Lesson 3—God’s Plan for Me!

Unit Summary
Many people, including Christians, settle for a very self-focused life goal—to arrive at death safely, with as much comfort as possible along the way. This is hardly God’s best! Though the world offers fun and excitement, only the Lord’s plan promises deep, rich fulfillment (John 10:10). God makes available a life of adventure when believers pursue the purposes for which He made them. What a privilege to introduce children to this journey!

We can help kids elevate their perspective to see that life can be thrilling when they follow God’s plan. We can help children develop a Biblical worldview, a broader view of God’s purpose in the world and what His plan is for every Christian. We can help children learn how to understand what God’s specific plan is for them and how to form an action plan to experience everything God has for them.

This series will help your kids discover God’s will for their lives! They will learn that growing in Biblical knowledge, in Christlike character, and in godly conduct are key to fulfilling God’s wonderful plan.

Lesson Summary
It may not come as a surprise to children that God has a plan for the world or even for all Christians—but does He have a unique and specific plan for each child as an individual? That is an incredible thought! The goal of this lesson is to inspire children with the concept that God not only made them unique as persons, but He has created them with a very special plan for their lives—a plan that can be experienced only if they follow Him. Life is not intended just to be lived, but to be enjoyed! We are not meant to just survive, but to thrive! Make it your goal with this lesson to pass on to your students a sense of adventure when thinking about life with God.

Paul’s Power Principle: God has a one-of-a-kind plan for every person.

In this lesson, your children will...

**KNOW**
- God has a unique plan for their lives

**FEEL**
- Determined not to miss out on what God has in store for them

**DO**
- Pray and ask God to help them see His plan for them come to pass
SPARK INTEREST

Choose from the following activities and ideas to engage kids and grab their attention.

Welcome!—Hidden Smile
Before any children have arrived, place a “smiley face” on the ceiling of the room (use either a sticker or print one out on a piece of paper). You want it to be small and rather hidden, but not impossible to find. As children arrive, hold a bucket of candy and tell them, I have hidden a smiley in the room. If you can find it, and without pointing to it or showing it to anyone else, whisper in my ear where it is, I will give you a piece of candy. If you give away the location, you get no candy and the game is over. It will take the children quite a while to find it, but eventually some will. The point will be given during the lesson time.

Let’s Meet-n-Greet!
Turn and greet the kids around you. After you tell your names, answer this question, “If you could drop out of school and instantly get hired for any job, what would it be?”

Leaders, be sure to stop whatever you are doing to move through the audience and greet the children, especially those you do not recognize. Announce any birthdays for the week. (See the How to Use DiscipleTown guide for quick and easy ways to acknowledge visitors and birthdays.)
Let's Worship!
During the worship time, be sure to comment on and emphasize the fact that God has a plan for each and every child. Point out how He made each child unique and has a special plan for each of them. And that plan is different from God’s plan for the child on your right and left!

Recommended Song: I Am a Promise, public domain

Puppet Intro
Leader & puppet introduce today’s lesson. You will find a scripted version of this intro at the end of the lesson. Supplies: puppet

Leader’s puppet asks where he came from. Leader explains that he had him made for children’s church, that he is a one-of-a-kind puppet made especially for children’s church. Leader chose puppet’s name, outfit, even his personality—all so he would be just what was needed for children’s church. Puppet serves a very special purpose in children’s church. There are a lot of puppets, but only one is (say puppet’s name). Puppet feels very special to have such a special role in children’s church. Leader explains that just as the leader designed a special puppet for a special role in children’s church, God has created every child here uniquely for a special role in His world. Puppet asks what uniquely means, and reminds leader not to use big words around little people. Leader explains that it means “one of a kind.” God has a one-of-a-kind plan for every child, but in order to see that plan come to pass, each child must choose to follow and obey God’s plan. Puppet says that kids aren’t puppets; they have a choice to obey. Leader laughs and says, “Yes, kids aren’t puppets. God doesn’t make them do anything. He invites them to join Him on the adventure of their lives!” Puppet says, “Get it? The ‘adventure of THEIR lives!’”

