

Dream Big with God

Leader's Guide and Curriculum

Christian supplemental teaching material
for the Dream Big Campaign curriculum

By Diana Scimone

The Born to Fly Project
to stop child trafficking

Dream Big with God Leader's Guide and Curriculum
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This curriculum is dedicated to the members of my writers group (Valerie Kosky, Karen Armistead, and Deborah Cole), to educators Karen Armistead and Georgia Ana Larson, artist Leah Wiedemer, designer Cathleen Kwas, and the many supporters of Born to Fly International. Special thanks to Mike Bickle, Janet Benton, Sharon Gonzales, Ashley Belerose, and Jim Kochenburger. Thank you for helping my dream come true.

—Diana Scimone, director, The Born2Fly Project to stop child trafficking

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Dream Big with God

A special note from Born to Fly founder, Diana Scimone

A number of years ago when we were choosing the name for our new organization to stop child trafficking, one of our board members said, “Don’t choose a name that reflects what you’re trying to stop. The name should show what you’re trying to do after that.” That’s why we chose the name “Born to Fly.” Today our goal is the same: not just to prevent children and teenagers from being trafficked, but in doing so we want to give teenagers the opportunity to dream big dreams—to be who God created them to be. In fact, our mission statement is “stopping child trafficking...setting kids free to soar.”

That’s why this curriculum places an emphasis on showing teenagers how to have a special relationship with God so that they can “dream big dreams” in a safe and successful manner. God puts these dreams inside each of us. They are our calling and our purpose. And they are part of His plan for the world.

Around the same time that we were launching Born to Fly International, my Bible study class decided to study Song of Songs (also known as Song of Solomon). It’s one of the shortest books in the Bible, but we spent two years studying it! We would spend a month on a single verse. At the end of two years, we all felt we had barely tapped into the depths of this little book.

Those two years changed my life, and Song of Songs has become my favorite book of the Bible. One of my favorite verses is “Draw me after you and let us run together” (Song of Songs 1:4 NAS). That is a key verse to help teenagers have a special friendship with Jesus and dream “God dreams”—with Him by their side.

As you spend time in this curriculum, God will give you opportunities to call forth and affirm the dreams in each of the teenagers in your class—the dreams that He Himself placed there.

We welcome your comments and suggestions. Just write to us at info@born2fly.org or write Born to Fly, PO Box 952949, Lake Mary, Florida 32795, USA. Thank you for being part of our dream of stopping child trafficking. We’re very grateful to you.

Diana Scimone
President, The Born2Fly Project to stop child trafficking

“Dream the dreams that alter the course of world history.”
—Bill Johnson

Introduction

Dream Big with God is additional Christian material designed to supplement the regular *Dream Big Campaign* curriculum. It is not designed to replace it, nor is it a standalone curriculum. It provides additional material you can use to teach biblical concepts.

The goal of this curriculum is to help teenagers choose to have a higher relationship with Jesus and to know how much He loves them; this will help them be safe and successful as they follow their dreams.

Teenagers can live normal “good” Christian lives, but if they don’t understand the reality of how God sees them and if they don’t know the depth of His love for them, they will never experience the full relationship He desires with them. That’s why it is critical for them to find their identity in Christ.

As Christians, we often love God simply because we know we are supposed to. What if we could teach teenagers that there is so much more? What if they could know the vast love He has for them—and how He truly desires for them to succeed and fulfill the dreams and purposes that He put in them?

That is the goal of *Dream Big with God*. Many teenagers are good at memorizing Bible verses and learning theological facts such as “God loves me,” but they often haven’t learned the skill of applying that knowledge in their own life. Depending on their spiritual upbringing, they may not even know they should do that. That’s why we have a two-part goal with this additional material:

1. Give teenagers biblical principles.
2. Show them how to apply these principles to everyday life—specifically how to keep from being trafficked, keep children around them from being trafficked, and how to pursue their dreams in a safe manner.

This is the difference between the tree of knowledge and the tree of life. Our goal is to give teenagers fruit to eat from the tree of life. We are honored to partner with you to do that.

Overview of Leader's Guide and Curriculum

Session 1: Choosing friendship with Jesus

Session objectives:

- To help teenagers understand that Jesus is inviting them to have a higher relationship with Him—a special friendship.
- To show teenagers they can choose to say “yes” to His invitation.
- To lead them to say “yes” to His invitation.

Key scripture: “Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, come with me” (Song of Songs 2:10 NIV).

Session 2: Jesus is the truest friend.

Session objectives:

- To help teenagers understand what it means to be a friend of God.
- To show them how to be a friend of God.
- To teach that Jesus is the truest friend.
- To show them that friendship with Jesus keeps them safe, healthy, and free as they pursue their dreams.

Key scripture: “This is my beloved; this is my friend” (Song of Songs 5:16 NASB).

Session 3: Jesus says you are unique, valuable, and worth loving.

Session objectives:

- To teach teenagers that Jesus says they are unique, valuable, and worth loving.
- To show them that if they love Jesus, even when they make a mistake, His love for them does not change.
- To show them that friendship with God does not depend on what they have done or not done.

Key scripture: “I am dark, but lovely” (Song of Songs 1:5 NIV).

Session 4: When you go through a difficult time, Jesus will always be there with you.

