

September 2017
Theme: When Plans Change Because of His Will

“I Don’t Like Change”

Summary: We’ve all been there, struggling to deal with disappointment and frustration because things didn’t work out as planned. God had plans that didn’t turn out exactly as He wanted. How did He respond?

Scripture: Genesis 3

Songs: “I Know Who Holds Tomorrow” REJOICE p. 434; “Where He Leads, I’ll Follow” REJOICE p. 496; “Ancient Words” by Lynn Deshazo; “How Firm a Foundation” REJOICE p. 221; “Thy Word” by Amy Grant; “Standing on the Promises” REJOICE p. 223; “Trust In You” by Lauren Daigle.

Suggestions and Helps

Promotional Helps

Invitation: Since this is “Back to School Month,” make your announcement on flyers with back-to-school stickers or clip art. If you have access to the church bulletin board, decorate it with school supplies.

Presentation Ideas

Presentation: Ask some women from your church to share about a time when their plans were changed and how they made it through, with God’s help.

Game: Introduce the game by stating that everyone sees things differently. Our perceptions are not always reality. Sometimes, we have to change our perception or admit we were wrong, even when we face changes in our lives.

Have the women divide into groups of four. Give each woman a piece of paper (see below for template) and pencil along with a slip of paper with a familiar phrase or Bible story (or any other category you want to choose) written on it. Each person will have one or two minutes to draw the scene (be sure her name is on the paper). At the end of time allotted, have each one pass their paper to the right. Allow thirty seconds to write down a guess of the drawing. After thirty seconds, pass papers to the right again and follow the same procedure. Keep passing the papers to the right until the drawing is back to the original artist, who then reveals the right answer. See who comes the closest to the artist’s right answer. See examples and suggestions below. It can be just for fun, or you can have a prize for the artist who gets the most correct answers.

Suggestions of familiar phrases:

A stitch in time saves nine.
Let sleeping dogs lie.

The early bird gets the worm.
Don’t throw the baby out with the bath water.

Bite the bullet.
Saved by the bell.

Cat got your tongue?
Don't spill the beans!

Suggestions of Bible stories:

Ruth gleanes the fields while Boaz looks on. Jesus turns water to wine at the wedding.
Israelites gather the manna to eat. The blind man washes his blind eyes in the water.
Jesus turns water to wine at the wedding. Jesus feeds over 5,000 with little boy's lunch.
The Hebrew Children refuse to bow down to the idol.
Ahab pouts when he doesn't get Naboth's vineyard.
David sneaks in Saul's camp and cuts part of Saul's robe off.

Missions: Choose several missionary kids. Provide note cards or paper and ask each attendee to choose one missionary's child and send them a note of encouragement as they start school this month. Remind them to trust Jesus to help them with their school experience.

Service: Make school "care packages" for the children in your Sunday school classes or Children's Church. Send notes to your attendees asking them to bring the supplies to stock each package. Provide colorful small bags and decorate the outside of the bags. Suggestion of things children could use when they go back to school: Kleenex packets, gum, mints, pencils, stickers, hand sanitizer, etc.

Service Project: If you are interested in doing a community project, check with the Children's Services Division in your county and arrange to provide backpacks filled with school supplies for needy children.

Study: Encourage your women to find Bible passages about people in the Bible who had their plans changed. For example, Mary, the young virgin girl, who was chosen to be the mother of Jesus; David, who was a shepherd boy and anointed King of Israel; Job who was prosperous and blessed with good things and family and then had nothing left; Saul who was terrorizing Christians, lost his sight and hatred, and began spreading the Gospel of love.

Prayer: Choose families in your church who are struggling with "changed plans" perhaps because of illness, death, job loss, or family problems. Have a time of prayer especially for that family or families.

Refreshments: Since August is the beginning of school, serve refreshments either on trays like the cafeteria or make sack lunches. The contents could either be popular items served on lunch trays (celery sticks, carrot sticks, pudding, brownies, etc.); or for sack lunches, peanut butter/jelly sandwiches, chips, apple or other fruit, juice box, or a Lunchable®).

