



# WEEK 3

## TEACHING GUIDE

modernfamilies

### THE BIG IDEA

When your family changes,  
God remains your center.

### THE BIBLE

Psalms 23:1-6

## WHAT?

### ACTIVITY: Family Charades

- Welcome back to Week 3 of our series called *Modern Families*, where we're talking about our not-so-perfect families.
- This week, I thought we'd get started with a little game as we talk about the difficulties we sometimes face with our families.
- *Split your students into groups, maybe by grade or gender, and select a few students from each group to be your actors. Give each group one or two scenarios to act out while the rest of the students guess what they're doing. Each scenario should be a significant transition that a family might experience, like a new baby, a graduating student moving away from home for the first time, a divorce, or a move to a new city.*

### DISCUSSION: Reflecting on the Activity

- Actors, have you ever experienced the scenario you were acting out? *Pause and let them respond.* What was it like acting out a scenario you, or someone you know, has experienced? *Pause and let them respond.*
- Turn to the people next to you and have a conversation about the scenarios you just saw. Have you ever experienced any of those scenarios? What was it like? *Allow time for discussion.*

### VIDEO: Up (Opening Montage)

- If you haven't already experienced a challenging change in your family dynamic, you will.
- We all deal with times of transition, but we don't all respond to change in the same way.

- Keep that in mind as we watch this clip. *Play the opening montage of the movie Up.*
- Carl Fredricksen wasn't always a grumpy old man, but in the midst of so many changes in his life, he forgot who he was. He forgot how his love for adventure used to give him joy.
- Life isn't always a straight line, and the bumps can be disorienting, confusing, frustrating, and sad — especially when it comes to our family.
- When our families change we can sometimes forget who we are or where we used to find our joy, even before we grow old like Mr. Fredricksen.
- Some people ride those waves and seem just fine, but for most of us, change can be tricky. Even when the changes aren't necessarily bad changes, they can still be difficult to navigate.

## SO WHAT?

### PROP: A Compass

- *Before you begin teaching, make sure you have a compass (or at least a compass app) in your pocket. Take it out and hold it.*
- Has anyone here ever gone hiking? If you have, you're probably familiar with a compass.
- When you're out in the woods and in unfamiliar territory, it's so easy to get lost, confused, or disoriented.
- When a hike takes you to an unexpected place, a compass is the tool you need to help yourself get back on track.
- A compass is helpful because, no matter how lost you feel, your compass always points to true north. It stays steady. It gives you a point of reference. It's trustworthy.

### SCRIPTURE: Psalm 23:1-6.

- I don't know about you, but my family has experienced quite a few changes over the years — both good and bad. I know what it's like to feel suddenly lost or afraid because of change.
- But for me, God continues to be my center. He's the one constant that, like this compass, keeps me on track. The same is true for a man we read about in the Bible, King David.
- King David is given credit as the author of many of the psalms, which are the poems and songs we read in the biblical book of Psalms. If you remember the Sunday school story about David and Goliath, this is the same David.
- David became king of Israel, but he came from humble beginnings. He was the youngest in his family, a shepherd, and his older brothers didn't think much of his physical prowess. From herding sheep to ruling a kingdom — that's a pretty big change.
- Before he became king though, David had to run from King Saul, the king before David who wanted to kill him. He didn't have a stable home to return to. He didn't know who he could trust.
- Our families and our own lives are just like the stories in Scripture. They aren't always predictable or planned. Even so, listen to what David wrote. *Read Psalm 23:1-6.*
- David knew all about unexpected and difficult changes, but He still wrote this psalm. He describes God as being our shepherd. He leads us. He stays with us. He comforts us. His goodness and His love follows us wherever we go. God is always there.
- We don't have to be afraid, David says, because no matter what situation we're faced with and no matter what changes we experience, He's with us. He's our true north.

## NOW WHAT?

### RESPONSE: Rewrite Psalm 23:4

- Before your program, be sure to place a blank sheet of paper under each seat, along with a pen.
- For the next few minutes, I want us to focus on verse 4 of this psalm. Actually, I want you to personalize it.
- Think about the changes that you're currently facing, or that you might face soon. Maybe it's a big move or a change in your family structure. Maybe you're moving up to high school or college next year. Maybe you're facing the loss of a loved one. On that sheet of paper, here's what I want you to do. *Put Psalm 23:4 on the screen.*
  - Write, "Even though . . ." and then write down whatever change is on your mind.
  - Next write, "I won't fear . . ." and write whatever frightens you most about that change.
  - Finally, write, "Because You are with me."
  - Create a personal example from your own life and read it.
- Let's take a few minutes to talk to God and respond to this verse. *Play some soft music.*

### LET GOD BE YOUR CENTER

- Change can be scary (especially when it's our family that's changing), but it's inevitable.
- When your family begins to change and you find those changes difficult to navigate, I hope you'll remember what we talked about today. I hope you'll remember this compass.
- And I hope you'll remember that, **when your family changes, God remains your center.**