Session objectives:

- To help teenagers understand that when they go through difficult times, Jesus will always be there for them.
- To show them they can ask for His help.
- To teach them He might answer in a different way than they expected.

Key scripture: “Who is this coming up from the wilderness leaning upon her beloved?” (Song of Songs 8:5 NKJV).

Session 5: Jesus invites you to His “secret place” where He protects you.

Session objectives:

- To teach teenagers that Jesus is inviting them to a secret place where He protects them and loves them.
- To show them the secret place is mentioned throughout the Bible; we have the privilege of living there.

- To remind them that the secret place is not always easy, but it is where He shares important lessons with us.

Key scripture: "In the secret places of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely" (Song of Songs 2:14 NKJV).

Session 6: Jesus helps you be safe and successful as you follow your dreams.

Session objectives:

- To help teenagers understand that God put a big dream inside them.
- To show them that as they spend time with Him in the secret place, He'll give them the wisdom and direction to help their dream grow.
- To teach that Jesus wants to partner with them and help them pursue their dreams.

Key scripture: "Draw me after you and let us run together" (Song of Songs 1:4 NASB)

Important notes to teachers:

1. We don't have a specific place in the curriculum for you to lead teenagers in a prayer of salvation because we leave that to you to discern the right time when your students are ready.

2. *Dream Big with God* covers topics that are emotionally difficult. You need to be prepared for students who may be traumatized in the classroom. One in three women is a survivor of sexual, physical or emotional abuse, so you will have young survivors in your classes. Talk with your teachers ahead of time about what to do when a youth reacts to the material. It's also important to let teachers know that some of the material might be difficult for them to read and may even cause deep emotional reactions in them if they have survived family or societal abuse. Letting both the teachers and youth know that these reactions exist is important so that re-traumatizing does not occur during the sessions. There are many excellent Christian books and curriculums available to help you minister to your students and teachers. We encourage you to be prepared in case the need arises.

3. Decide ahead of time if you will collect journals from students at the end of each session or allow them to take them home. Keep in mind that some students may live in traumatic and even abusive situations, and they may write about this in their journals. If parents/guardians who are abusers or even traffickers read the journals, they may react. You will have to be prepared—as will students. If you keep the journals instead of sending them home with students, and you decide to read student entries, let them know ahead of time that you will be doing this. If students write about being abused or even trafficked, you need to know how to respond. Be prepared spiritually to minister to them. Also check with your administrator regarding local procedures and laws for reporting abuse and trafficking.

Additional information on the fine line between awareness and fear

The regular *Dream Big Campaign* curriculum has specific suggestions to help you make your teenagers aware about human trafficking without instilling fear in them. Here are more ideas from a Christian perspective:

Have teenagers write down their fears and then together with them, look for Bible verses to counter those lies. Help them see that their fears, while real, are contrary to what God's Word says. For example, "God has not given us a spirit of fear but of power, love, and a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7). If you make this an activity and work together with teenagers to come up with specific verses, it will mean more to them than if you just recite the verses to them yourself. Have teenagers write them on papers, decorate them, and hang them where they can see them at home and school. You can also use this as an opportunity for teenagers to memorize the verses they find.

Play worship songs for them—either songs that are Scripture based or even simple songs like "Jesus Loves Me," that proclaim truths about God.

You and your staff can pray against the spirit of the fear. Pray that teenagers will receive a revelation of God's love and protection that He is providing to them.

Session 1: Choosing friendship with Jesus

Focus of *Dream Big* curriculum: Choices have consequences.

Focus of *Dream Big with God* curriculum: Choosing friendship with Jesus

Session objectives:

- To help teenagers understand that Jesus is inviting them to have a higher relationship with Him—a special friendship.
- To show teenagers they can choose to say “yes” to His invitation.
- To lead them to say “yes” to His invitation.

Key scripture: “Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, come with me” (Song of Songs 2:10 NIV).

Supplies and materials list: Various invitations from your culture, such as for a baby dedication, birthday, graduation, or wedding. (If you do not have printed invitations, prepare descriptions of how you might invite someone to an event.) A piece of rope with 3 strands with one end frayed so that you can easily unravel it, paper, markers, worship music, worship music player, and journals.

Before class: Read the session notes and choose the questions you think will be most appropriate for your group. Write the journaling questions for “Journaling activity for Session 1” below on a whiteboard, blackboard, or poster. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you ways to customize the lesson for your class.

Begin Session 1

Object lesson: Invitations

Talk about invitations in your culture, how you invite people to celebrate special occasions, and what an invitation looks like (or sounds like, if given verbally) to a birthday party, wedding, graduation, baby dedication, or any other event you can think of. Show sample invitations if you have them.

Explain that when you receive an invitation, you must reply to the person who invited you to say if you are accepting or declining the invitation. Talk about different ways of doing this in your culture.

Discuss these questions:

- What invitations have you received?
- When someone invites you to share a special event with them, what does that say about how they view you or your friendship with them?
- What is the best invitation you’ve ever received? Why? Did you accept it? Why? What would you have missed out on if you said “no” to the invitation?
- What is the disadvantage of choosing to decline an invitation from a family member or friend?

Say: Invitations are usually from family or friends who want to include you in a special event or celebration, indicating that they value their relationship with you. Today we are going to look at a very special invitation, the most important one we will ever receive.