PRINT THIS PAGE TO PASS OUT FOR THE GAME:

"Artist's" Name: _____

Draw your picture in this box:



Guesser #1 Name: _____ Guess: _____

Guesser #2 Name: _____ Guess: _____

Guesser #3 Name: _____ Guess: _____

Guesser #4 Name: _____ Guess: _____

Guesser #5 Name: _____ Guess: _____

Guesser #6 Name: _____ Guess: _____

October 2017
Theme: When Plans Change Because of Sin

“Mary or Eve...”

Summary: Sometimes plans change because of sin, but God still works in miraculous ways. We must have faith to believe & follow what God directs us to do.

Scripture: Genesis 1-3 and Luke 1-2

Songs: “Living by Faith” (REJOICE, p. 416); “Come Thou Long Expectant Jesus” (REJOICE p. 115); “Trust and Obey” (REJOICE p. 451)

SUGGESTIONS AND HELPS

Promotional Helps

Bulletin Board: For pictures, use an apple tree with a snake in it and a picture of the nativity. Put the announcement for your meeting in the center. This lesson is also dealing with “cause & effect” you can find many ideas and go with that theme, “because of _____ we have _____” “because of _____ then _____ happens.”

Meeting Reminder: Pass out paper cutouts of an apple or a manger with the date & time of the meeting.

Presentation Ideas

Presentation: Begin the meeting with everyone sharing a cause & effect that has happened in their life. Invite someone with a testimony who made a bad choice due to sin, but has since been redeemed.

Icebreaker game: Have everyone come up with a fruit or veggie that starts with the first letter in their name. Example: My name is Kelly and I like Kiwi. My name is Amy and I like artichokes.

Missions: Supporting missions have a positive effect around the world. Have the missions’ coordinator talk about the cause & effect (both good & bad) of supporting (and not supporting) missions, both financially & through prayer support. Have a missionary come (or video conference in) and share about “effects” they have seen “because” of something someone did for their ministry.

Begin preparing your group to participate in the Pre-Thanksgiving week of prayer for North American Ministries.

Service: Both Mary & Eve were mothers. Reach out to a new mom in your congregation with a surprise mini-shower at your meeting. Plan a trip to a local pregnancy care center and see how

your group could minister—through prayer, collection of items, volunteer work. Make freezer meals and give to all the moms in your congregation with school-aged children.

Prayer: Have a special time of prayer for requests near and dear to the moms/grandmothers in your group.

Refreshments: Poppy Seed Fruit Salad

¼ cup honey 4T lime juice
(Blend first two ingredients well)

2 tsp poppy seeds - add to first two ingredients
4 cups fruit - Chop fruit & toss with first three ingredients
Apple Banana
Strawberries Blueberries
Watermelon Mango
Pineapple

Top with ¼ cup slivered almonds toasted

Extras:

Door prize: It's the fall season, find a little trinket with apples on it. One suggestion might be an apple-scented candle. Apple coordinates with the story of Eve, the candle coordinates with Mary birthing Jesus, the light of the world.

Craft: Keeping with easy symbols that equate with Mary & Eve, your group could do a number of apple crafts or nativity crafts.

Group Challenge: Encourage women to obey God even if, like Mary, they don't fully understand how He is working. Have different challenges written on pieces of paper for the women to draw out of a box. They would be challenged to obey. Examples might be visit a local nursing home to volunteer, take essential items to a homeless shelter and help pass them out, take lunch to a stranger, pay for someone's groceries in line at the store, pay for someone's dinner at a restaurant, make treats for a neighbor and deliver them, etc.

October is typically known as Pastor Appreciation Month. Do something special for your Pastor's wife and kids still in the home.

November 2017

Theme: When Plans Change Because of Family

The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly

Summary: We all have dreams and goals for our life and the lives of our family. However, changes in family dynamics, changes resulting from sin, changes beyond our control, changes necessitated by life seasons, or changes God desires may require our personal plans or the plans for our family to change. Regardless of the difficulty, God desires our worship, surrender, and trust concerning the family He has given us.

