

# YEAR 3, MONTH 1

## Part I. Prepare

**Topic: God Has A Plan For Me**

**Key Verses:**

***Job 42:2 “I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours (God) can be thwarted.”***

***Malachi 3:6 “I the Lord do not change.”***

**Key Take-Away:**

God’s plan is always better than our own plan. We are given a choice: 1. To fight against God’s plan and make our own way, or 2. To embrace God’s plan (to patiently submit to God’s ways).

**Important notes for this meeting:**

Today’s first meeting is going to set the groundwork for the rest of this year’s meetings that will address important topics/issues facing our girls during the tenuous tween years. Be encouraged, though. The Bible is perfectly clear that trials and tribulations are part of God’s plan. They will sharpen us and our girls as we gently guide them through these waters ahead. Today’s lesson may be a little messy, so have a newspaper or tarp to do the craft activity.

**Materials needed for this meeting:**

- Bible
- Notebooks (1 per daughter). You can continue notebooks from last year, space permitting, or start with new.
- Memory Verse Notecard Rings (have additional cards and rings)
- *God’s Perfect Strategic Plan* (1 per girl; Year 3, Month 1 Printables)
- Perennial seeds or starts (any variety) to grow. Seeds that grow well in fall may include plants like basil, cilantro, radicchio, arugula, sunflowers, etc.
- Small Containers for plants (recycled egg crates, disposable cups, small pails/buckets, mini mason jars, etc.)
- Planting soil and water
- Crafting supplies to decorate the planters: Colorful paper, stickers, permanent markers, Mod Podge glue, paint brushes, scissors, embellishments/adornments.

## Part II. Lead

### First 15:

Gathering time. Welcome everyone. Name tags are handy to use during the first meeting so that everyone can re-learn names. Grab a snack if your group is providing that. Remember, water and a simple snack is ideal; keep it simple! Gather your group together around a bucket of soil and some seeds set out (perennial seeds work best). Give each girl a small jar or planting container to fill with soil. Have each girl pick a few seeds she would like to plant into the soil and then cover them up. Let the girls decorate their plant containers to personalize them with stickers, Mod Podge glue and embellishments. Once everyone has a plant, have them sit with their moms and with their plants as you begin moving through the lesson.

### Let's Go 70:

This is the heart of your gathering time. Use the following outline to help guide you in the process, but don't feel bound to it. Take some time with the material before you lead so that you are able to adapt things to best meet your group's needs. The **action steps are in bold**.

#### 1. Open in prayer

2. Have the girls **update their Bible verses by adding this month's new verses: *Job 42:2 and Malachi 3:6***. You may need to add more notecards to the rings if they have run low on blank cards. If they don't have their cards from last year, provide new ones to start fresh with this year.
3. **Read the verses out loud** (one girl might read a line or two, then switch readers to encourage girls to participate in a simple way). Then, **read *Psalm 139* starting at line 1 and ending at the end of line 18, and *Jeremiah 29:11***.
  - ➔ **Ask:** What kinds of things change? (This is broad and should include most everything in the world).
4. **Have the girls Brainstorm a list of things that can NEVER CHANGE.** Write them down on a piece of chart paper or a dry-erase board. This is challenging, but here are a few ideas to get you started:

- Navigational directions - north is always north; south is always south, etc.
- Death - everyone dies eventually
- Sun/Moon - comes out every day, even when we can't see it
- Unpredictability of life - the reality that life is always changes
- God's love for you - every single one of you
- God's omnipotence (power)
- God's omniscience (always knowing)
- God's omnipresence (His constant presence which is ALWAYS near)

**\* Make the Point** - This is a pretty short list. MOST everything changes to some degree or in some way. One of the only things that does NOT change is God.

5. **Pair/Share:** Allow moms and daughters to quietly share with each other about some of the bigger changes they have lived through their life (either individually or together). They can write this list down in the CG notebook. (5 minutes)

6. **Turn and share with the large group. Have a few volunteers share** about changes they have lived through or experienced. Make sure to have the volunteers describe HOW these changes made them feel. Some of these answers might be small and seemingly insignificant while others may feel big and very significant. Be prepared to respond to each girl's contribution by affirming what she shares and by acknowledging the impact of the change in her life.