There are 66 books in the Bible and one of them is called Song of Songs (or Song of Solomon). It is one of the shortest books in the Bible but it has one of the most important messages—a special invitation for us. Song of Songs is about Jesus' invitation to us to have a wonderful, special friendship with Him.

Read the key scripture verse for this session, Song of Songs 2:10 (NIV): "My beloved spoke and said to me, 'Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, come with me.'"

Say: In this verse, Jesus expresses His love for you ("my darling") and tells you how He views you (as "beautiful"). He asks you to "arise." *Arise* means *to get up and go higher*. This is an invitation to you from Jesus to have a special friendship with Him. If you accept this invitation, He will help you to become everything that He has created you to be, and to live the dream He has placed in your heart. This is very important: You must choose how you will respond to His invitation.

Activity time:: Invitation creation

Display the invitations again. Have students pair up in teams and work together to either write a song (or psalm) or create an invitation from Jesus to them. (Pair with any student left without a partner.) Distribute paper and markers to students who choose to create an invitation.

Say: You should create your song, psalm, or invitation based on what I just shared and what you understand about having a special relationship with Jesus. Let's prepare our hearts for this activity with a time of worship and prayer.

Play soft worship music. Encourage students to focus on worship and prayer so that they can hear from God. Read Song of Songs 2:10 again.

Say: God is always willing to talk with us; we need to practice worshiping Him and listening to Him, and we will hear Him. This takes practice. Sometimes He speaks to us in words and other times in pictures. Remember, Song of Songs 2:10 is Jesus' invitation to you to have a close, special friendship with Him.

Encourage students to listen for Jesus' invitation and to respond with "yes." Challenge them to ask Jesus to tell them why He thinks they are so special. Do not rush this time; wait and allow them to talk with Him.

After an appropriate amount of time (however God leads you), lead a short discussion:

- Did you hear God's invitation? If so, how did you respond? Why?
- What else do you believe God said to you?

Have students complete their invitations, songs, or psalms and share them with the class when finished.

Trafficking connection

Say: Having a special friendship with Jesus will help you to make right choices, keep you safe from traffickers, and be successful in following the dreams God has given you. Another important part of making right choices, staying safe, and following the dreams God has given you is to make sure your closest friends are those who also have a special relationship with Jesus.

Bible lesson: Three-cord strength

Read Ecclesiastes 4:12 aloud: "Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken" (NIV).

Hold up the piece of rope and unravel it. **Say:** Is this piece of rope stronger when all three strands are combined or when they are separated? (Pull the three strands apart for effect. Hold up the first strand.) Think of this as you. (Hold up the second strand.) Think of this as friends who share your close relationship with Jesus. A friend that loves the way Jesus does will help keep you safe, healthy, and free. (Hold up the third strand and begin winding the strands together.) Think of this as Jesus, as the one who holds all the strands together, making you strong, keeping you safe and focused on living out your God-given dreams.

- How has your friendship with Jesus strengthened you? How has it helped keep you safe?
- How has your relationship with Jesus caused you to strengthen others? Has it ever helped you to keep others safe? Explain.

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Read and discuss Psalm 24:3-5.

- What does it mean to have clean hands and a pure heart?
- What blessings are promised to those who do? (See verses 3 and 5.)

Journaling activity for Session 1

"My beloved spoke and said to me, 'Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, come with me.'"

Read Song of Songs 2:10 again. Show students the list of journal questions below that you wrote on the whiteboard, blackboard, or poster before the session. Have them write the questions in their journals. Allow them a few minutes to write their responses, and then discuss the questions together.

- How does it make you feel to know that Jesus calls you "beautiful"?
- Why do you think Jesus calls you "my beautiful one"? What kind of beauty is He talking about?
- Do you feel beautiful? Why?
- What is the difference between inner beauty and outer beauty?
- Which is most important to you? Why?
- Which do you think is more important to Jesus? Why?

Say: In future sessions, we will learn why Jesus calls us "beautiful"—even when we don't feel it.

Ask students to respond to the following in their journals (either now or before the next session):

- How did you respond to Jesus' invitation? (They might write this as a letter to Jesus.)
- What did Jesus say to you during our prayer time?
- Write two things you would tell younger children about what it means to be a friend of Jesus, and how this will help them in life.

Say: Use all this as a reminder that Jesus is calling you to “arise”—and that you have responded, (if you have done so).

Session 2: Jesus is the truest friend.

Focus of *Dream Big* curriculum: Know whom you can trust.

Focus of *Dream Big with God* curriculum: Jesus is the truest friend. You can trust Him.

Session objectives:

- To help teenagers understand what it means to be a friend of God.
- To show them how to be a friend of God.
- To teach that Jesus is the truest friend. He can be trusted.
- To show them that friendship with Jesus keeps them safe, healthy, and free as they pursue their dreams.

Key scripture: “This is my beloved, this is my friend” (Song of Songs 5:16 NIV).

Supplies and materials list: Friendship frame materials, journals, instrumental worship music, music player.

Before class: Read the session notes and choose the questions you think will be most appropriate for your group. Write the journaling questions for “Journaling activity for Session 2” below on a whiteboard, blackboard, or poster. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you ways to customize the lesson for your class.