Scriptures: I Samuel 17:12-30; II Samuel 12:7-12; I Samuel 21:1-9, 22:22; II Samuel 6:16-23; I Samuel 25; II Samuel 7:18-29

Songs: "Amazing Grace" (REJOICE p. 230); "Through it All" (REJOICE p.452); "The Family of God" (REJOICE p. 344).

SUGGESTIONS AND HELPS

Promotional Helps

Invitation: Ask a member of your group to create an eye-catching invitation to your meeting that includes a picture of your pastor and his family. Hang them in strategic locations throughout your church two weeks prior to the meeting.

Monologue: Bathsheba by Tracy Sybesma

<http://www.reformedworship.org/article/september-2007/mothers-messiah>

My story precedes me in hushed whispers when I walk into a room. I've heard the whispers, the harsh judgments. My one secret act of indiscretion made me a public spectacle.

One wrong choice set loose an avalanche of offenses seemingly too powerful to stop. The weight of it was crushing. Not only did I endure public shame when my adultery was exposed but I had to live with the scorn of family and friends. There was no consideration for my remorse over my sin and my despair over my murdered husband. I loved Uriah, I really did. Add to that the horrifying confrontation between David and the prophet Nathan. God spared our lives, but he would not withhold the consequences of our actions. While David fasted and pleaded for our child, I watched my son struggle to take his final breath. How could I endure the death of my child because of my terrible sin? Ongoing discord in David's family plagued us even after David's death. What we did was wrong. What we thought was a private sin affected an entire kingdom.

But today if you remember me at all, I implore you to remember not my sin but God's grace.

While God allowed us to suffer the grave results of our deeds, he also provided us with the grace to survive. Utterly humbled, we had the perfect vantage point to recognize God's remarkable grace. We named our second son "peace"—it's all we wanted. God named Solomon "loved"—for God loved him and offered us a second chance.

Despite our sin and the darkness in our hearts, God's grace is sufficient to restore our brokenness. That grace is offered to you today as a gift in the form of Jesus, God's only Son. Won't you accept it?

Decorate: Prior to the meeting, contact enough ladies to match the number of tables that will be used in the meeting and ask them to bring a framed 5 x 7 photo of their family to use for table centerpieces. Inexpensive clear frames may be purchased at a discount store so that the decorations will match. Accentuate the picture, by using matching greenery or flowers.

Presentation Ideas

Prayer Request Exchange: Give each woman an index card and ask her to write one special prayer request she has for a member of her family. Ask someone to gather all of the cards in a basket. Pass the basket around the group and ask each lady to take a card and commit to pray for the request on the card at least until the next meeting.

Ice Breakers

- Ask each woman to share the most memorable childhood activity she did with her family.
- Ask each woman to share one characteristic she received from her parents that she wants to keep, and one she wishes she could change.

Game

Prior to the meeting, contact at least six women in your group and ask them to bring a picture of their parents that is at least 30 years old. Tape those to a piece of foam board and place a number from 1 to 6 below each picture. Distribute paper and pencil to each woman and ask them to guess whose parents each one is. Award a small prize for the woman who has the most correct answers. Be prepared for a possible tie.

Missions: If there is a missionary available to attend your meeting, ask her/him to share a testimony about a time when the plans for their life changed because of a family circumstance. If there is not a missionary available, ask a woman from your church to share her circumstance of life changing testimony. You may be able to FaceTime with a missionary.

Service: Contact a local social service agency or family resource center at a local school and ask if there is a family in need that your group can help. Ask your group members to provide for the needs as much as possible, whether the need is food, clothing, or assistance with the payment of a utility bill. It may be necessary for the family name to remain anonymous. If not, please be sensitive to the identity of this family.

Study: The life of David

Prayer: Use this time to pray for families and any urgent needs that are known.

Refreshments: Serve light refreshments that may bring back happy childhood memories. Suggestions include cookies and Kool-Aid or peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.