

Happy New Year!

PRESCHOOL LESSON PLAN

Theme: We don't know what the future holds, but we know who holds the future.

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 8:7

Memory Verse: Since no one knows the future, who can tell someone else what is to come? - Ecclesiastes 8:7

The Children's Sermon

This morning I have two calendars with me. This calendar is for the year 2xxx. As you know, we have finished up the year 2xxx. You can see that my calendar is all marked up with the things I did over the past year. This calendar is of no use to me now except to help me to remember what I did last year.

This is my new calendar for the year 2xxx. You can see how nice and clean all of the pages are. This calendar is all ready for me to start planning for next year. Whenever I make an appointment or have something important to remember, I will mark it on this calendar. Pretty soon, my new calendar will start to look a lot like the old calendar as I make plans for the future.

There is nothing wrong in planning for the future, but we need to remember that no matter what our plans may be, we can't know for sure what is in the future. The Bible says, "Since no man knows the future, who can tell him what is to come?" We can put appointments on this calendar from now to next December, but the only day that we can be sure of is today!

Some people become worried and frightened because they can't be sure of the future, but we don't need to worry, because even though we don't know what the future holds, we know who holds the future. The future is in God's hands, so we can rest easy in the plans that He has made for us. We can't be sure of tomorrow, but we have today, so we need to try to live it the way God planned it!

Dear Lord, thank you for giving us today. Help us to live it the way you have planned it. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Now, let's talk a bit more about this idea of future uncertainty. It's like when you're planning to go to the park tomorrow, but then it rains. You didn't know it was going to rain, right? That's a little bit like how the future works. We can make plans, but sometimes things change, and that's okay.

God knows all about future uncertainty, and He tells us not to worry about tomorrow because He's already there. He's like a friend who walks into a dark room first and turns on the light for us. With God, we don't have to be scared of what's coming because He promises to be with us every step of the way.

Imagine you're on a big, exciting adventure, but you're walking through a thick fog. You can't see very far ahead, and that might make you a bit nervous. But what if I told you that you have the best guide in the universe with you? God is that guide. He knows the path perfectly, even when we can't see it because of the fog of future uncertainty.

Sometimes, we might wish we had a special machine that could tell us everything about the future. But think about this: if we knew everything that was going to happen,

we might miss out on the fun of surprises and the lessons we learn from challenges. God gives us just enough light for the step we're on, teaching us to trust Him more.

Let's also remember that God wants us to talk to Him about our worries. Just like you would tell a friend if something is bothering you, God wants you to tell Him. When we pray and tell God about our feelings, He listens. And even though the future uncertainty might not go away, we can feel peace in our hearts knowing that God is in control.

God also gives us stories in the Bible of people who trusted Him during times of future uncertainty. Think of Noah, who built an ark even though he didn't understand why at first. Or Abraham, who went on a long journey not knowing where he was going. They didn't have all the answers, but they knew God was with them, and that was enough.

So, what can we do when we feel worried about the future? First, we can pray and talk to God about our feelings. Second, we can remember the stories from the Bible and how God helped those people. And third, we can try to live each day the best we can, doing kind things for others and following what God teaches us.

In the end, future uncertainty is a part of life, but it doesn't have to be scary. It can be an adventure where we learn to trust God more and more. And remember, no matter what happens tomorrow, next week, or next year, God's love for us is certain. That's something we can always be sure of.

Dear Lord, even when we're not sure about what's coming, help us to trust You. Thank you for being with us always, even in times of future uncertainty. Help us to remember that Your love is something we can always be sure of. Amen.

Bible Memory Verse

Since no one knows the future, who can tell someone else what is to come? - Ecclesiastes 8:7

You Will Need:

- Construction paper
- Markers or crayons
- Stickers of stars and moons

Get Ready:

- Cut the construction paper into large star shapes, one for each child.
- Write the memory verse on each star with a marker.

Do This:

1. Give each child a star-shaped piece of construction paper with the memory verse written on it.
2. Encourage the children to decorate their stars with markers, crayons, and stickers of stars and moons.
3. As they decorate, talk to them about how we may not know what the future holds, but we can trust that God does and He is taking care of us. Finish by having them recite the memory verse together.

