMPORTANCE OF TAKING BREAKS**. So here are some of the lyrics:

What a day for a daydream

What a day for a daydreamin' boy ...

And even if time ain't really on my side

It's one of those days for takin' a walk outside

I'm blowin' the day to take a walk in the sun

And fall on my face on somebody's new-mowed lawn

So how many people here have ever been working so hard, and had so much to do, you couldn't take a break? Anybody?

You know, we are a country where we are driven: driven to succeed, driven to achieve, driven to accomplish. And sometimes we see breaks as a luxury. Sometimes we see breaks as a sign of being lazy or not as committed. When the fact is, breaks aren't a luxury; they are a necessity for staying in balance and for self-care and a happy life ... not to mention keeping us as efficient and productive as possible.

I mean, he's saying in this song that there's some important stuff to do, but there's something even more important -- and that's taking care of myself and making sure I'm happy and making sure of my well-being.

Another line says:

And even if time is passin' me by a lot

I couldn't care less about the dues you say I got

Tomorrow I'll pay the dues for droppin' my load

A pie in the face for bein' a sleepy bull toad

And so what he is saying is, like: I know there's stuff to be done, but I need a mental health day; that I need a break. So, he knows he needs it, and he takes it. I think a lot of us know we need it and *don't* take it. You know, all of the studies that have been done on taking a break, every one of them shows consistently that breaks make a significant difference in our productivity, in our well-being, in our

performance in a variety of ways ... from learning, from memory, in our work and in our personal life. Studies show that you are more likely to solve a problem after you have taken a break.

You know, taking a break helps us clear our mind. It recharges our brain, it renews our thinking, and it gives us a fresh new perspective. Taking a break actually helps prevent mental fatigue. It improves our concentration. And it helps us recall the things that we have learned and gained.

How many people know you could do a better job taking breaks in your life? Anybody? And how many people know you could do probably a better job with self-care?

You know, our minds are the most powerful gift that we have been given, and one of the best ways to get the most out of our minds is to quiet it, is to be still. It's to slow down our thinking; it is to give it a rest.

Listen to some of the ways that the Bible points out the importance of taking a break. Jesus said, *"Come apart awhile and rest."* The 23rd Psalm says, *"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures. He leads me besides the still waters. He restores my soul."*

You can hear how powerful withdrawing -- taking a rest, and a break -- is, and the difference it makes.

Jesus said, *"Come to me all who are weary and heavy burdened, and I will give you rest."*

Each of these scriptures are telling us a break and having a rest is the greatest thing we could do for ourselves in terms of our physical, mental and I would say our spiritual well-being.

How many people are not very "techie," like me? Okay. But I would tell you there's one thing that even the least-techie person knows in our culture what to do under the answer for this question. If your printer, if your computer, if your phone is kind of acting up a little bit, what is the first thing to do to troubleshoot to make it work again? Unplug it. [Congregants laugh] Unplug it for a couple of minutes, plug it back in, and 99 percent of the time what happens? It works better again!

Now, if it works for machines, why would we not think it would work for us? The fact is: if we're struggling, if we're frustrated, if things aren't going the way that we would like, the best thing we can do is unplug. Take a break. It'll recharge us in amazing ways. It'll refresh us in amazing ways and be helpful.

And there's so many things that we could do to take a break. Just breathing. Just some breath exercises: following your breath in and out 10 times, or doing a little more formal guided meditation, even. Maybe it's reading *The Daily Word*. Maybe it's going for a walk. The one I've been trying to do is stretch; take some time to actually just stretch.

It could be go to the gym; play pickleball; take a yoga class; go to a comedy club; work in the garden and get your hands in the dirt. It could be maybe work on some art project. It could be singing karaoke. It could be maybe just jamming on some tunes and singing in your house or dancing by yourself.

I love the line It says:

And fall on my face on someone's new-mowed lawn.

Maybe it's laying on the grass! Maybe it's just experiencing nature.

Jesus worked and rested and meditated. He would give a sermon, rest and meditate. Jesus was never exhausted. He never overdid it, because he was connected to that flow of life. There's a certain flow and pace and rhythm of life, and sometimes we fight against it instead of working with it. And one of the most powerful things we can all learn to do is to be more consistent in our rest. Listen to our body and when it needs to be quiet; when it needs more rest.

Everyone wants to be on the top of their game. We want to succeed. We want to achieve. We want to get everything done. Well, if we do, the best thing to do is take breaks. And that's the first thing we learned from this song: the importance of taking a break -- a lazy day -- and nurture and engage in some self-care.

The second thing is to **USE OUR IMAGINATION**. Here's some more of the lyrics.:

***And I'm lost in a daydream
Dreamin' 'bout my bundle of joy ...
I've been havin' a sweet dream
I been dreamin' since I woke up today
It's starrin' me and my sweet thing
'Cause she's the one makes me feel this way***

So his daydream is about his sweetheart, about his loved one. And he's using his imagination to dream of his "bundle of joy."

So, I ask you: What is your bundle of joy? What is the bundle of joy that you are dreaming of or would like to be dreaming of? Because I truly believe if we want to be happier; if we want to be more joyful; if we want to improve; if we want to change; if we want to become stronger or more successful -- anything we want in life -- it would behoove us to engage the power of our imagination to create and shape what that "good" looks like.

Again, what is your bundle of joy, or your happy life, or your better life look like? And can you imagine it? What does it look like? Can you use your imagination to create and shape what your better life looks like?

Albert Einstein said, *"Imagination is everything. It's the preview of life's coming attractions."* So, what are the coming attractions for your life? What would you like to bring forth in the next six months or year or two years?

