

A Not-So-Hopeless Situation

SCRIPTURE

"For I know the plans I have for you, . . . plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11

Focus

God can give us hope no matter how many tough situations we may face.

Object Talk

Ask all students to stand. **If you like to play basketball, pretend to dribble and shoot a basketball. If you like to play football, pretend to catch a football and do a touchdown dance.** As time permits, repeat action for other sports (soccer, baseball, swimming, etc.).

- **If a group of professional athletes in any of these sports came into the room, do you think you would have any hope of beating them? Why or why not?**

You might feel hopeless if you had to play against a professional athlete.

- **What does it mean to feel hopeless?**

Feeling hopeless is awful! It can make us feel like giving up. The good news is that with Jesus we can always have hope. Think of some sad or angry times when you have felt like giving up. No matter what tough situations we're in, God promises to give us hope. Jeremiah 29:11 tells us God's promise to give us hope. Read Jeremiah 29:11 aloud. We all go through tough times when we're sad, angry or confused. Sometimes we feel like giving up, but God promises us that there is hope in our future.



CONCLUSION

God always keeps His promises, and He will always help us. With God we can always have hope!

Close in prayer.

Going the Extra Mile

BIBLE DISCUSSION

Even in the worst situations, God gives us hope. Let's look at a sad story in the Bible where hope was found even in the worst of situations. Have a student read Acts 7:54-60 aloud. Stephen knew he was about to be killed. Yet, as he was being killed, he had hope! He prayed for Jesus to receive his spirit, and even found it possible to forgive those who murdered him. Stephen had hope, because he knew that he was going to be with Jesus in heaven.

ACTIVITY

Help students form groups of three to six. **In your groups, try to give me three answers to the question, When might a child your age feel hopeless? Then decide what you would say to a child so that he or she might have hope in the situation.** Give groups several minutes to list answers. Then ask groups to share their lists. Discuss lists by asking the following questions:

- How might God help a child in one of these situations?
- If you have a friend who is having a tough time and feeling hopeless, what might you say or do?

LIFE CHALLENGE

If Stephen can find hope as he faced death, surely we can find hope in whatever we might be facing. Think of a problem you're dealing with right now. Maybe it's a kid at school that you just can't get along with. Maybe your schoolwork just seems too hard. Maybe something difficult is happening in your family. As we get ready to pray, think about something that you need God's help with right now. I'll give you a few moments to say a silent prayer for the situation you're in. Ask God to help you find hope as you face that challenge.

PRAYER

Allow a few moments of silence for students to pray silently. **Lord, You are the giver of hope. Thank You for giving us hope in difficult times. We know that as long as You are with us, we will always have hope. In Jesus' name, amen.**