



Date: _____
Series: Advent
Winter Year 2, Lesson 28

Hope

Primary Scripture: Romans 8:24,25

Key Verses: Romans 8:24,25, “We were saved with this hope in mind. If we hope for something we already see, it’s not really hope. Who hopes for what can be seen? But if we hope for what we don’t see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.”

How does this address a need in our kids' lives?

Our kids need hope. Kids often feel uncertain about their future. For some, it seems that the future is scary since there are so many unknowns about how they will grow up or what they will become in the adult world. For others, family instability or even living with abuse can make them feel hopeless. For still others, there is a fear of death or, perhaps, impending tragedy. Hope is that sure confidence that we can have in Jesus Christ. We know that since he holds the future, we have a bright future. Ultimately, that future is our everlasting salvation. Our hope has a positive outcome in our earthly future, as well, since we know Jesus, who asks us to trust him with our futures.

How does Jesus fill this need?

Jesus for us: If Jesus loved us enough to give his life for us on the cross, then he loves us enough to take care of our tomorrows.

Jesus in us: Jesus’ gift of the Holy Spirit is the reason for our continued hope. We experience his presence in our lives now, and we will also in the future.

Jesus through us: Since Jesus calls us to a positive future, we can have confidence that he will use us to bring his presence into our tomorrows.

Stamp of Excellence:

Remind the kids what excellent worship looks like. We are in God's presence to honor him. Put on your best manners. This might include wearing your name tag, participating eagerly at all times, listening when the leader is talking, raising your hand to speak, not distracting others, playing the learning game with cooperation, singing enthusiastically, and praying reverently. Offer rewards or positive reinforcement to those who worship with excellence.



Worship

Invocation:

Let kids bring forward the worship symbols such as the cross, candles, Bible, and offering plate. Invite God's presence and call by name Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Attention Grabber:

Capture the children's attention and help them focus on the worship theme for the day.

Light the Advent candle (the first one this week), explaining each candle's special meaning:

1. Blue – the candle of hope.
2. Blue – the candle of faith.
3. Rose – the candle of joy.
4. Blue – the candle of love.
5. Center candle – white – the candle representing Christmas.

Have the child light only the first candle today. Explain that two candles will be lit next week, three the following, four the Sunday before Christmas, and the fifth after Christmas.

While lighting the candle, read the following responsively (put on PowerPoint or overhead) or have another child read the scripture responses.

Presenter: We worship in the name of the strong and living God – Father , Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen. The living flame that burns on our Advent wreath gives us a picture of Jesus. He is the living light of the world. At one time Jesus said...

Reader: *"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will have a life filled with light and will never live in the dark."* (John 8:12b)

Presenter: The evergreen of the wreath represents the life that is found in Christ. At another time, Jesus said...

Reader: *"But I came so that my sheep will have life and so that they will have everything they need."* (John 10:10b)

Presenter: What is the meaning of lighting the first candle?

Reader: This candle calls us to hope. Since Jesus has come into the world, we have a sure and certain hope of our future.

Presenter: Dear Lord God, thank you for now helping us get ready for Christmas. We want to get ready to receive Jesus into the world and into our lives. We open our hearts to you as we worship you. By the power of your Holy Spirit, let Jesus come into our lives. When he does, fill us with hope. Amen.

Songs of Worship:

Choose two or three songs. Briefly introduce songs so kids can better understand what they are singing and can be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God!

Your choice of music.

The Power of the Cross:

Jesus has given his life for us that we might have forgiveness and power to live for him.

Offer a brief discussion about hope.

To begin, interview a few kids to respond to the following:

- "Next year in third grade, I look forward to or hope to be able to..."
- "When I am twelve years old, I hope my parents let me..."
- "When I grow up and get a job, I hope that..."
- "When Jesus comes back on the last day, I hope that..."

Read this section of Romans 8:24:

"If we hope for something we already see, it's not really hope."

Then continue with:

Hope is looking forward to the future. God wants us to look forward to the future, and trust that he holds the future in his hand. God has our best interests in mind. Even if we cannot see the future, when we

trust him, we have hope that everything will be great because Jesus is with us.