Let’s Play!—Human Battleship
This is an extremely fun group game that involves every child. The children will be talking about the game months from now! It is based on the familiar Battleship game, in which players place plastic battleships on a playing board and take turns guessing locations on a board to try to sink their opponents’ battleships. You will need a way to divide the room in half so that the kids on one side can’t see the other side. (See some of the options below.) Label the rows A, B, C, D, etc., from the front of the room to the back. Label the chairs 1, 2, 3, 4, etc., from left to right. Make sure you have the same grid—the same number of rows and chairs—on both sides of the room. You will want to set up more chairs than you have children so that there are plenty of empty chairs (water) on each side. You can choose to have each child be a ship, or you can group children into lines of two to five to form battleships—it all depends on the number of children and chairs you have and how complicated you want to make the game.

All the children begin the game standing. For the shooting/guessing, start with the child in the front row closest to the center of the room and allow that child to guess a letter and a number. Give the range of letters available. Obviously, the child should not be able to see the other side of the room. It is helpful to give children a clipboard with a grid of the other side and allow them to mark each guess as a hit or miss (X for hit and O for miss) to help keep track of what has been guessed already. A child simply calls out a row and seat number (for example, “C-4”). When the child calls out a guess, if there is a child on the other side in row C and seat 4, the child in that seat will yell (dramatically) “I’ve been hit” and sit down. If there is no child in that chair, a leader can say, “Miss.” It is now the other team’s turn. After the first child’s turn, the clipboard is passed to the next child in that row for the next guess. After every child in that row has made a guess, continue with the next row. Of course, after every child on a team has
guessed, you can return to the first row if the game is not yet over. The first team to sink all the “ships” on the other side wins!

**The Point:** In Battleship, we can only guess where the ships are on the other side because we can’t see them. We can try to guess the pattern, but there is a lot of luck involved. If only we could see from up above! But when it comes to our lives, God sees “from above” and knows everything. He sees our lives. He sees all the details of everything in this world, how all the details relate to each other, and how it all works out. He has a plan for how it will all work together. He doesn’t have to guess; He has a plan! If we follow Him, we won’t be sunk—we will stay afloat and sail to where He wants to take us!

**Connect with Your Kids**

It is one thing to just talk about how every child is unique and different. Prove it. Talk about some of your own dreams or goals in life; show how they are unique for you and tell how they make you different from other people. What makes you different from others? How has God wired you? Give kids a glimpse into how you discovered your calling in life. This exercise will show children that life is a journey and help them look forward to what God will show them.

**Connection Tip:** Surprise the kids by giving them a demonstration of something you are good at or enjoy. Perhaps you have a talent they are unaware of or an interest that is unrelated to your role as their teacher. If you can demonstrate that talent or skill in front of them, it will show them another dimension of you and break the mold of you as just their teacher or pastor. Instead, it will show them that you are a unique creation of God, just as they are—with unique gifts and dreams and goals and desires. Letting children see another side to you that is completely unrelated to your usual role can be powerful and endear them to you in ways that, ironically, can make you a more effective teacher in the long run.

**DiscipleTown Visitor**

*Find a script version of this segment at the end of this lesson.*

**Architect Amos**:

A man is walking by carrying blueprints. He stops and tells the group that some people will be constructing a new building in town. He explains what blueprints are for: they are plans for the framing, plumbing, electricity, doors, windows—all the details about the building—so that the final building can be unique and special with all the details worked out in advance. He talks about how the workers need to check the blueprint often while the building is going up. Leader says that this is kind of what our theme verse is about. God has worked out the details of our life in advance, and He has a special one-of-a-kind plan for our life. We need to check God’s blueprint for our life often as we are growing up by checking in with the architect and builder: God.

*CHARACTERS:* These are suggested characters and names. Please feel free to change or adjust to suit your kids’ needs and tastes.
Let’s Search!—Bible Dash

Supplies: Bibles

Ask all kids with Bibles to participate, or invite a few volunteers to come to the front. As children hold Bibles closed with hands on covers, state the Bible reference twice, then on the command “SEARCH!” have the students race to locate the verse. Once they have a finger on the verse, they can stand and call out, “FOUND IT!” Have the first child read the verse aloud while you project the verse on a screen via PowerPoint. See suggestions below for comments on each verse. Keep your comments brief and to the point of the lesson.

- **Psalm 139:13**
  - From before birth you were made special.

- **1 Corinthians 2:9**
  - We can’t imagine God’s awesome plan!

- **Acts 20:24**
  - We each have a task.

- **Ephesians 2:10**
  - You were created for good works.

