
LIFE TEEN PARENT LETTER

Check out our Parent Life website at ltparentlife.com for resources on how to guide your teen in a faith-filled way through modern day culture!

LIFE NIGHT: HOLDING TO HOPE

CONTENT OVERVIEW

We all have hope in something bigger than the present moment. Sometimes our hopes are really more like goals; we hope for a promotion, we hope for our children to do well in school and their activities, we hope to retire someday and enjoy the fruit of a life well lived. These are all reasonable hopes.

In recent weeks, what we hope for has likely shifted. We hope for our job to still exist in a couple of months, we hope for the economy to turn around, we hope for our family to stay healthy, and we hope for an end to the Coronavirus pandemic so life can return to “normal.”

There is a good chance your teen is feeling this way, too. For your teen, their hope right now may be mingled with fear: They hope to get back to school but fear what this uncertainty means for their future. They hope to see their friends and interact regularly again but fear that life may not return to normal. For those who are getting ready to go to college, they hope for their first semester but fear that the pandemic may delay it.

Disappointment may also be mixed with our hope and fear. As parents, you are likely feeling the disappointment and frustration your teen is feeling. It is hard to see our children who have been excited about all that comes with this time of year (sport events, concerts, musicals, prom, graduation) so crushed, knowing there is nothing we can do to fix it. Those are hard moments in the life of a teen who had placed their hope in these experiences.

But in this time of uncertainty, we have a chance to re-evaluate how we approach hope and what hope means for us as Christians. Hope is bigger than a goal or dream. Hope, true hope, is based in something that cannot be changed or go away. Saint Paul wrote about this hope in a letter to the Romans, saying we have hope and this hope “doesn’t disappoint” (Romans 5:5). He is speaking of the hope we have in Jesus and, specifically, our hope in one day being united with Him in heaven. All our other hopes are not bad, but if they are our “big hope,” we are going to end up disappointed.

Even if we experience that thing we hoped for, what do we have left when it is gone? People hope for a promotion, get promoted, and are still unhappy and looking for the next step. Teens hope for their graduation, but once they graduate high school, they look to the next thing. Sometimes our hopes can leave us disappointed. We get the thing that we want only to find out that it was not all we hoped it would be. Other times, we do not get to realize our hope at all and we are left with a whole different kind of disappointment. For many of us, this is what we are experiencing right now. It is the graduation ceremony that will not happen, the baptism of a child that is delayed, even a funeral we cannot attend. These moments are hard because we do not necessarily get them back.

In this time of challenging moments, frustration, and disappointment, we can redirect our families toward hope in Jesus. Despite the disappointments, fears, and challenges

we face in this world, we know Jesus has won the victory over the world and there is more to this life than just what we see in front of us.

We can be examples of this hope with our family by modeling prayer. Our hope is rooted in prayer. During a time when routines are disrupted, make prayer a routine in your household. Remind your teen that this time in history will pass. We will experience moments of disappointment, but where we place our trust is not in experiences or moments; it is in Jesus.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is something you are hopeful for right now? Why?
2. Where have you experienced disappointment recently? How are you feeling now?
3. What can we do, as a family, to be more prayerful and focused on Christ during this time?