

Second Sunday in Lent

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.—Philippians 4:1 NRSV

Explore

What is a Promise?

flip chart, markers, paper, pens, hymn “Standing on the Promises” at www.hymnsite.com

Ask the students to tell you what they think a promise really is. How do you make one and keep it? To whom do you make promises? Write what is said on a chalkboard or flip chart and leave it in a place where the teens can see it throughout the lesson. Who has made promises to you? Has God? What are some of God’s promises? How are God’s promises fulfilled? There is a hymn “Standing on the Promises.” Sing or listen to it. It can be found at www.hymnsite.com. What do you think this hymn said to the people in the time it was written. Its writer, R. Kelso Carter, lived between 1849 and 1928. Could this hymn be adapted for today? How? Try it.

Extract

Finding the Promises

Read each scripture reference aloud using several students. After each is read, ask these related questions.

Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants

Genesis 15:1–12, 17–18

Philippians 3:17–4:1–15

Alma 5:23–28

Doctrine and Covenants 16:4e–g

Genesis 15:1–12, 17–18

Philippians 3:17–4:1–15

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Doctrine and Covenants 16:4e–g

What did God promise to give Abram?

How did God make Abram believe that all that was promised to him would actually be given to him?

How do Genesis and Philippians relate to each other? Who is speaking and what is being promised within each?

What are we promising to God when we are baptized? What does it mean “to covenant”?

What is God promising to us through the act of baptism?

What is being said?

What promise is made?

How do the promises that were made to the people so long ago still apply in today’s world? God’s promises to Abram were very specific, but Jesus’ promise to be with us always is not so tangible. Discuss these thoughts with the teens. What parts do those promises play in our own personal lives?

Experience

We Must Trust in Our Promises

Prepare the teens to do a trust fall. Probably many have participated in a similar activity before. To review, the class divides into pairs. (If there is an odd number, the instructor may need to participate.) Partners should be as close to the same height and weight as possible. Determine who will fall and who will catch first. The faller should remain as straight as possible with their arms across their chest. Do not bend at the knees or waist. They must be able to communicate with the catcher.

The catcher should stand with one foot in front of the other in a lunge position to strengthen their balance. They need to be alert and place their hands in position just below the faller's shoulder blades. They should be prepared for the weight of the faller. They will communicate with the faller assuring him or her continually.

The faller's back is to the catcher. When the command is given, the faller falls straight back without bending at the knees or waist. Make three tries before changing roles.

After this exercise is complete, discuss what it took to trust your partner. How does a promise fit with trust? Every time someone makes a promise to us, we trust that they will fulfill it. The same goes for when we make a promise to someone else—even when we make a promise to God. We expect God to keep promises.

Binding Us Together

Have the class get into pairs. Tie one wrist of one person to another person's wrist with a piece of yarn. Tell the teens that every time we make a promise, it ties us to the person to whom we make the promise. It even applies when we make a promise to God. With each promise we make to God and actually fulfill, we grow closer and closer to God. Discuss these thoughts, then cut the yarn that binds the teens together, saying to them, "Each time we break our promise, we also break the bond that was made. When the bond is broken, we are left again to ourselves. We must try to keep our promises to each other and God so we can create bonds that will never be broken."

yarn, scissors

Expand

For What Do You Stand?

Think about the promises you've made to others. If you have been baptized, think about your promise to God. How do you measure up in keeping promises?
Respond on the paper provided.

paper, pens