

Hope for the Future

Dear Facilitator: For several weeks, we have studied what it means to be a family and uncovered strategies leading to healthy behaviors that reflect its values. We started in Genesis to see who we are, and now we are going back to Genesis to see what God’s purpose is for our families and our whole lives.

In each “legacy” lesson, we will look at the “why” first and then the “what” and “how.” The big idea here is that if you know your purpose, or why God has put you here on this earth, then what you do and how you do it will be much easier to determine.

This week we will start by considering our hopes and dreams. As we do this, we must encourage everyone to set aside past experiences and just spend a few moments considering their dreams. Genesis reminds us that God Himself had hopes and dreams for the world and humanity. He created a wonderful world for us to live in, enjoy, and to work in as we are in partnership with Him. God gave humanity the ability to hope and dream, to envision what it would look like to flourish in all aspects of life, and this is one way in which we live out our calling to be the image of God in the world, even to this day.

Some essential questions as we get started:

- Why should we hope and dream?
- What are our hopes and dreams?
- How do we prepare to work toward achieving them?
- How will this impact the legacy we leave for our families, workplaces, neighborhoods, communities, and world?

We will consider these questions before diving into more practical aspects of planning. We will finish with a final focus on your families’ kingdom purpose.

The scripture for the lesson is found in 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17: “May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.”

continued

Notes

God is for us and not against us, and He has given us eternal encouragement and good hope through His Son, Jesus Christ. Therefore, this message should encourage our hearts and strengthen you in what we work to accomplish and share with others. Encourage your group to ask God to show them what His dreams are for them.


Participants will:

1. Explain the source of hopes and dreams.
2. Identify hopes and dreams (tangible and intangible individually and for the family.
3. Be inspired to continue to dream.


We pray that God will give you direction and clarity as you prepare the lesson and activities. We hope that the families in your group will grow together in God's love and become a source of friendship and support for one another and your community.

Blessings


Welcome *5 minutes*

 **Say:** Welcome back! I hope it's been a good week for all of you as you have been working diligently on many things that positively influence and help you lead your family.

Last week we learned about how families are created to be a team.

 **Ask:** Did anyone try something that made a positive difference in your family this past week that you would be willing to share?

Introduction *5 minutes*

 **Say:** Today, we are beginning our sessions on family legacy. We started in Genesis to see who we are, and during this series, we will return to Genesis to see what God's purpose is for our lives and families.


In each legacy lesson, we will look at the “why” first and then the “what” and “how.” If you know your purpose or why God has put you here on this earth, then what you do and how you do it will be much easier to determine.

One of the most amazing things about people is that we each have hopes and dreams about what our lives could look like, the things we’d like to see happen, or the positive change we’d like to see in the world. This session focuses on the importance of hopes and dreams. Why are hopes and dreams so important? We’ll talk about two central answers to this question. First, having hopes and dreams is part of how God has made us reflect His image. God has hopes and dreams for each of us, our families, workplaces, communities, and the whole world, and these are ways He chooses to work in the world, through us! Second, as we understand our hopes and dreams as aligning with God’s hopes and dreams, then we can see how important our work is in all aspects of life: our families, our workplaces, neighborhoods, and communities. Would understanding our hopes and dreams make a difference in our families, neighborhoods, and communities? If God has put hopes and dreams in our hearts, it implies that He has a purpose for each of us, our families, our work, and our communities. We can be confident that He will help us on our journey to discover those dreams.

Today’s teaching objectives are to:

1. Explain the source of hopes and dreams.
2. Identify hopes and dreams (tangible and intangible) individually and for the family.
3. Be inspired to continue to dream.

Family & Table Talk 20 minutes

 **Say:** We’ve written questions on the whiteboard or printed them on cards at your table for you to discuss and enjoy.

1. What is something people dream about or hope for? Think of examples from family life, work, and community.

Notes

2. Share something you dream about doing, being, or having. Also, share something you hope for.
3. Pick a place you know (neighborhood, school, workplace, etc.) and think about what God's hopes and dreams might be for that place. What would the ideal school look like, for example? Would there be homework or math class?

After the meal, children are dismissed to their group.


As you begin this portion of the evening, explain that each time you will start with the overview and then the lesson time.

40 minutes

Parent Training

Legacy

HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

 **Say:** How many of you had plenty to discuss at dinner? Did you learn about any new hopes and dreams from others in your family? Did you see how people have hopes and dreams for their families, workplaces, and communities?

It's exciting to think that God has put these hopes and dreams in our hearts.

It's exciting to think that God has put these hopes and dreams in our hearts.

