

Facilitator:

1. Open with Prayer
2. Welcome any newcomers
3. Try to keep your discussion to an hour and a half at the most.

**Facilitator:** Encourage your members to **BRING THEIR BIBLES** and use them during Connect Group.

### **CONNECT Group study questions for May 7, 2017**

**Title: A Man With a Plan — Genesis 41:33-52; Proverbs 6:6-8; Proverbs 30:25; 2 Timothy 3:1-5**

#### **Announcement:**

This week's study questions for the May 7 sermon will mark the end of this Connect Group semester.

#### **Children:**

Have you ever had a really big project—maybe a Science Project or a long book report to write? Did you make a plan for how you were going to do it a little bit at a time?

#### **Read:** Genesis 41:33-52

*Now therefore let Pharaoh select a discerning and wise man, and set him over the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh proceed to appoint overseers over the land and take one-fifth of the produce of the land of Egypt during the seven plentiful years.*

*And let them gather all the food of these good years that are coming and store up grain under the authority of Pharaoh for food in the cities, and let them keep it. That food shall be a reserve for the land against the seven years of famine that are to occur in the land of Egypt, so that the land may not perish through the famine."*

*This proposal pleased Pharaoh and all his servants. And Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find a man like this, in whom is the Spirit of God?" Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, "Since God has shown you all this, there is none so discerning and wise as you are. You shall be over my house, and all my people shall order themselves as you command. Only as regards the throne will I be greater than you." And Pharaoh said to Joseph, "See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt." Then Pharaoh took his*

*signet ring from his hand and put it on Joseph's hand, and clothed him in garments of fine linen and put a gold chain about his neck. And he made him ride in his second chariot. And they called out before him, "Bow the knee!" Thus he set him over all the land of Egypt. Moreover, Pharaoh said to Joseph, "I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no one shall lift up hand or foot in all the land of Egypt." And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphenath-paneah. And he gave him in marriage Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On. So Joseph went out over the land of Egypt.*

*Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh and went through all the land of Egypt. During the seven plentiful years the earth produced abundantly, and he gathered up all the food of these seven years, which occurred in the land of Egypt, and put the food in the cities. He put in every city the food from the fields around it. And Joseph stored up grain in great abundance, like the sand of the sea, until he ceased to measure it, for it could not be measured.*

*Before the year of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph. Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera priest of On, bore them to him. Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh. "For," he said, "God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's house." The name of the second he called Ephraim, "For God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction."*

**Read: Proverbs 6:6-8**

*Go to the ant, O sluggard;  
consider her ways, and be wise.*

*Without having any chief,  
officer, or ruler,  
she prepares her bread in summer  
and gathers her food in harvest.*

**Read: Proverbs 30:25**

*the ants are a people not strong,  
yet they provide their food in the summer*

**Read: 2 Timothy 3:1-5**

*But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.*

**Question:** What are some of the short-term plans we make—or should make—in our day-to-day living? What long-term plans should we be making? **Facilitator:** A budget, a grocery list or a to-do list, directions for a trip are all short-term plans. A savings plan for college, a business start-up and preparing for retirement are examples of long-term planning.

**Question:** Why do you suppose something as sensible as making a plan for the future—near or distant—is often the last thing many people want to do?

**Question:** A maxim often quoted is *Plan your work, and work your plan*, but often our plans are interrupted or cancelled by circumstances, events or people.

What do you do when your plan is thwarted?

**Question:** Pastor Peppy said that the entire Bible is God's plan for redeeming man. Did God draft his plan to redeem mankind before he created the universe or after Adam sinned? If God's plan to redeem mankind was included in his creation blueprints, was your salvation also part of his plan? How does knowing that affect your plan for the future? **Facilitator:** Have a group member read Ephesians 2:10.

**Question:** Pastor Peppy taught us the SAM method for planning: a plan should be Specific, Attainable and Measurable.

If your goal as a Christian is to mature spiritually, how would you apply the SAM method when you draft your plan? **Facilitator:** A read-through-the-Bible plan is an example, but see if members can identify markers on the road to Christian maturity and create a SAM-compatible plan.

**Question:** Here are some selected passages of Scripture about planning. Read though them and discuss what you learn about making plans and trusting God to lead you and direct your steps. What other Scripture passages can you think of that teach us what God has to say about planning?

**Jeremiah 29:11**

*For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.*

**Proverbs 16:9**

*The heart of man plans his way,  
but the LORD establishes his steps.*

**Psalms 37:23**

*The steps of a man are established by the LORD,  
when he delights in his way;  
though he fall, he shall not be cast headlong,  
for the LORD upholds his hand.*

**Proverbs 20:24**

*A man's steps are from the LORD;  
how then can man understand his way?*

**Philippians 1:6**

*And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*

**Ephesians 2:8-10**

*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*

**Proverbs 3:5-6**

*Trust in the LORD with all your heart,  
and do not lean on your own understanding.  
In all your ways acknowledge him,  
and he will make straight your paths.*

**2 Corinthians 5:7**

*for we walk by faith, not by sight.*