

- What does this verse mean when it says that we are the clay and God is the potter?
- What do you think God's plans were when he made us?
- Why do you think God chose to make you just as you are?
- What do you suppose God thinks about his creation?

Say: Let's say the verse again. Recite the verse with the children. Say: This verse says that each one of us is a work of art. Because God is great and wonderful, his creations are beautiful. Just as your clay creation is a result of your own intelligence, creativity, and personality, we, as God's creation, show God's intelligence, creativity, and personality.

This verse also says that we have purpose. When a potter creates a pot or a mug, he or she has a purpose in mind for it. God has a purpose in mind for each of us. Let's thank God for creating us and ask him to show us what purpose he has in mind for us.

Go around the room and have the children all recite the verse as a prayer for each child. For example, for Christine, the class will pray, "Yet, O Lord, you are Christine's Father. Christine is the clay, you are the potter, Christine is the work of your hand." When you've prayed the verse for each child, pray: God we thank you for creating us. Help us to know what your purpose for us is. Thank you for making us the work of your hand. Amen.



REFLECTIVE

Making Plans

*"For I know the plans I have for you,
declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and
not to harm you, plans to give you a hope
and a future."*

JEREMIAH 29:11

SUPPLIES: You'll need a Bible, copies of a blank calendar page for the upcoming month, pencils, paper, a chalkboard and chalk or newsprint, and markers.

Give each child a copy of the blank calendar page for the upcoming month and a pencil. Then say: Write down all of the plans that you already know

about for the month to come. Be sure to include all of your soccer practices or music lessons on the right day so that you won't miss any. Don't forget holidays and birthdays. Write down each and every plan you already have for the month to come.

Allow a few minutes for children to think and write.

Then give each child a sheet of blank paper, and say: Now, let's think about more long-term plans. Write down these questions and spend the next few minutes answering them:

- What would you like your life to be like in high school?
- What would you like your life to be like ten years after high school?

Have the children jot down words that show the plans they'd like to make for their future, such as driving a car, going to college, or becoming an astronaut. While the kids are writing down their plans, write Jeremiah 29:11 on the chalkboard or newsprint.

Have the children describe to the rest of the class what they'd like their lives to be like in the future. Then ask:

- What were you thinking as you wrote down your plans for the month and as you considered your future?

Say: It's fun to think about all the great things that might happen to us in the future. But sometimes it's a little scary to think about the future. There are lots of things to think about, and it can be hard to make decisions. And while we like to think about all the good things that will happen, there will also be sad things. But God's Word gives us hope. Jeremiah 29:11 tells us what God thinks about us and our future. Let's read it together.

Have the children read the verse aloud.

- How does this verse affect how you feel about your future?

Have the children each think of one word that represents a plan they have for themselves or that expresses their excitement or apprehension about the future.

Let each child write his or her word on the chalkboard around the verse.

After each child writes his or her word, have the rest of the class affirm that person by stating the child's name and then reciting the verse together. For example, Chris may write the word "car" to represent plans to drive. Have the class say, "Chris, 'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.'"