Session 1 review: Spend a few minutes reviewing the last session where students learned that Jesus is inviting them to have a higher relationship with Him—a special friendship, and that they can choose to say yes to His invitation.

Begin Session 2

Say: In this session we will learn what it means to be a friend of Jesus—and how that will help us pursue our dreams.

Discuss these questions:

- Are there different kinds of friendship? Explain.
- Are all of your friends your best friends, or are you closer to some than others? Why?
- How do you know when someone is your best friend versus an acquaintance?
- Do friends sometimes disappoint you—even your best friend(s)? Explain.

Read Song of Songs 5:16. **Say:** This verse is talking about Jesus. He is the only friend who will never disappoint us. He will always love us. We can trust Him because He is a true friend.

Have one or two students take turns reading the following scriptures aloud:

“‘Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.’ And he was called the friend of God” (James 2:23 NKJV).

“Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you” (John 15:13-15 NKJV).

Discuss these questions:

- What is the difference between a servant and a friend? Which did Jesus say you are? (His friends)
- What is your reaction to the idea that Jesus calls you His friend?
- How can you be a friend of Jesus? (Love Him, follow Him, believe Him, reading the Bible, learning about Him, by talking to Him in prayer, and more)

In “Rely on your instincts,” **say:** This is the role of the Holy Spirit in your life. He will warn you of danger and of people who don’t have your best interests in mind. He will speak to you and protect you.

Prayer time

Play soft instrumental worship music in the background. Challenge students to listen quietly for Jesus’ voice. **Say:** Jesus does not shout at us but speaks in a “still, small voice,” so we have to listen carefully for it. Sometimes He speaks with words and other times with pictures. Remember the invitation Jesus gave you in the previous session, when He asked to have a special friendship with you. As you pray, ask Him what friendship with Him means specifically, and how you can be a friend to Him. Ask Him to show you a picture of Himself and you—as friends.

Allow time for students to hear God and see with their spiritual eyes (Ephesians 1:18). Afterward, have some share what they heard Him say and what they saw. Encourage them in what they share.

Activity time: Friendship frame, part 2

Have students create a second friendship frame, this time drawing a picture of themselves with Jesus. They can include any words Jesus has spoken to them. Allow time for some to share their work.

Trafficking connection

Say: Having a close friendship with Jesus and having close friendships with others who have a special relationship with Jesus can help keep you from being trafficked. In John 15:13-15, Jesus talks about the difference between a servant and a friend. When you are trafficked, you are someone’s servant or slave—even if they say they are your friend. You know a true friend by what they do, not by what they say. Jesus laid down His life for you.

Bible lesson

Have individual students take turns reading these verses aloud: Isaiah 54:5, Revelation 19:7-9, Matthew 9:15, and Matthew 25:1-13.

Say: These verses tell us Jesus is the bridegroom; those who love Him and follow Him are His bride. This is a key concept for those who pursue a close relationship with Jesus to understand. Song of Songs tells us that Jesus wants the closest, most intimate relationship possible with us.

In the Bible, God often uses natural examples to define a spiritual principle. Marriage is the most intimate of all relationships. This is the relationship the Lord desires with us.

- A couple gets married because they are more than friends.
- They are connected on an emotional level that is higher than any other human relationship.
- When two people are in love, they want to spend the rest of their lives together.
- They want nothing but death to separate them.
- Each wants the other to be the first one they see in the morning and the last one they see at night.
- Their love is so strong that they can't seem to get close enough.
- They can rest in each other's embrace, knowing they are loved and accepted by the other.
- They cherish each other.

Note: This may be a difficult concept for youth to understand, particularly boys and young men, but ask the Holy Spirit to help them.

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Read and discuss Psalm 119:9.

- In your own words, describe what question this verse asks.
- In your own words, describe the answer it gives to that question.

Journaling activity for Session 2

"This is my beloved, this is my friend."

Read the key verse for this session. Show students the list of journal questions below that you wrote on the whiteboard, blackboard, or poster before the session. Have them write the questions in their journals. Allow them a few minutes to write their responses, and then discuss the questions together.

- What is your reaction to the truth that Jesus is our bridegroom king? That those of us in close relationship with Jesus are His bride (the bride of Christ)? That He seeks the most intimate relationship possible with you?
- Think of Jesus laying down His life for you. Write a letter to Him to thank Him.
- How is Jesus your best and truest friend? Explain.
- What will you do to draw closer to Him?

Session 3: Jesus says you are unique, valuable, and worth loving.

Focus of *Dream Big* curriculum: You are unique, valuable, and worth loving.

Focus of *Dream Big with God* curriculum: Jesus says you are unique, valuable, and worth loving.

Session objectives:

- To teach teenagers that Jesus says they are unique, valuable, and worth loving.
- To show them that if they love Jesus, even when they make a mistake, His love for them does not change.
- To show them that friendship with God does not depend on what they have done or not done.

Key scripture: “I am dark, but lovely” (Song of Songs 1:5 NIV).

Supplies and materials list: Journals, instrumental worship music, music player

Before class: Read the session notes and choose the questions you think will be most appropriate for your particular group. Write the journaling questions (below) for “Journaling activity for Session 3” on a whiteboard, blackboard, or poster. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you ways to customize the lesson for your class.