Do we ever worry about the future? Do we ever worry about bad things happening or are we ever scared? Do we ever worry about dying? God says we don't have to worry. Even though we cannot see the future, we can see him. God holds the future in his hand. Let's confess any sin of worry that we might have and hang on tightly to the hope that is ours in Jesus.

Song of Response:

Choose a song to help the children turn to Jesus. Or, you may want to help them celebrate what God has done by singing a song of praise.

Offering:

Teach the importance of giving and talk about the mission activities they are supporting.

Explain the mission destination of the monies that are collected for offering. Give thanks that we can trust God enough to give back what is already his.



The Word

Learning Game:

Some churches dismiss children from the adult service at this time to join Kids Church. The learning game provides a fun kinesthetic activity to help kids connect with each other. The learning point will help reinforce the theme of the day.

“The Great Paper Airplane Contest”

Say:

The United States government has asked the kids of Kids Kount to design a paper airplane that is invisible to radar and can fly across the room and hit a target that is two inches across. The first child to design such an airplane will be given \$1 million dollars and a contract to produce 300 identical airplanes.

Give the kids standard sheets of typing/copy paper and let them work on creating their airplanes. Have older kids help younger ones before they do their own. Then have a “fly-off” to see if any planes can hit the two-inch target(s) on the wall. If any plane actually hits the target, then announce that you forgot to mention that the plane must be able to hit the target every time. Have them try again until they miss the target.

Ask:

Do you have any hope of designing a paper airplane that will hit the target every time? (No.) That’s the way we feel sometimes – like there’s just no hope.

If we pray hard enough, will God help us build an airplane that can hit the target every single time? (No.) *Could* God help us create such an airplane? (Yes.)

What “impossible” things has God done to show us that all things are possible with him?

Let kids recount Biblical miracles they remember. Make sure the cross and the empty tomb are mentioned as the greatest miracles of all – the proof that no matter what happens, we can find our hope in God.

Bible Reading:

Help children pay attention by giving them a word or concept to listen for as you read. Consider letting a child read who could do so with excellence.

The following verses give a description of spiritual hope.

Spiritual hope is confidence that Jesus holds the future. We can have confidence that we will not only live in heaven forever, but that Jesus will help us become free from habits of destructive sin. The Bible verse for this is Romans 8:23b- 25, 28.

“... We groan as we eagerly wait for our adoption, the freeing of our bodies from sin. We were saved with this hope in mind. If we hope for something we already see, it’s not really hope. Who hopes for what can be seen? But if we hope for what we don’t see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance... We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God—those whom he has called according to his plan.”

Application:

Option One:

Read the story, "I Promise I Will Always Tell You the Truth," from *Tell Me the Promises* by Joni Eareckson Tada and Ron DiCianni.

This story fits the lesson in that it gives a picture of what it would be like to live, literally, in a dark world. God's truth is light in such a world, and in it is hope for a bright future. With an appropriate introduction and conclusion about hope, this story easily fits the theme of the day.

A verse that aptly fits this is John 1:4,5,9.

"He was the source of life, and that life was the light for humanity. The light shines in the dark, and the dark has never extinguished it... The real light, which shines on everyone, was coming into the world."

This story is a rather long story and it will be challenging to hold the kids' attention by reading with no visual illustrations. It is suggested that the reader practice the story so that it can be read in effective storytelling fashion. Also, brief questions along the way would help kids stay engaged. The storyteller might also ask the kids to listen for every time they hear the word "light" or "lit." When they hear one of those words have them hold up an imaginary lighter and turn it on. See which kids can pay attention enough to hear the word "light" or "lit" every time.

Another technique to see who is paying attention is to have someone secretly "spy" on the kids and watch for those who do an exceptional job of paying attention. The spy could have some penny candy that he or she might give a child who completely ignores the spy and continues to keep eyes and ears on the storyteller.

Yet another technique might be to have kids lie down, close their eyes, and imagine the story as it is read. The story could even be read with the room darkened using only candlelight. The lights would not be turned on until the very end of the story.