Tonight, we will begin with understanding “why” we should hope and dream, and then we'll talk more about “what” we are hoping and dreaming for, and finally, “how” we can keep on dreaming and hoping and not give up.

Dr. King gave the “I Have a Dream” speech, not the “I Have a Plan” speech. It's our dreams that change the course of history.

Dreamers are the ones who have the courage and creativity to see beyond “what is” to “what can be” to make a difference in their own lives and the lives of others. We often look to leaders who can envision something new or better and bring others alongside them. Through this type of dreaming, we see

innovation and creativity emerge in working to solve problems. We also need to pause for a moment and recognize that even though God gives us dreams, the reality of achieving those dreams can sometimes be difficult. This is a result of sin in the world and the corruption we find in each part of life. Knowing how to deal with setbacks, disappointments, and hurts is important to seeing dreams fulfilled. Sometimes our dreams are so big that they might be fulfilled after our lifetime. This is where hope comes in.

Our hope as followers of Jesus Christ is found in Him alone, and He gives us the power to live our lives knowing that He is the Hope of this world and is coming back someday to make everything right. Hope sustains us during challenges and trials. As we live our lives, and allow God to work in us, hope shows through our actions as we dream about the future.

As we hope and dream, we do this for ourselves and for others in our families, workplaces, and communities. This is part of our priestly role, where God has called us to see our work with, and on behalf of others, as an act of worship. As we work towards fulfilling our hopes and dreams, we do so with God's strength, in partnership with Him, and as an act of worship. In this way, we don't consider some work to be spiritual and other work to be secular. Instead, we see the work God has called us to do as vital and as an act of worship that honors God.

2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 strengthens us by saying, "May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by His grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word."

God is for us, not against us, and He has given us eternal encouragement and good hope through His Son, Jesus Christ. Therefore, this message should encourage our hearts and strengthen us in what we work to accomplish and in what we share with others.

DISCUSS

Why has God put hopes and dreams in our hearts?

Facilitate a short discussion around this question. If your group needs help, encourage them to think about how God created them. We are created in the image of God with talents, abilities, and passions to do things for God and according to His purpose.

We then can make a difference in our families, workplaces, neighborhoods, communities, and the world. This point is very important to emphasize. (If we know the "why," we will be better prepared to think about "what" we do and "how" we do it.)

What dreams has God put in your heart? (Think of dreams associated with families, workplaces, neighborhoods, and communities). One of the most important things to remember is that God's dreams might sometimes be different from our dreams. There could be times when we begin to see things more

clearly how God sees them as we get to know God more closely and understand His plans. In these times, we need to align our hopes and dreams with God's so we can fully partner with Him in His work.

ACTIVITY

Tangible Versus Intangible

Provide each person with a copy of the worksheet from the end of the lesson.

Explain that tangible things are those we can see or touch, while intangible things describe something we do or how we are.

Ask everyone to write down a few hopes and dreams in each category.

The following questions may be helpful in the areas of family life and work:

1. What do I find myself thinking about or excited about? "I can't wait to..."
2. Are there things you would like to change?
3. What do you wish was different in your life?
4. "Next year, I hope to be..."

Please note that we will be coming back to this next week, so make a copy that you keep or collect their paper at the end of the lesson.

DISCUSS

- What specific actions do you regularly practice that help you to pursue your hopes and dreams?
- How do you invest time and energy into pursuing your hopes and dreams?
- Are there things that keep you from dreaming or that shut down your hopes? What steps do you take to overcome these obstacles?
- What are some things you do that help you to trust in God and be thankful?
- In what ways does realizing God's timing is perfect help your perspective?



Scripture SUPPORT

Romans 15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Psalm 71:5

For you have been my hope, Sovereign Lord, my confidence since my youth.

Proverbs 29:18

Where there is no revelation, people cast off restraint; but blessed is the one who heeds wisdom's instruction.

Psalm 37:4

Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.

Jeremiah 29:11

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Psalm 91:15

He will call on me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him.

Ephesians 3:20

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.

Notes

ACTIVITY

Neighbor Nudge

Each person should ask the other the following questions:

1. What is one of your hopes and dreams?
2. What would encourage you as you pursue your hopes and dreams this week?

After one minute, have the inner circle move to the next person to hear their answers and share their own. End the activity with prayer for the group.

SUMMARY

We covered a lot of material in the lesson.

Our objectives were to:

1. Explain the source of hopes and dreams.
2. Identify hopes and dreams (tangible and intangible) individually and for the family.
3. Be inspired to continue to dream.

As we close, remember that leaving a strong family legacy will change our families, neighborhoods, and communities. It all begins with hopes and dreams. Why should we have hopes and dreams? God has created us in His image and has filled our hearts with hopes and dreams to benefit others and to make a difference in our world.