Review Session 2: Spend a few moments reviewing the last session—what it means to be a friend of Jesus.

Begin Session 3

Read Ephesians 2:8-9: “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast” (NKJV).

Say: Our friendship with Jesus is a gift from God. He has not chosen to be our friend because of what we do for Him or how good we are. We could never do enough to earn His love and His salvation. That is why they are a free gift. Knowing this will help us to feel Jesus’ love even when we do something wrong.

Bible lesson

Have students take turns reading aloud a few or all of the following verses: Zephaniah 3:17, Psalm 139:14, 17-18, Luke 12:24, Isaiah 43:1, Isaiah 49:16, John 1:12, and John 15:15. After each verse, ask students to share how it shows that God Himself says they are unique, valuable, and worth loving.

Say: To love unconditionally means to love someone even when they’ve done wrong or made mistakes. God loves us and values us no matter what we do, because of who we are in Christ.

- What should our response be to God’s great, unconditional love?

- Having received so great a love, what responsibility do we have to share it with others?
- Since God considers us so valuable, how should we feel about ourselves?

Activity time: Prodigal son drama

Assign the following roles to students: narrator, prodigal/lost son, and father. As the narrator reads the story in Luke 15:11-24, the two actors should act it out. The narrator should pause after reading each sentence to allow the actors time to act it out. Option: After they act out the Bible story, consider having students create and act out a present-day version of the story, too.

- What is your reaction to this story? What did it make you think or feel?
- What is unconditional love? How did this story illustrate unconditional love?
- Is there a difference between loving someone unconditionally and blindly ignoring sinful behavior? Explain.
- Even when you are forgiven, why must you repent when you've done something wrong? (In order to receive God's grace)
- What do you do after you've repented? (Receive God's forgiveness and love; not focus on our sin but on Him)
- What is the difference between someone who purposely rebels against God and an immature believer who makes mistakes? (God does not confuse spiritual immaturity with rebellion.)
- How did this story illustrate how valuable we are to God and worth loving?

Trafficking connection

When we know that Jesus thinks we are unique, valuable and loved, we will not believe the lies of traffickers who tell us otherwise.

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Have students find passages in the gospels where Jesus talks with women and girls.

- Did Jesus treat women differently than He treated men?
- What do you think the culture was like in Jesus' time? (Very repressive toward women; women were not allowed to talk with men the way Jesus spoke with women—as equals. He broke many of the rules of His time.)
- How did Jesus show that He valued women?
- In Mark 10:13-14, whom did Jesus talk with? (children—both girls and boys)
- How did Jesus show that He valued girls?

Journaling activity for Session 3

“I am dark, but lovely.”

Read the key verse again for this session, Song of Songs 1:5, “I am dark, but lovely.”

Say: The word *dark* does not refer to skin color, but speaks of the mistakes we make and the wrong things we do. It means that even when we make a mistake or do something wrong, we can know that Jesus still loves us. This does not describe a person who is rebellious against Jesus; it describes someone who loves Him but makes mistakes. Matthew 26:41 says, “The spirit indeed

is willing, but the flesh is weak" (NKJV). The meaning of the word *lovely* is "delightful, pleasing, having a beauty that appeals to the heart or mind as well as to the eye."

Have students discuss the concept of "dark, but lovely." There is a paradox in discovering our own sin, yet at the same time discovering Jesus' great love for us.

Show students the list of journal questions below that you wrote on the whiteboard, blackboard, or poster before the session. Have them write the questions in their journals. Allow them a few minutes to write their responses, and then discuss the questions together.

- What is an example of something lovely?
- Why do you think Jesus considers you lovely, even when you've done wrong or made mistakes?
- How does Song of Songs 1:5 ("I am dark, but lovely") make you feel about yourself? About Jesus?
- Does knowing this make you want to draw closer to Him or run from Him when you do something wrong?
- Why this is such an important truth to understand?
- How does this help you to view others who make mistakes?

Say: Jesus still thinks of us as "lovely" even when we've done something wrong. This is where our value comes from. This is why His love for us is a gift of God. He adores us and nothing we can ever do can decrease or increase His love for us. Unlike human love, God's love is unconditional.

- Why do you think God still thinks of us as lovely, even when we've done wrong?
- Why does God's love for us never change?

Prayer time

Play soft instrumental worship music. Lead students into prayer by having them close their eyes.

Say: Think about Jesus smiling at you with joy. I am dark, but lovely." Now think about a time when you did something wrong.

Quietly read 1 John 3:1, 1 John 4:19, and John 15:9. As students recall sinful things they've done in their lives, they may have specific needs for healing. Be prepared to lead them through repentance and forgiveness, encouraging them that Jesus still sees them as "lovely."

Say: Are you still "dark, but lovely"? Listen for Jesus' words to you about this. Remember, sometimes Jesus speaks with words and other times with pictures.

Allow students at least five minutes to spend time with the Lord. Then have them share what they experienced.

Say: Remember, you accepted Jesus' invitation to have a special friendship with Him. He wants you to live holy lives and He will give you grace to do that. In your journal, write a few thoughts

about what you have experienced during this session in regard to “dark, but lovely.” Then write how God’s unconditional love makes you feel and some words of thanks to God.

Session 4: When you go through a difficult time, Jesus will always be there with you.