Option Two:

Each of the next four weeks, watch one section of the video "Dangerous Journey" based on John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, ©1985 by Yorkshire Television Enterprises Ltd. (Order from: http://www.visionvideo.com/111-1111111-1111111_389.vhtml or from: <http://www.musicchristian.com/sys/product.php?PRODUCT=22234>.)

Each of the nine sections lasts about 15 minutes.

Say: Over 300 years ago, a man named John Bunyan preached the message of the Bible in England. But that was against the law if you were not given permission to do so from the government, so, he was thrown in prison and stayed there for many years. In 1676 he wrote a story called “The Pilgrim’s Progress.” It is history’s all-time best selling book next to the Bible.

This is what happens in the story. There is a man named Christian who is on a sacred journey. That is why he is called a pilgrim. A pilgrim is someone who is taking a journey for an important religious purpose. He leaves his hometown, called City of Destruction, and travels to a place called The Celestial City. The Celestial City reminds us of heaven. His journey is like our lives as Christians, as we, too, have the final destination of heaven. Along his way, he faces many dangers and obstacles, just like we face challenges in our Christian life.

Today, we will watch a 15-minute section from the movie “Dangerous Journey” which is based on the book “*The Pilgrim’s Progress*.” We will see how hope is needed to continue the journey to the Celestial City.

When you listen to this chapter of his story, I want to see who can really listen and remember these questions. I will ask them after the story, and if I call on you and you have the right answer, you will receive a prize!

- What is the name of the Giant?
- What is the name of the Giant’s castle?
- What is the name of Christian’s traveling companion?
- What does Christian use to get free from the dungeon?

Show Part 7 of “Dangerous Journey” which is titled “Giant Despair.” (This episode begins at about one hour and 25 minutes into the video.) After viewing the video, ask the Discussion Questions below.

What was the name of the Giant? (*Giant Despair*)

What was the name of the Giant’s castle? (*Doubting Castle*)

What was the name of Christian’s traveling companion? (*Hopeful*)

What did Christian use to get free from the dungeon? (*A key -- in his pocket all along! – called “Promise”*)



Witness and Tell:

Give children opportunities to share how God is working in their lives. It is best to use a microphone to ask children interview questions around the theme for the day.

Who can tell us an example of something that happened to you and you felt despair? That means you felt like giving up. (Let a few students tell a story from their own experience.)

What advice would you give to someone in situations like these so that they would have hope? Remember what key Christian used.

Prayer:

Let the kids pray out loud. If you are using a microphone, invite children to form a prayer line and speak their thanksgivings or requests. If you have portable microphones, you can roam the audience. Kids can also go to prayer stations set up for specific types of prayer.

Options: (select one from the options below)

_____ **Prayer Line Option:** Kids line up and take turns stepping in front of the microphone to speak their prayers briefly.

_____ **Prayer Chair:** Adults or children with special prayer needs are invited to sit in the chairs. Kids gather around them, lay hands on their shoulders or knees and take turns praying.

_____ **Popcorn Prayer:** The leader moves through the crowd with a microphone and turns it toward kids who are raising their hands to pray. The kids speak their prayers into the microphone.

Lord's Prayer: Lead the children through the Lord's Prayer, phrase by phrase, or let them pray the entire prayer along with you.

Blessing:

Speak a blessing prayer over the children. Personalize this to your setting. Use a special scripture verse or blessing around the theme of the day.

Song of Sending:

Choose one song. Briefly introduce song so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God.

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Supplies:

Attention Grabber:

- Advent wreath with three blue candles, one rose candle, and greenery

Learning Game:

- 100 sheets of typing/copy paper
- 100 paper clips
- two-inch target(s) taped to wall

Bible Reading:

- Option 1: “I Promise I Will Always Tell You the Truth,” is cited from *Tell Me the Promises* by Joni Eareckson Tada and Ron DiCianni—order from: <http://www.campusi.com/bookFind/asp/bookFindPriceLst.asp?prodId=0891079041>
- Option 2: the video “Dangerous Journey” based on John Bunyan’s *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, ©1985 by Yorkshire Television Enterprises Ltd—order from: http://www.visionvideo.com/111-1111111-1111111_389.vhtml or from: <http://www.musicchristian.com/sys/product.php?PRODUCT=22234>
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