Ages 4-16

40 minutes

Student Training

Legacy

HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

Objectives

- Help children be aware of the reasons we need hopes and dreams.
- Help children to think about their hopes and dreams.
- Help children be aware of the need for family hopes and dreams.
- Help children think about what motivates them to want to achieve.

This week we will spend time together talking about hopes and dreams!

Did you know that the Bible tells us we need hopes and dreams to live an enjoyable and satisfying life? The Bible says that God gives us hope. As Christians, our hope is to expect God to be with us and do something good for us (Romans 15:13).

Psalm 71:5 says, “For you have been my hope, Sovereign Lord, my confidence since my youth.” When you ask Jesus to be in your life, He gives you hope! God wants us to know that He loves us and He is on our side. He tells us that He will provide us with hope and a good future. (Jeremiah 29:11). He has great plans for our lives!

Life can sometimes be difficult. As individuals and families, we will experience failures and disappointments, but as children of God, we have been promised that God will be with us in times of trouble (Psalm 91:15). And that’s why our dreams are important. Dreams are your goals and desires—the vision you have for your life. Our dreams inspire and motivate us to keep moving forward through life’s challenges. God’s Word tells us that to be successful. We must have a vision for our lives.

Without a vision, a person will have no focus and will be unable to achieve their dreams. Proverbs 29:18 says, “Where there is no revelation [vision], people

cast off restraint; but blessed is the one who heeds wisdom's instruction."

God created each of us with a specific purpose in mind, and He puts the dreams in our hearts that will lead us through the experiences we must go through to achieve these dreams. As years go by and we learn and grow in our homes and schools and through various life lessons and experiences, we begin to discover our areas of gifting. This causes us to start thinking about our lives and what kind of work we may want to do in the future. This might begin as a prayer asking God to show you how you can make a positive change in your family, school, or community. Year by year, we begin to create a vision for our lives and start setting goals to make our dreams become a reality.

Maybe you want to be a doctor, a teacher, a singer, a minister, or an airplane pilot. God placed a gift in each person and He wants you to accomplish the purposes He has for your life. With God's help, when you are focused, you will achieve your dreams.

Just like God has a purpose for each of us, He also has a purpose for each family. For this reason, God puts hopes and dreams in the hearts of parents for their families. Maybe they have a dream for their children to love and serve God or for their children to receive a college education. Maybe they dream of starting a family business or building a new home. Perhaps they feel God is leading their family to serve as missionaries. And just like with individuals, when parents pray together and invite God to be involved in their family, God will be with them and show them His purpose. As God guides them, He will help their dream become a reality.

Although God wants us to have hopes and dreams, He also wants us to be sure that our dreams are a part of His plan for our life. The Bible says, "Take delight in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart" (Psalm 37:4). Our dreams are the desires of our heart. Because God is the one who puts the dreams in your heart, He will help make your dreams come true.

To see our dreams come true, we need to do our very best in everything we do as individuals and as families. By trusting that God will help us, we will achieve our dreams. God also tells us that when we put our trust in Him, we can do far more than we could ever ask or dream (Ephesians 3:20). Hope changes everything!

DISCUSS

- Lead children in a discussion about their hopes and dreams.
- Lead children in discussing why we need to have hopes and dreams.
- Lead children in a discussion about why it's important to have a vision for our lives.
- Lead children in discussing why families need to have hopes and dreams.
- Ask children to discuss some of their unique gifts.
- Ask children to share their hopes and dreams for their future.



Activities

Activities are age appropriate. One is focused on ages 4-11, and the second is for older children ages 12-16.

AGES 4-11

Materials

Cloud handout

Pencils, markers, and crayons

- Have children write some dream words for their family in the center of the cloud to help them think about their parents' vision for their family. Give children a chance to share some of the words they chose and why. (See Cloud Handout.)
- Children that cannot write are encouraged to draw a picture of what they want to be.

Notes

AGES 12-16

Materials

Paper

Pencils, markers, and crayons

Have children view YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/WnYuA8cmtt8>

(If not possible, do activity without video.)

- Have children write down three things they have always wanted to do, but never acted on.
- Now write down three steps they can take to begin to make them happen.



CHALLENGE QUESTION

AM I SPENDING ENOUGH TIME TALKING TO GOD
ABOUT MY HOPES AND DREAMS?

CHALLENGE COMMITMENT

WHAT ARE YOU WILLING TO DO
TO WORK ON THE CHALLENGE
QUESTION THIS WEEK?

	AFFIRMATION <i>Have children repeat:</i>
	<i>God has great plans for my life!</i>

Cloud Handout