Focus of *Dream Big* curriculum: Be patient, work hard, and wait for the right time.

Focus of *Dream Big with God* curriculum: When you go through a difficult time, Jesus will always be there with you.

Session objectives:

- To help teenagers understand that when they go through difficult times, Jesus will always be there for them.
- To show them they can ask for His help.
- To teach them He might answer in a different way than they expected.

Key scripture: “Who is this coming up from the wilderness leaning upon her beloved?” (Song of Songs 8:5 NKJV).

Supplies and materials list: Journals, instrumental worship music, music player

Before class: Read the session notes and choose the questions you think will be most appropriate for your particular group. Write the journaling questions for “Journaling activity for Session 4” below on a whiteboard, blackboard, or poster. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you ways to customize the lesson for your class.

Review Session 3: Spend a few moments reviewing the last session—that we are unique, valuable, and worth loving because Jesus said we are; it does not depend on what we have done or not done.

Begin Session 4

Read the key verse for this session, Song of Songs 8:5: “Who is this coming up from the wilderness leaning upon her beloved?”

- What is a wilderness? (Dry place, lonely place, without many friends) What is an actual wilderness in your country?
- How can a difficult time be like a wilderness?
- What does “leaning on” mean? (To rely, to trust)
- When you go through a difficult time, how can you “lean on” Jesus? Does He want you to do this? Why?

Bible lesson

Read Romans 8:37-39: “No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (NIV).

Discuss these questions:

- What is your first reaction to these Scripture verses? What feelings and thoughts came to you as I read it?
- Life is full of wonderful times, but we also experience many difficulties along the way. What does this verse say we are “more than” over these difficulties?
- Who makes us more than conquerors over every difficulty we face in life?
- What is any difficulty or enemy we face unable to do? (Separate us from the love of God) Explain.
- How does this encourage you?

Activity time: Level of difficulty

Have students rate the difficulty of the following situations from 1 (very easy) to 10 (extremely difficult) by holding up between 1 and 10 fingers after you say each one aloud. You may instruct students to close their eyes as they vote on certain difficulties you state—like those that mention sex or drugs. Be sure to total the votes for each difficulty to determine which are the most difficult. (You may need to adjust this list of difficulties to match your culture.)

1. Someone spreading gossip or lies about you at school or around the neighborhood.
2. Being accused of a crime you did not commit.
3. Resisting the temptation to engage in sexual activity before marriage.
4. Working hard and making high grades in school.
5. Obeying and honoring your parents.
6. Having daily quiet time with God, reading the Bible, and praying.
7. Living a righteous, moral life that is pleasing to God.
8. Developing close friendships with other young people who have close friendships with God (those trying to live in way that pleases God).
9. Holding onto the dream God has for your life.
10. Resisting the temptation to use drugs or alcohol.

Discuss these questions:

- God cares deeply about every one of these difficulties you might face. Does this surprise you? Why? Is this hard for you to believe? Why?
- Starting with the difficulties that got the most votes, discuss ways students could rely on Jesus during them.
- Why do you think Jesus cares about and wants to help you with your difficulties?
- Does Jesus always help you the way you expect Him to or want Him to? Why?
- If He chooses to help you in a different way than you expect, does this mean He loves you less? Why?
- If He chooses to answer you at a different time than you expected, does this mean He loves you less?

Trafficking Connection

Throughout this session, emphasize to students that relying on Jesus through all the difficulties of life will help them stay safe and make their dreams come true.

Don't promote trafficking!

Read and discuss Proverbs chapter 9.

- What is the warning about?
- What are the consequences of making the wrong choice? (verses 23, 26-27)

Prayer time

As you play soft instrumental worship music, ask students to think about the difficult things they are going through. Have them ask Jesus to speak to them to tell them how He is helping them through their difficulties. Remind them that Jesus speaks with pictures as well as words. Afterward, allow students to share what He showed them. If there is time, they can draw a picture of it. After prayer, lead students in a discussion about the difficult times they are going through and what Jesus showed them during prayer.

Journaling activity for Session 4

“Who is this coming up from the wilderness leaning on her beloved?”

Show students the list of journal questions below that you wrote on the whiteboard, blackboard, or poster before the session. Have them write the questions in their journals. Allow them a few minutes to write their responses, and then discuss the questions together.

- What wilderness times are you going through now? How do you see Jesus helping you?
- Are you beginning to see Jesus as your beloved? As a bridegroom? Share examples.
- Remember that *persevere* means to keep on working hard even though you may feel discouraged. How can Jesus help you persevere?
- Share a difficult time you went through when you knew Jesus was right there with you. How did you change during this time?
- What difficult things are you facing right now? How do you want Jesus to help you? Why?

Say: Write in your journal what Jesus told you during our prayer time. Then write and ask Him to help you with the difficulties you currently face. Finally, write about how “leaning” on Him makes you feel.

Allow those who want to share to read what they wrote.

Session 5: Jesus invites you to His “secret place” where He protects you.

Focus of *Dream Big* curriculum: You were born to fly. Don't settle for less.

Focus of *Dream Big with God* curriculum: Jesus invites you to His “secret place” where He protects you.