- **Proverbs 16:1**
  - God has a plan for us.

- **Proverbs 15:22**
  - Many advisors help us succeed.

Paul’s Power Principle: God has a one-of-a-kind plan for every person.

Let’s Learn!—God’s Plan for Me! Luke 2:52

Supplies: three-legged stool (ideally, one that has legs that can be removed!)

Come out with a stool that has only two of the three legs. As you begin to teach, keep trying to sit on the stool, and keep falling and getting up. Do not draw any attention to why you are falling or what is wrong with the stool—just act a little confused, and continue to talk to the children as though everything is all right, then try again. Fall repeatedly, until finally their shouts that your stool is missing a leg are so overwhelming you are forced to listen to them and acknowledge what they are saying. Study the stool; then say, **Well, I think I can get by with just two legs.** Continue to try some more. Succeed for a little bit, and then fall again. Finally admit that you really do need all three legs in order to have a secure foundation to sit on.

Many people’s lives are a lot like I was on that stool a minute ago. They are falling and unstable because they don’t have a steady foundation. Inform the children that there are three things that we all need to build into our lives:

- **Good Knowledge** (Ephesians 1:17): Show a picture of a brain. You can find a brain drawing online. There is even a Jell-O brain mold that the children will enjoy—especially if you take a bite of it!

- **Good Character** (Mark 12:30-31): Show a mask. Choose a mask that isn’t scary; a mask of a normal person is better than an animal or an unusual character. Talk about how a person can wear a mask in order to pretend to be someone else. **We can wear a mask without putting anything on our face; we can pretend to be someone we truly aren’t. Character is who we are when no one is looking.**

- **Good Conduct** (James 1:22): Show a remote control toy (for example, a robot or car). Demonstrate how the remote control device works. Allow a few children to come up and try it. The more complicated or interesting the sample you bring, the better. Talk about how the remote
control works on the toy. The toy has to do whatever the remote tells it to do. Then talk about how our bodies have a remote too—it is our mind, our will. **We have the ability to remotely control our conduct! We often act like we can’t control our actions, but the truth is that we can! We choose our actions every day. The secret is to ask for God’s help and to allow His Spirit to have more control of our remote. As we grow in knowledge of what is right, and as we improve our character, our conduct will improve too!**

### Suggested Bible Narrative

**Jesus as a Boy**—Luke 2:21-52

Point out that Jesus grew in wisdom (knowledge) and stature (physical size) and in favor with God (character) and man (conduct).

### Dee’s Disciple Tip:

You’ve heard of WWJD: “What would Jesus Do?” But Jesus might do a miracle or walk on water; we can’t do that! Instead, ask yourself WWJHMD: “What would Jesus have me do?” And then that is what you should do!

### KeyVerse

**Topic:** God’s Plan for Us  
**Reference:** Jeremiah 29:11

Review Jeremiah 29:11 by having the children read it several times. Then explain that it is important to read verses in their context; this means reading the verse along with the verses around it. Read Jeremiah 29:1. Our theme verse comes from a letter that Jeremiah wrote to people who had been taken far away from Jerusalem to Babylon. The letter gave good news to people who were sad and discouraged! Then have them read verses 12 and 13. Point out that the promises in verse 11 come with a condition; there is something we need to do for these promises to come true. We need to seek God with all our heart. Talk about what that means.
Dramatize the Point

Act this out or read as a story. **Supplies:** backpacks, jars of jelly, “Crazy Campers” PowerPoint, same actors from Lesson One

This third week finds our campers on a hike and stopping for lunch. As they take off their backpacks and talk about how excited they are about lunch, they all take jars of jelly out of their backpacks. Each one looks surprised. “You brought jelly?” Then they start to argue about who was supposed to bring the bread and the peanut butter and who was going to bring the plates, knives, drinks, napkins, and other supplies. Apparently, they didn’t plan very well—and everyone just brought jelly. The skit ends with them all just sticking their fingers in the jelly and scooping out jelly and eating it, much to the delight and entertainment of the children!

**The Point:** In life’s journey, God desires for each of us to play a part and for each to contribute to what God is up to. And we are to work together. He wants to carry out His plan through each of us, and through all of us together, but we need to listen to Him and do our part.

