

Series: Behold! The City

Lesson 4: Get Moving

Lesson Objectives:

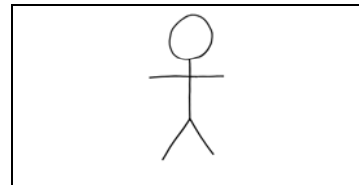
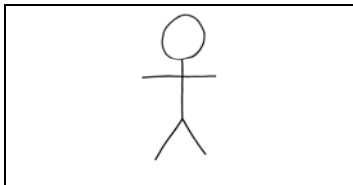
As a result of this lesson, students will be able to...

- Identify and qualify the possible responses to God's promise of a restored world
- Make a plan to bring about restoration now, together

Materials Needed:

- ☐ Board and markers (See note)
- ☐ Copies of handout "Behold! The City: Four"
- ☐ Pens

Note: For the Lead In and Task One, you will need three separate boards or drawing areas. You could use three boards, divide one board into three sections, or use chart paper or Bristol board. Either way, put all three side by side. Use the middle section for the Lead In and the outside sections for Task One. Prepare the outer sections as illustrated below:



Lead In:

Ask for a volunteer who will go to the centre board to draw in behalf of the whole class. Solicit from the rest of the students their ideas of our future life with God. Remember some of the things we have learned in this series to date: the presence of God, the absence of suffering, the plentiful provision and tender care of God, the unknowability of the exact details, and so on. Work together to draw a picture of what that might look like. Of course, a restored life with God is one that we cannot fully picture but we can imagine that it will be awesome! The volunteer artist can stop once you are all agreed on a portrait of our future with God.

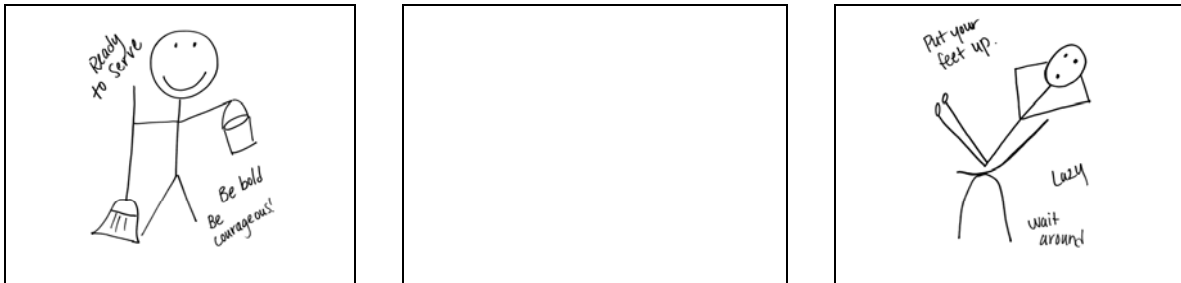
Task One:

Tell students that it's awesome to know that we can hope for the things that God has promised: a restored world, a restored relationship with God and each other, and so on. It is truly a wonderful thing and it will change the way we feel, think, and live. Ask students to turn to the person next to them and identify how this knowledge might change the way a person lives. They must agree on at least two possible ways. Make scrap paper available for students to record their answers.

When they are finished, solicit answers. You are going to record their answers on the outside boards around the mystery people. There are two basic categories into which the answers might fall. Some answers will emphasize that hope in the future God has for us will motivate us to serve others, to join God in the restoration of the world, to have courage in God's mission, to love boldly and without fear, to sacrifice all in pursuit of the kingdom, and so on. The other possibility is that knowing about the future God has for us will make us individualistic, lazy, and complacent. In other words, since I'm going to heaven any way, why bother being good on earth? Record the first set of answers around one of the mystery people and the other set of answers around the other mystery person

When you have exhausted those answers, ask students to guess why you have divided the answers the way that you did. Solicit some guesses before revealing that the two sides/people exemplify two possible reactions to God's promise of eternal life.

Next, invite a volunteer to add some detail to the two mystery figures. You could add props, emotions, etc. to make the outline look like a real person who embodies each of the two approaches. The outer boxes on the board should look like the example below.



While he or she is drawing, ask the other students which approach they think is the right one. Which one is more individualistic? Which one is more corporate? Is one more biblical than the other? Does one make more sense? Are they both explicable? Generate some conversation about the impact of eschatology on life's choices. Complete this task when the people are drawn and the students have understood the difference between the two approaches.

Task Two:

Say something like, *The Bible teaches that the kingdom of God is in the future but also here among us. In other words, God is working to restore the whole world and while that work won't be complete until the end, it is already taking place. Not only is it already taking place, but we have the incredible opportunity to be a part of it. We can be like this stick figure, alive with action and reflection, working under God to bring about God's kingdom right now! All year we have looked at our relationship with God, with each other, and with nature. Tonight, let's be like this person. Motivated by our hope in God's plan, let's make our own plan to join what God is doing.*

Have students divide into three groups. If you are a small group (less than six) you could do this all together. Give each group a copy of the handout, “Behold! The City: Four”. Assign one relationship to each group: 1) our relationship to God, 2) our relationship to each other, 3) our relationship to nature, and tell them to record this in the first blank. For the second group, clarify that each other in this case doesn’t just mean the people in the room, it means all people. The handout contains instructions for the task, in which the groups will brainstorm and choose ideas for action.

Give ample time for completion. When students are finished, have each group present their idea. Have the others listen and decide in what way it could be feasible for your group. Make commitments, as appropriate, to complete the actions suggested by your group, whether they are one-time actions or ongoing actions.

Closing:

A cool way to end would be to read aloud, or have a student read aloud, Psalm 48, The City of God.