Session objectives:

- To teach teenagers that Jesus is inviting them to a secret place where He protects them and loves them.
- To show them the secret place is mentioned throughout the Bible; we have the privilege of living there.
- To remind them that the secret place is not always easy, but it is where He shares important lessons with us.

Key scripture: “In the secret places of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely” (Song of Songs 2:14 NKJV).

Supplies and materials list: Instrumental worship music, journals

Before class: Read the session notes and choose the questions you think will be most appropriate for your particular group. Write the journaling questions for “Journaling activity for Session 5” below on a whiteboard, blackboard, or poster. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you ways to customize the lesson for your class.

Review Session 4: Spend a few moments reviewing the last session—that when we go through difficult times, Jesus will always be there for us.

Begin Session 5

Say: On the way to our dreams, we will face many difficult times, but if we trust Jesus, taking time to pray and read His Word, He will teach us important lessons. Jesus calls this time we spend with Him the “secret places.”

Read Song of Songs 2:14: “In the secret places of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely” (NKJV).

Say: Jesus actually invites you into these secret places to spend time with Him. It is our choice to go there with Him.

Bible lesson

Read Isaiah 45:3: “I will give you the treasures of darkness and hidden riches of secret places, that you may know that I, the Lord, who call you by your name, am the God of Israel.”

Say: The secret place is a place of secrets; Jesus will reveal His secrets to you. This is His wisdom that will help you in life.

Read Psalm 91:1-2: “He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, ‘He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust’” (NKJV).

Say: In Old Testament times, the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle was the holiest place of all. Only the high priest was allowed to go there, and only once a year. But today, because of Jesus, we have the privilege of being in the Holy of Holies—the secret place of the Most High—whenever we want. In fact, Jesus invites us to dwell there (Psalm 91).

Activity time: Illustrating Psalm 91

Distribute large pieces of paper and markers. Choose teams of two or more students and give each team one of the following verses in Psalm 91. (The number of verses you assign will depend on the number of teams; you don't need to assign all the verses.)

- Psalm 91:3-4
- Psalm 91:5-8
- Psalm 91:9-13
- Psalm 91:14-16

Have teams work together to illustrate the many ways God protects us as we dwell in the secret place. When students have finished their work, read Psalm 91:1-2, then have a member of each team read their assigned passage as other team members display the illustration for it.

Trafficking connection

Spending time with Jesus in the secret place keeps us safe and protected as we pursue our dreams.

Don't promote trafficking!

Read and discuss Proverbs 8:1-11, selecting verses that may apply to your class.

- What is wisdom? Why is wisdom calling (verse 1)?
- Who is wisdom calling to? (verse 4 and 5) Why?
- What connection do you see between having wisdom and not enabling trafficking to continue?

Journaling activity for Session 5

“In the secret places of the cliff, let me see your face...”

Read Song of Songs 2:14. Show students the list of journal questions below that you wrote on the whiteboard, blackboard, or poster before the session. Have them write the questions in their journals. Allow them a few minutes to write their responses, and then discuss the questions together.

- In our key verse, Jesus says, “In the secret place of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely.” What does this verse mean to you now? How does it encourage you?

- Which promises in Psalm 91 mean something particularly special to you? (See the posters teams created earlier.)
- What is your understanding of the secret place? How will this help you in difficult times?
- How will all this help you as you follow your dream?

Prayer time

Play instrumental worship music. Read Song of Songs 2:14 and Psalm 91:1-2 as the music plays.

Say: Jesus is inviting you to enter—and dwell—in the secret place right now, the Holy of Holies. After prayer, ask students to write in their journals what they experienced. If you have time, have students share what they wrote.

Session 6: Jesus helps you be safe and successful as you follow your dreams.

Focus of *Dream Big* curriculum: Review and commitment

Focus of *Dream Big with God* curriculum: Jesus helps you be safe and successful as you follow your dreams.

Session objectives:

- To help teenagers understand that God put a big dream inside them.
- To show them that as they spend time with Him in the secret place, He'll give them the wisdom and direction to help their dream grow.
- To teach that Jesus wants to partner with them and help them follow their dreams.

Key scripture: "Draw me after you and let us run together! The king has brought me into his chambers" (Song of Songs 1:4 NASB).

Supplies and materials list: Instrumental worship music, journals

Before class: Read the session notes and choose the questions you think will be most appropriate for your particular group. Write the journaling questions for "Journaling activity for Session 6" below on a whiteboard, blackboard, or poster. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you ways to customize the lesson for your class.

Review Session 5: Spend a few moments reviewing the last session—that Jesus is inviting them to the secret place of Psalm 91:1 where He protects them and loves them.

Begin Session 6

Read the key scripture, Song of Songs 1:4: "Draw me after you and let us run together! The king has brought me into his chambers."

- What do you think it means to "run" with Jesus?
- What are the "king's chambers"? (The special place in the castle where only the king's family and most trusted friends are invited)

Say: When we ask Jesus to give us a higher friendship with Him, He will take us into that chamber, that area reserved for His most trusted friends. This is part of the secret place where He will help us pursue our dreams. As we spend time with Jesus in the secret place, He shares wisdom with us about our dreams. He shows us how to be safe and successful in following our dreams.

Bible lesson

Read Isaiah 61:1-3. Discuss these questions.