Object Talks—The Recipe and the Cupcake

**Supplies:** video projection

The video clip for this lesson features Karl, the Kidologist, doing a short object lesson featuring a recipe card and a cupcake discussing how behind every yummy snack is a recipe just like God has a plan for every Christian’s life. Use this short teaching video to show the kids or to train a leader to do the talk “live.” **Featured verse:** Jeremiah 29:11

Let’s Talk!—Small Group Discussion

Each member of the small group holds up five fingers. They take turns sharing something about themselves that they think is true only of them. If anyone else can say “me too,” they both have to put a finger down. Continue around the circle as time allows. This should help them think of just how unique they truly are.

Use the following questions to help children process what they’ve learned:

1) What do you think is the coolest job in the world?
2) Who is someone you really admire?
3) How does the word knowledge make you feel?
4) How different are you when you are alone? Why?
5) Why do you think it is so hard to control ourselves?
6) What do you hope is in God’s plan for you?
DiscipleTown Super Citizen

Choose a child who wore a unique outfit to church today. Encourage all the children to feel free to be unique.

Let’s Pray!

Dear God, it’s so amazing to think that despite all that is going on in this big busy world, You have a plan for ME. But we understand, Lord, that You have also given us a role to play in order to see Your plan come to pass, that we will begin to do our part to see Your plan unfold! We know that we need to grow in knowledge by studying Your Word and learning more about what it means to follow You. We need to develop our character by obeying You whether people are watching or not. And we need to allow you to help us control our character. We know that as we work on these things, Lord, we will begin to see Your plan for our lives unfold—and we can’t wait to see what You have in store for us! Help us this week to follow You! In Jesus’ name, amen.

Cy’s Challenge: Each morning, pray and ask God to help you follow His plan for you that day.

Let’s Review!

If you have extra time, use these review questions to keep the kids focused on the lesson until time to dismiss. A handful of candy will help you keep their attention. After each question, take a minute to reiterate the lesson point related to the question.

For review, pick up the stool you used earlier in the lesson, and ask if there is a child in the audience who can tell what each of the legs on the stool represents—the three areas of our Christian life that we must work on strengthening in order to have a balanced spiritual life (knowledge, character, conduct). If a child doesn’t get all three, congratulate the child on getting part of the answer right, and then allow another child to give all three areas rather than just the missing one. Continue until one child can give all three. Next, review today’s object lessons and ask a child to describe what each object lesson taught.

For the Home
DiscipleTown Table Talker: Give each child a copy of this week’s DiscipleTown Table Talker. Be sure to show the kids how to put it together and encourage them to ask their parents to lead family devotions three times this week.

Parent Email: Copy and send the email below to help your parents connect with their kids during the week. Send them early in the week, but not on Sunday. As a courtesy, be sure parents have opted to receive these emails. Review and edit as necessary to reflect the lesson elements you have used. You can also find this email as a Microsoft Word document in your download bundle.

Dear Mom and Dad,

As we continued our current series this week on How to Follow God’s Plan in children’s church, we homed in on God’s specific plan for each child—including your child! It may not come as a surprise to children that God has a plan for the world or even for all Christians, but that He would have a unique and specific plan for them as individuals—that is an incredible thought! The goal of our lesson was to inspire children with the concept that God not only made them unique as persons, but He created them with a very special plan for their life—a plan that can only be experienced if they follow Him. Life is not intended just to be lived, but to be enjoyed! We are not meant to just survive, but to thrive! Our goal with this lesson was to pass on to your child a sense of adventure when thinking about life with God.

We explained to your child that in order to experience God’s plan there are three areas of our spiritual life that we need to work on growing in: our knowledge, our character, and our conduct. It would be a good idea to review with your child what he or she learned about these three areas.

Using the DiscipleTown Table Talker during the week will also help reinforce what your child learned throughout the week and help encourage lifelong changes. Your family will enjoy these simple and fun activities that will stimulate meaningful and thought-provoking discussions.

I’m excited to see God’s plan unfold in your child’s life in the years ahead!

Making young disciples,

[Your Name]
Chip's Snack Time!

**Supplies:** crackers, cheese, lunchmeat

Provide snack crackers such as Ritz and slices of cheese and meat, but make sure kids have a choice of three ingredients to represent the three areas of our spiritual life. The children make a snack cracker sandwich with three ingredients of their choice. As you explain the snack, remind the children that they need to work on growing in knowledge, character, and conduct.