Bible Interactive Experience

You'll Need:

- A large box (to represent the unknown future)
- Several small toys or objects (to represent different future events)

- A picture of Jesus or a cross (to represent who holds the future)

Get Ready:

- Decorate the large box with question marks and label it "The Future."
- Hide the small toys or objects inside the box.
- Place the picture of Jesus or the cross next to the box.

Do this:

1. Gather the children around the box and explain that the box represents the future, which is full of surprises and things we don't know yet.
2. Invite each child to reach into the box and pick one object without looking. Once they have their object, help them talk about how it might represent something that could happen in the future (e.g., a toy car could mean traveling to new places, a ball could mean playing new games).
3. Show them the picture of Jesus or the cross and explain that even though we don't know what will happen in the future, Jesus does, and He is always with us, taking care of us. Encourage the children to place their object near the picture of Jesus or the cross as a way of trusting Him with their future.

Snack Activity: Future in His Hands Cookies

You'll Need:

- Pre-made sugar cookie dough
- Star and heart cookie cutters
- Edible markers or small tubes of icing

Get Ready: Preheat your oven according to the cookie dough package instructions. Roll out the cookie dough on a flat, floured surface to about 1/4 inch thickness.

Do this:

1. Help the children use the star and heart cookie cutters to cut out shapes from the dough. Explain that the stars represent our dreams for the future, and the hearts remind us that God loves us and holds our future.
2. Place the cookies on a baking sheet and bake according to the package instructions. Allow them to cool after baking.
3. Once the cookies are cool, let the children decorate the cookies with edible markers or icing. Encourage them to draw or write simple symbols or words of hope and trust in God. Share Ecclesiastes 8:7, explaining that even though we don't know what the future holds, we can trust that God is in control and He loves us.

Game Activity: Future Steps

You'll Need:

- A large roll of paper
- Markers or crayons
- Tape

Get Ready: Use the markers or crayons to draw a path on the large roll of paper. Along the path, draw several large footprints as stepping stones. Each footprint represents a step into the future. Tape the paper to the floor to prevent it from moving.

Do this:

1. Have the children stand at the beginning of the path. Explain that the path represents our journey through life, and we don't know what the future holds, but God knows and He is with us every step of the way.

2. Encourage the children to hop from one footprint to the next, imagining the good things God has in store for their future.
3. At the end of the path, celebrate with the children and remind them that even though we don't know all the details of our future, we can trust God to be with us.

Craft Activity: God Holds Our Future

You'll Need:

- Construction paper (various colors)
- Safety scissors
- Glue sticks
- Markers or crayons
- String or yarn

Get Ready: Cut out several large hand shapes from the construction paper ahead of time. These will represent God's hands holding the future.

Do this:

1. Let each child pick a hand shape and a few other colors of construction paper to create their own decorations or symbols of things they hope for in the future (e.g., a sun for happy days, hearts for love, etc.).
2. Encourage them to use the markers or crayons to draw on the hand or on their cut-out shapes before gluing them onto the large hand shape.
3. Once their craft is complete, help them attach a piece of string or yarn to the top of the hand. Explain that just like the string holds up the hand, God holds our future. They can hang their craft at home as a reminder that we don't know what the future holds, but we know who holds the future.

Prayer Activity: God Holds Tomorrow

You'll Need:

- A large piece of paper or poster board
- Markers or crayons
- Stickers with stars or hearts

Get Ready: Before the class, write 'God Holds Tomorrow' at the top of the poster board. Draw a simple path or road winding from the bottom to the top, leaving plenty of space around it for children to draw or place stickers.

Do this:

1. Sit with the children in a circle and explain that even though we don't know what will happen tomorrow, God does and He takes care of us. Use simple words like 'God knows everything, even our tomorrow. And He is always with us.'
2. Give each child a marker or crayon and a few stickers. Invite them to draw themselves along the path on the poster board or decorate it with stickers. As they do, encourage them to talk about things they hope for tomorrow or in the future.
3. Lead the children in a short prayer, holding hands in the circle if possible. You can say, 'Dear God, thank you for holding our tomorrows. Help us to trust You every day. Amen.' Encourage the children to say 'Amen' at the end and express their trust in God.