- What does this scripture tell you that you can and will do because the Spirit of God is on you?
- When you think of the dream you have for your life, how many of the things in this scripture relate to this dream? Explain.
- How many of relate to keeping you safe from human trafficking? Empowering you to keep others safe?

Say: God's Spirit is on you to help you fulfill your dreams and purposes.

Activity time: Running together

Ask two students to demonstrate running together. First, have them run separately in whatever direction they want. **Say:** Is this "running together"?

Now have them run in the same direction, but at different paces. **Say:** Is this "running together"?

Finally, have them run in the same direction at the same pace. **Say:** When we "run" with Jesus, we go in the same direction and at the same pace He does. We don't do our own thing but we partner with Him. This applies to our dreams. God has perfect timing for every dream to be born. To run with Him and to stay in the king's chambers to hear His voice, stay close to Him, and remain under His protection, we must often be patient and wait for His perfect timing.

- What challenges might you face as you wait for the right timing for your dreams to be fulfilled?
- What do you do when you pursue your dream and:
 - It gets difficult?
 - Other people don't understand you or your dream?
 - Other people don't support you?
 - You're not sure whether your dream is from God or your own imagination?
 - You have no money, no connections, and no obvious resources to make your dream a reality?
 - You fear you might fail?
 - You _____ ? (Have students fill in the blank.)
- What can you do while waiting for the right time for your dream to be fulfilled? (Study the subject of your dream, find others who've done what you want to do, read about them and contact them if possible, pray, etc.)

Read Habakkuk 2:1-3: "Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time; but at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry" (NKJV).

Say: God will be faithful to bring your dream to reality.

Trafficking connection

Remind students that:

- The point of *Dream Big with God* is to keep you safe and make you successful in following your dreams.
- Human traffickers are real people who want to harm others, but Jesus will help keep you safe.

Don't promote trafficking!

Read Proverbs 8:12-21.

- In what ways do you think you have more wisdom now than you did at the beginning of Dream Big?
- Where does God promise to walk? (See verse 20.) What does this have to do with trafficking?
- What does God promise to give to those who pursue His wisdom? (See verse 21.) How could this help you pursue your dream? (Remind students that the Bible does not say that money is evil. It says that the love of money is evil.)

Journaling activity for Session 6**“Draw me after you and let us run together!”**

Show students the list of journal questions below that you wrote on the whiteboard, blackboard, or poster before the session. Have them write the questions in their journals. Allow them a few minutes to write their responses, and then discuss the questions together.

1. What is your dream?
2. What do you need to make it happen?
3. What is your role in making your dream happen?
4. What is God's role?
5. What can you do to prepare?
6. How will your dream help you, your family, city, and country?

Say: God gives each of us a dream; our dream is part of God's purpose for us.

Lead students in a time of sharing their dreams and answers to the questions for their journals. Encourage everyone to be respectful and encouraging as students share their dreams.

Ask: What is keeping you from pursuing your dream?

Allow several students to respond. Invariably someone will say, “I'm afraid I might fail.” Talk about failure and risk. Explain that we can't pursue our dreams without either one. Share a personal story from your own life of risks you've taken, failures along the way, as well as blessings and dreams you realized along the way. Emphasize something you learned because you failed—something you might not have learned otherwise.

Have students share risks they must take to pursue their dream. Discuss ways they might fail and ways they might succeed. Is the risk worth it? What is the risk of not trying?

Prayer time

Play soft instrumental worship music. Then read the key scripture.

Say: I am giving you permission to dream big dreams for God, and to pursue them. (Many children—and adults—need permission to do this, particularly if someone in the past has prevented them from dreaming.) Quietly tell Jesus that you want to respond to His invitation to “run” with Him, enter His chambers, and learn more about the dream He has for you, how to pursue it, and how it can help your family, city, and country.

Read the six questions above, pausing between each one to give students time to hear from God. Finish by reading Isaiah 61:1-3. As you read each verse, substitute your students' names (for example, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Hailey to...”).

Don't rush this. Allow students plenty of time. You want to encourage them to spend as much time as necessary. As they listen to God, remind them that He speaks with both words and pictures.

Activity time: Dream logos

Encourage students to create logos to illustrate their dream. They can do this in their journals, on a computer, or by using whatever creative medium they'd like. They can incorporate answers to the six questions or whatever best illustrates their dream.

Additional resources

Audacious, by Diana Scimone

www.born2fly.org

Born to Fly and *Soaring Higher*, anti-trafficking curriculums for young children. Available in many languages.

<http://www.born2fly.org>

Diana Scimone's blog

A blog by Born2Fly president Diana Scimone; includes news and updated information about how to stop child trafficking

www.dianascimone.com

Digital resource library

Updated list of free anti-trafficking resources, all available online (pamphlets, posters, videos, etc.)

www.born2fly.org/Digital-Library.html

[Land of the Free: A Prayer Guide to End Human Trafficking in America](#) by Nicholas Canuso and Dixie Canuso (The prayer points in this book are applicable to every country.)

A Look at Love Through the Tabernacle of Moses, by Tiffany Ann Lewis

<http://www.elijahlist.com/words/html/textonly-021412-Lewis.html>

Teaching resources from Mike Bickle on Song of Songs:

<http://mikebickle.org/resources/category/intimacy/song-of-songs/>