**Group Activity**

When discussing knowledge, choose ten of the most difficult trivia questions you can find, and tell the children you are going to play a trivia game. Choose five contestants from the audience. However, ahead of time, give the answers to a first-grader and ask him or her to memorize them. It will really impress the other children. At the end, you need to tell the children of your hoax, but explain all you did was give the child the knowledge ahead of time. **God does the same thing in the Bible. He gives us ahead of time everything we need—if we are willing to study. Are you willing? If you are, you can be a winner in the game of life!**

**Optional Game:** A three-legged race might be a good alternative or additional game that goes along well with the lesson.

**Additional Ideas**

- **Optional Object Lesson:** If you do not have a stool available, a camera tripod can be used instead.

- **Remote Control Kid:** If one of the leaders is a parent, this can be fun. You will need to practice ahead of time at home and have your child play along. Create a “Kid Remote.” Announce that you have finally found a way to control your child. Bring the child up on stage and turn on the remote. The child pretends to be hesitant and rebellious and unwilling to cooperate, but once the remote is turned on, the child says, “Yes, sir. Whatever you say, sir.” Tell the child to clean up the stage, do dishes, take a nap, and so on. Have fun with this! It can be very entertaining.
DIRECTOR’S NOTES
The words in italics are notes for you and your puppeteers; they are not to be read aloud.

Puppet: [Leader name], where did I come from?
Leader: I don’t know.

Puppet: [Alarmed.] You don’t know?
Leader: Well, it was probably China. Or Taiwan. But I had you made just for us.

Puppet: Really?
Leader: Yep! You were made especially for our children’s church. You are a one-of-a-kind.

Puppet: Wow.
Leader: I chose your name, your outfit...

Puppet: [Looks at his clothes in disapproval.] Yeah. Thanks for that.
Leader: [Ignores him.] ...even your sarcastic personality. All so you could be just what we needed.

Puppet: Just what you needed?
Leader: Sure! You serve a very special purpose in our children’s church. There are many puppets out there, but only one [puppet name].

Puppet: [Swells with pride.] Wow. That’s just super! It feels amazing to be made for a special purpose.

Leader: And just as I designed you, a special puppet for a special role in children’s church, God has created every child here uniquely for a special role in His world.

Puppet: What does “uniquely” mean? [Gestures to audience.] Don’t go using big words around little folks like us.

Leader: Sorry. Unique means “one of a kind.” God has a one-of-a-kind plan for every child, but in order to see that plan come to pass, each child must choose to follow and obey God’s plan.

Puppet: Yeah, kids aren’t puppets—they have a choice to obey. Unlike some of us.

Leader: [Laughs.] Yes, kids aren’t puppets. God doesn’t make them do anything. He invites them to join Him on the adventure of their lives!

Puppet: Get it? The “adventure of their lives.”

*PUPPET: Develop a puppet character to use regularly. The children will get to know the personality and enjoy these regular visits. Dee, Cy, and Paul puppets are available at DiscipleLand.com
DIRECTOR’S NOTES
The words in italics are notes for you and your volunteers; they are not to be read aloud.

A man walks by in a construction hat carrying blueprints.

Architect Amos*: Did you hear, [leader name]? The city is constructing a new building in town!

Leader: Oh, hey Amos. [To kids:] Amos is an architect. Are those blueprints for the new building?

Amos: They sure are.

Leader: Remind me—what are blueprints again?

Amos: Blueprints are plans for the framing, plumbing, electricity, doors, windows—all the details about the building—so that the final building can be unique and special with all the details worked out in advance.

Leader: Wow! Everything, huh?

Amos: Everything. Workers need to check the blueprints often while the building is going up, or they might forget something or install something the wrong way.

Leader: That reminds me of our KeyVerse, Jeremiah 29:11. God has worked out the details of our lives in advance, and He has a special one-of-a-kind plan for each of us.

Amos: That does sound like a blueprint to me.

Leader: And just like your workers, we need to check God’s blueprint for our lives often as we grow up.

Amos: How do you do that, exactly?

Leader: By checking in with the architect and builder...

Amos: God!

Leader: You bet.

*CHARACTERS: These are suggested characters and names. Please feel free to change or adjust to suit your kids’ needs and tastes.
Each DiscipleTown Unit will teach your kids an essential "how to" skill to become victorious disciples of Jesus!