I think you know what coming attraction I'm visualizing! And that is our fellowship and welcome space. I can see it! I can feel what it would be like to be in it. You see, our imagination is one of the greatest creative gifts that God has given us. Imagination is creative energy. The question is: How well are you using your imagination to create the things that you want in your life?

In the Book of Proverbs 29 it says, *"Where there is no vision, the people perish."* And what this is saying is that a part of our spiritual work here as creators is to use the creative power of our imagination. And when we don't, you know what perishes? Our joy, our passion, our creativity, our drive, our emotion. It's a part of our job to use our imagination to bring forth the glory of God -- to bring forth more joy, more good into our lives and into our world.

You know, visualization and imagination are daydreaming on purpose. It's daydreaming with intention. Daydreaming towards some positive possibility.

Henry David Thoreau said, *"The world is but a canvas to our imagination."* So, the question is: What are we painting on the canvas of our lives with our imagination?

You know, can you imagine for yourself what would be your highest vision for your relationship? Either the one you've currently got or the one you'd like to attract? What would that look like for you to visualize the highest vision of a relationship or your relationship? What would it look like?

How would you use your imagination to see what your financial life would look like? What would that look like? Can you imagine it?

What about your health? What about your energy and your vitality? What would that look like?

The fact is: if we want a better life – if we want to create anything -- we must engage our imagination and dream of our “bundle of joy.”

So, the final one we learn from this song is to **LIVE WITH JOY**. Another lyric says:

***And you can be sure that if you're feelin' right
A daydream will last long into the night***

You know, every one of us wants to be happy. We want to feel joyful. We want to feel fulfilled. And my question is: What is stopping you from being joyful right now and living joyfully right now? And I would suggest it's nothing except ourselves making the choice and giving ourselves the permission.

So, just for a moment now, can you cultivate yourself feeling joyful and feeling happy right now? Sometimes we think we need something, or conditions to change, some situations to happen, before we can. We can give ourselves the permission to be joyful *right now*; to live with joy right here and now.

Psalm 118, 24 says, *"This is the day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it."* And we get to live this day. That should be a joyful experience! We get another day to live, to love, to laugh, and to learn. To live with joy, to me, is to be present. It is to be positive, and it is to be grateful. And the last one is to choose: to make the choice. To choose to live with joy.

"Today, I choose to live with joy."

Together: [with congregants] *"Today, I choose to live with joy."*

"I am present, positive, and grateful for my life."

Together: [with congregants] *"I am present, positive, and grateful for my life."*

"I choose to live with joy."

[Congregants]: *"I choose to live with joy."*

"I choose to live with joy."

[Congregants]: *"I choose to live with joy."*

And amen to that!

Joy, someone said, is the soul's natural vibration. In Psalm 16:11 it says, *"In Thy presence is the fullness of joy."* So, the fullness of joy is to feel and know the presence of God. See, joy is in us; we just need to connect with it. It is not a matter of outer condition; it's a matter of inner connection.

To me, joy is a deep knowing that we are loved and supported by God. That, no matter what the difficulties or challenges in life, we can still feel a sense of joy, knowing that, if God brought us to it, God will help us through it. And that is a joyful experience we can have. It is a comforting and reassuring feeling within us all.

Thich Nhat Hanh said, *"The present moment is filled with joy. If you are attentive, you will see it."* There is joy in us and all around us if we pay attention and allow ourselves to see it and also to choose it.

This week I did a lot of joyful things. On the top of my list was I had breakfast with an eight-year-old and a nine-year-old -- a friend of mine and her two sons. And one was a “chatty Cathy” and the other one's head was down coloring the whole time. It was such a delight to be in the energy and the presence of kids.

The chatty one was trying to decide what to eat for breakfast. He said, *"Mom! Mom! Could I have some blueberries and bananas and whipped cream on my pancakes and could I have my eggs scrambled and some bacon, too?"* He's eight. The plate was bigger than him, for goodness' sake! [Congregants laugh]

And then the other one said, *"Mom, could I have lunch for breakfast?"* We were at U.S. Egg. And it was just so much fun just watching these kids eat, hearing the things that they talked about. They were hiding under the table ... But there was something so joyful and wonderful about being in the energy and the presence. Because kids are just like ... they're childlike! They're natural joy. We call them bundles of joy. And they absolutely radiate that in the innocence and the purity.

So, we can all choose to be joyful. We can choose to even see and allow outer joy to awaken the joy in us, like those kids awaken the childlike joy in myself.

An elderly man was walking out of a dance club at night with a very beautiful blonde woman on his arm. And his cardiologist sees him and says, *"Mr. Smith, what are you doing -- in your condition -- what are you doing here?"*

He said, *"I'm doing what you told me to do, Doc. You said, 'Get a hot mama and be cheerful.'"*

The doctor said, *"No; no! I said you have a heart murmur, and be careful!"* [Congregants laugh]

Studies have revealed that there are two kinds of daydreaming. A non-productive type where we dream of alternative realities and fantasies, and the productive type where we plan and problem-solve. And they say that doing both is actually helpful, because then we become more whole-brained. Because one type is triggered by one side of the brain and the other by the other, and the more whole-brained we are with our daydreaming, adds to higher levels of creativity and higher levels of success.

So, three things we need to do is: take breaks. Rest your mind; come apart a while in all the different ways. Unplug for a little bit because it will work for us spiritually in the same way and even better than it does for our electronics. The second thing is: use your imagination. See what your bundle of joy is. What are the things you want to create? Use the imaginative power of the mind to see the possibilities for your life -- the better life that you want to have. And, finally, live with joy. Be present, be positive, be grateful, and choose to live with joy.

Taking breaks, using your imagination, living with joy: those are the three lessons and the spiritual message from John Sebastian's "Daydream."

God bless you all!