

Changed in the Waiting

**YOUTH MINISTRY RESOURCE
FAMILY CONVERSATIONS**



A crucial part of youth ministry is partnering with parents/guardians, caregivers, or other primary faith influencers in our teens' lives. The family conversation is meant to occur during the week ideally around a meal, but it can be done wherever most naturally fits into your dynamic. The discussion prompts come out of various daily reflections within the *Changed in the Waiting* devotional book. It will be helpful to read the identified daily reflection before engaging the conversations, but it is not required.

The goal of these conversations is to set the table for families to dialogue about faith and the Advent season. Each conversation has six movements: *Pause, Book, Scripture, Discussion, Practice, and Prayer*, each one patterned after the four themes in the Sundays of Advent: hope, love, joy, and peace.

Families are not expected to do all six at once. Let it serve as a resource to start a conversation, allowing it to support reflection as needed.

WEEK 1

Hope

You can prepare for this conversation by engaging with the devotional reflection from Sunday, December 1 (pp. 8–13 in *Changed in the Waiting*).

PAUSE

The season of Advent invites us to pause. While the world seems to speed up at this time of year, we choose to slow down so we can remember the purpose of our upcoming celebration of Christmas. Have everyone take a deep breath. Then share moments from your week that were enjoyable. Talk about what made this week feel busy and what brought joy.

BOOK

Share what stood out to you as you engaged with the devotional reflection from Sunday, December 1. What words or phrases caught your attention? What, if anything, did you not totally understand or have questions about or even disagree with? Discuss together the following quote from the book (p. 9): “Hope lives in the real world and sees things as they actually are, while still holding out for how things *should* be.”

SCRIPTURE

Read this scripture together before engaging the discussion questions.

*In you, LORD my God,
I put my trust.
I trust in you;
do not let me be put to shame,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.
No one who hopes in you
will ever be put to shame,
but shame will come on those
who are treacherous without cause.*

*Show me your ways, LORD,
teach me your paths.
Guide me in your truth and teach me,
for you are God my Savior,
and my hope is in you all day long.
—Psalm 25:1–5*

DISCUSSION

What makes hope difficult? What lies do you hear that distract you from having hope?

When David writes in this psalm that his hope is in God “all day long,” what do you think that looked like?

How does hope change our daily lives?

Can we have hope and lament at the same time? How does hope impact lament, and how does lament impact hope?

What happens to hope when it feels like God is silent?

What are things that remind you to lean into hope?

PRACTICE

As we think about God hearing our laments and providing us with a hope that the world will one day be new, we should be stirred to action. Have everyone identify someone in their life who needs hope. Talk about how you can encourage them in their unique circumstances.

PRAYER

Take the next few moments to pray as a group. Have each person, whether silently or out loud, pray for those people they just identified. Make a plan to reach out to that person this week. Then end your time by having someone pray this for the group:

God, you are patient. We struggle to wait, wanting to experience what you have planned right now: to fix every broken thing. While we wait, we thank you for the gift of hope that is with us in the middle of the mess. Give us more of your hope so we can share it with others. Guide and teach us as we work to be your ambassadors of hope to others. As we wait for you, we rejoice in the anticipation of a coming Savior. We love you, purposeful Creator. Amen.