



Family Matters



A CHRIST-CENTERED RESOURCE FOR FAMILIES AND TEACHERS

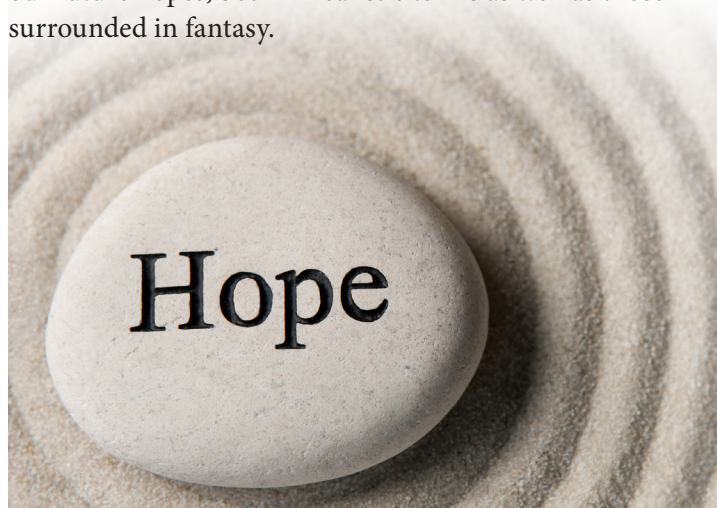
Upon This Rock: The Rock of Hope

What do you hope for?

- To travel?
- To own a home?
- To climb the corporate ladder?
- To have high-achieving children?
- To run your own business?
- To live to a ripe old age?

Most rational people have dreams. We often dream that the future will bring improvements for ourselves, our family, our community or our country.

Our dreams start when we are young, and children often express them by saying, “I want to be a _____ when I grow up!” We often ask children, youth and even those approaching mid-life about their dreams — both in fun-loving ways and also with serious intent. It seems to be a natural human condition to want to describe our future hopes, both in realistic terms as well as those surrounded in fantasy.



“As Christian parents, our hope is built on the righteousness of Christ.”

As parents, we are quick to set aside our dreams for the hopes we have for our children. We often place a lot of pressure on ourselves to help our children achieve what we dream for them — even if it’s not what they might want for themselves. How many parents have hopes that their child will become a doctor, a professional athlete or a performer? Setting the bar high raises expectations and can often create pressure.

As much as we have wonderful hopes and dreams for our children — even those that are realistic and achievable — they are misplaced. As Christian parents, our hope is built on the righteousness of Christ. As much as we want to “get things right” for our kids, the only thing that truly ended up right in this world was Christ’s perfect life, death and resurrection from the dead.

When the women came to Jesus’ tomb on the first day of the week following His crucifixion, they were hoping that they could enter the tomb. They were hoping that someone could roll the big stone away so that they could attend to the body of Jesus. When they arrived, they noticed that the stone had been rolled away and that Jesus was not there — He had risen from the dead! These women were presented with a reality that went far beyond their hopes. Their friend, their Lord, their Savior was alive! This was a hope beyond any hope they had to be imagining that morning as they walked to the tomb.

We, too, are given the reality of this hope of new life, a life with Christ forever! This message of hope in the resurrected Lord goes far beyond the dreams we would achieve in this world; this is an eternal message that we can share and teach to our children every day in our homes.

As parents, we can fill our homes not just with earthly dreams, but also with the sure and constant hope of the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.

FAMILY LINKS: Activities for families to reinforce Bible story truths in the home.

Gather the family together in a comfortable place in the home for a time of family interaction and Bible study using the outline below.

OPENING PRAYER: Have the person in the family who is the tallest offer an opening prayer.

FAMILY SHARING TIME:

Use the questions below to have a family discussion on the various hopes and dreams you have.

What do you hope will be happening in your life ...

- One year from now?
- Five years from now?
- 20 years from now?
- When you are 50 years old?
- When you are 75 years old?



FAMILY BIBLE TIME:

Open up a Bible to **MATT. 28:1-10** and read these verses aloud in your family setting.

After reading, ask these follow-up questions:

- What were the women who went to the tomb hoping to do?
(*Enter the tomb of Jesus.*)
- What did they actually find?
(*That Jesus wasn't there, that He had risen from the dead!*)
- What did these women do?
(*They ran back to tell others of this great news!*)
- Who did they meet along the way?
(*They met Jesus, which gave them the assurance that He had indeed risen from the dead.*)
- How did this news eventually change the world?
(*Believers have the hope of eternal life through the death and resurrection of Jesus.*)

FAMILY ACTIVITY TIME:

- 1) Locate 8–10 lighter colored (yellow, pink, white, light green, etc.), small balloons of 5–6 inches. Also get some permanent markers and a vase with an opening of at least 3–4 inches.
- 2) Find some wooden kabob skewers and a roll of masking tape.
- 3) Blow up the balloons.
- 4) Hand a balloon and marker to each person in the family. Have them either write a word or draw a symbol on their balloon of the hope we have in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead!
- 5) Tape each completed balloons to the end of a wooden kabob skewer.
- 6) Now, place each of the “balloons on a stick” in the vase, so that the words and symbols of the resurrection are easily seen. Adjust the length of the skewers as needed to make a nice, balanced arrangement.
- 7) Put the resurrection balloon bouquet on the kitchen table or in another prominent place in the home where it will be seen over the next several weeks to remind all members of the family of the hope we share in the resurrection of Jesus!



CLOSING ECHO PRAYER: Have an adult or older sibling read the prayer below, section by section, with the rest of the family echoing each phrase.

Dear heavenly Father, thank You for giving us Jesus as our Savior from sin. We give thanks that He gave His life on the cross for us and that we can have eternal life. Help us to live every day with hope in this good news and to share it with others. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

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