



1.03.10 – Proverbs 29:18 (Reverse Engineering)

Materials Needed: Blank paper, crayons or markers

Opening Activity

Let's draw a goal map!

- Think of a goal that you'd like to accomplish in 2010. Examples: Get an A in English. Score 5 points a game in basketball. Be a better brother/sister/friend.
- Turn your paper vertically and write or draw a picture of that goal at the top.
- Think of things you can do to help accomplish this goal. Example: If your goal is to score 5 points a game in basketball, you will need to practice your layups and free throws for 30+ minutes/day on your own, arrive to practice on time, ask the coach for extra help, etc. Then, write or draw these action steps at the bottom of the paper.
- Draw arrows from the action steps to the goal. This is your personalized map for achieving this goal in 2010!

(If this activity is too difficult for some kids, just have them draw a picture of their goal or something they'd like to accomplish or do in 2010.)

Discussion

Wow, it may take a lot to try to accomplish our goals, but once we have a 'map' and an idea of how we're going to work to accomplish that goal, we're at least heading in the right direction. Pursuing God and His plan for us is kind of similar. Let's read tonight's passage to get started:

Read Proverbs 29:18

Where there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint, but blessed is he who keeps the law.

Question One: What is 'prophetic vision'? *The New Living Translation of the Bible translates 'prophetic vision' as 'divine guidance'. The word 'divine' here shows us that this vision, or guidance, is from God. 'It's almost like a roadmap that God gives us to find our way through life. But this is no ordinary roadmap – it's God's Word that He gives us through prayer and as we read and study the Bible. How Cool! Having a 'prophetic vision' here doesn't mean telling the future ahead of time – 'prophetic' means 'true,' and this means having a respect and love for God and following His true path that He shows us in the Bible.*

2 Timothy 3:16-17 reminds us of this truth: "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work." As we read the Bible, we are reading God's Word and through this 'prophetic vision' (God's truth), God teaches us, corrects us and trains us so that we're able to do what He asks us to do.

Question Two: In this passage, we see that because the people had no prophetic vision, or guidance from the Lord, they 'cast off restraint.' What does it mean to 'cast off restraint'? *Well, the word 'restraint' means to be held back by something, similarly to the way a seatbelt holds us in place in the car. In this case, the restraint that the people lacked was the law of God. Without God's law, the people were out of control and had nothing holding them back. But just like a seatbelt protects us in the event of a sudden stop or crash, following God's law helps us keep our eyes on Jesus and not on ourselves for direction and purpose in life.*

Question Three: a) How do we hear and/or see God's vision? *The passage indicates that we do this by keeping God's law. Because Jesus is the fulfillment of the law (we'll talk more about this in just a minute), keeping God's law means to do what Jesus*



teaches us in the Bible and to follow Jesus at all times. So, we are able to see/hear God's vision for our lives as we pray and study the Bible and ask God to give us everything we need to follow Him and His commands for our whole life! (Re-read 2 Timothy 3:16-17 to remember how God's Word does this.) b) What are some of the commands God gave to His people long ago? Refer to Exodus 20:1-17.

If you read over the Ten Commandments, I'm sure you're a bit overwhelmed! That's a lot to try to do! God knows this and even though He desires for us to follow these commandments, He knows that it's humanly impossible due to our sin to follow His law completely no matter how hard we try (Romans 8:3). This is why God had to send Jesus to earth on Christmas to live the perfect life that we could not and to pay the punishment that we could not – dying on the cross for the whole world's sin. If you remember, God didn't stop there. He allowed His son to give us a gift of new and everlasting life if we believe in Him so that we can be reconciled, or brought back into God's family, even though we'll never be good enough! How wonderful!

Even though we will never be able to follow God's law completely; because we love God and are so thankful for the gift that He has given us (through Jesus), we should live our whole life in a way that shows God how thankful we are and how we desire to be like Jesus. "... You are not under the law, but under grace" (Romans 6:14).

Question Four: What does it mean to be 'blessed'? *Blessing in this sense contains elements of joy and means "happy" (Hebrew word = esher, which means happy). This isn't just a surface feeling, but it's a deeper joy that only comes from God. God created His law to give us life, and that life is blessing.*

Have the kids give examples of blessing in their life.

Wrapping Up

Without God's 'prophetic vision' or true guidance, we will be unrestrained, out of control, and without blessing. But when we follow God, He will bless us with His joy and steadfast guidance. As we look forward to 2010, let's remember to bring our plans to God before we try to take care of them ourselves. God knows what's best for us, and as we seek Him with our whole lives, we will be blessed and become more and more like Jesus every day! Let's close by praying over these things.