

Artist:

TOBYMAC
TOBYMAC.COM

Album Title & Record Company:

TBD
FOREFRONT RECORDS

Video Title:

PROMISED LAND

Study By:

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Playlist

This song is featured on “The Linc: Hope” Spotify playlist – which is the perfect way to remind your students what you’ve taught them in this session. To share it with them, click the live link on the web version of this study.

Theme

Hope, Life; Meaning/Purpose, Doubt

Objective

Students will consider the reality that God has placed eternity in the hearts of every human – and will discover why many people struggle with the feeling that “there must be more than this.”

Warm Up

Pick and Choose – You’ll need several brown paper bags. Each bag should contain one item. The items should be of varying degrees of value and usefulness, such as a new pair of socks, a five-dollar bill, a movie ticket, a new toothbrush, a thumb drive, a pack of gum, a candy bar, etc. After secretly placing one item in each bag, call on volunteers to, one at a time, choose a bag to open (without touching it). Upon opening the bag, the participant shows the group the item. Continue until all bags are gone. Next, have the group vote on which item was the lamest and which was the best. Have those two people engage in a final game. The person voted to have the lamest item gets to choose whether he wants to trade with the person who has the best – or whether he will open a final “mystery bag” – which he will have to keep regardless of what’s inside. Make sure this mystery bag has an excellent item.

Transition

Explain how easily dissatisfied we can become with our circumstances. We wonder if following Jesus really works. While God teaches us to learn contentment, there is a “holy” kind of discontent that every person is born with – an instinctual suspicion that there is something greater beyond all of this.

The Story

Toby has recorded his thoughts about “Promised Land” along with the story behind the song and video: <https://youtu.be/95qnvqSC2eg>

The Video

Ask the participants to pay attention to the lyrics and any concepts communicated visually. Then, play Toby-mac’s “Promised Land” music video.

Transition

Encourage students to discuss some of the images and lyrics of the song. Be sure to cover these concepts:

- What motivates a coal miner to keep working day after day?
- When did the song shift from the disappointment of “Where is my Promised Land” to the victory of “You are my Promised Land”?
- What images were especially symbolic or meaningful to you?

Bible Study

Read **Ecclesiastes 12:13** together aloud. Explain that this verse is the wrap-up message of Ecclesiastes. It comes after the author has observed everything (wealth, pleasure, education, ambition, accomplishments, family, and so on) and has concluded that all of life seems pretty pointless. Then, point the students to the **Look It Up** section of their Student Guide and discuss the questions as a group.

- Are we actually supposed to be afraid of God? If not, what does “fear God” mean?
- How would you describe someone who’s good at showing that they fear God?
- The Bible is FULL of “commands,” right? So, how does a person go about “keeping” them?
- What does “keep His commandments” really mean in daily life?

Talk It Up – Read **Ecclesiastes 3:11** together aloud. Then discuss the **Talk It Up** questions.

- Why do you think God created people with a yearning for the eternal?

The verse tells us that humans cannot fathom the ways of God from beginning to end.

- What does this mean?
- How “knowable” is God?

- When you think about eternity – what concepts and ideas flow into your mind?
- In his famous book *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis said: “If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.”
- How does that quote relate to Toby-mac’s video of “Promised Land”?

Wrap Up

Either discuss these questions or ask the group to think about them silently before you show the video again.

- Are you, or is someone you know, searching for the “Promised Land”?
- Could God be showing you that HE is that “Promised Land”?
- What discourages you from seeing your relationship with Jesus as your Promised Land?

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