7. **Talk about change:**

- Changes can feel unexpected and sometimes unwelcome in our lives.
- Sometimes they bring good surprises but other times they bring challenges and trials to our life.
- God can and does handle ALL things and NOTHING surprises Him. He does not change!
- Changes can feel a lot like weeds in a garden — they can creep in slowly or pop up quickly. They sometimes grow where we don't want them to grow. They can even suffocate other plants that were already there. Weeds can become overwhelming in a garden if we ignore them. But other times, weeds end up being far more beautiful than we anticipated and replace something in an unexpected, but positive way.

8. **Pair/Share:** Moms and daughters talk together about times in your life that you made plans that did not turn out the way you thought they would. How did this make you feel? How did it end up going instead? How might God have been using your interrupted plans for His purposes? Was there evidence of that?

**\* Make the Point** - Girls - God's plan is SO VERY GOOD! The hard thing is that His plan is not always the same as ours, CLEAR or KNOWN. This can make us feel powerless, frustrated, unloved or even abandoned at times. We have two choices: 1) Either throw a fit, or 2) Trust God and His plan. Remember, He is good and His plans are good, too. When we are tempted to throw a fit, let's remind each other to trust God's perfect strategic plan. The flower is a visual reminder that we can let God decide where to plant us and we can bloom wherever that is. Bloom where you are planted! Do not worry about being in a new or different garden than you anticipated. Trust the Master Gardener. Our job is to sink our roots into God and we will grow wherever He plants us!

9. **Pass out *God's Perfect Strategic Plan*** to each girl (found on Year 3, Lesson Printables). As a group, **review the plan together**. Then, have each girl fill in the last two questions at the bottom of the plan for herself, based on the group's conversations today. Here is a sample answer:

**What do I need to DO to see God's plan working in my life?** Be in the Word, reading my Bible and spend time talking to God so that I am more aware of His plan for my life.

**How can I learn to trust God's plan more?** Talk to Godly mentors (i.e. parents who love me) about what I think His plan might be for me; then ask for feedback from the mentor(s) – do they see ways I can lean more into God's purpose for me? Pray often that God would help grow my faith in His plan and reminding me that I do not have to figure everything out myself.

\* These plans can stay in their notebooks to refer back to.

10. Move the group to wherever you are going to do the planting activity. Give each girl a planting container (a jar, cup, etc.). Have potting soil in a large bucket or two with small shovels or scoops to fill each individual container. Walk the girls through planting their seeds/starts, then have them add a bit of water. They can decorate their planters with the remaining time.

 **Getting to the HEART of the issue:** All we need to do is bloom where God plants us. That's it! If we can focus on where God has placed us in life (at this moment), giving thanks for what He has brought us through (all of our past circumstances and life changes), then we are more open and receptive to His future plans and changes that will come our way.

### **Final 5:**

Gather everyone together to wrap up the meeting. **Circle up and pray** over this sweet tribe that has come together. Make sure to dismiss on time; it is extremely important to honor everyone's time, especially those that desire structure and schedules.

**Suggested Homework for the Month:** Spend 5-10 minutes in quiet prayer or meditation every day this week. Listen for God's guidance and for His direction in your life. What is God asking of you? Where is He needing you to be working/acting/helping/living in your purpose? What needs to change in your life so that you can prioritize this quiet time every day? Talk to your mom and family about ways you can adjust your schedule to make a little more room for God. With daily prayer and quiet time, your faith is bound to grow, and as it does, God's plan for you may become a little bit easier to trust!

Both moms and daughters should complete the Core Values Index (CVI) online test BEFORE we meet again next month (both moms and daughters will need to do this separately, though younger girls will likely need some help defining terms while they are taking the test). You can access a FREE version using the link below:

<http://livingwholehearted.com/take-the-cvi/>

Write down your highest/strongest Core Value and your secondary Core Value after you complete the test. Bring these results with you to our next group meeting.

## **Part III: Reflect and Connect**

Email out the 'Suggested Homework for the Month' (printed above; do this even if you printed it out already for your group). With the beginning of this third year, we desire to see personal change and growth happening in our girls! Courageous Girls is more than just a Bible study, an after-school activity, or a girl's group. The goal is for these gatherings to build life transforming relationships between the girls, with God, and with their moms so that there is growth for every participant — daughters and moms alike. Take inventory of your group. How are hearts changing? What potential roadblocks lie ahead this year for your group? What communication patterns are causing issues for your group's growth? Take a hard look at what has developed in your group thus far and pray fervently for God's plan to continue taking shape over this vital group. It was HIS will that bore the creation of Courageous Girls. Let's make sure His will is continuing to pave the way into this new year!

