

Choices

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CHOICES: UNIT OVERVIEW

MEMORY VERSE: “If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.” James 1:5

Every day we are faced with choices: choices about what to wear, what to eat and how to live. The most life changing choices come when we have to decide to honor God or to follow our flesh, to follow the prompting of the Holy Spirit or be driven by the world’s standards. These choices we will all have to account for someday before our Father in heaven.

In the first unit of curriculum, we knew of no better place to start than at the beginning. The most basic and fundamental principle that we have is seeking wisdom. **We need to have wisdom from God to be able to make the right choices.** What kind of choices? Choices between right and wrong, life and death, daily choices and the choice to stand firm in the things that God has commanded of us.

This unit is designed to be the framework of your center. Many of these lessons will teach you how to handle each of the activities that go on in the center as if you are doing them for the first time. You will teach your children how to handle snack time; how to act during Bible Club times and all of the other time segments that you have incorporated into your center’s schedule.

In this unit on choices, you will find...

BIBLE CLUBS that show you how Adam and Eve had a choice to make that ushered in the first sin, how Queen Ester had a life or death choice to make when she had to decide to stand up for her people, how Samson had to make daily choices whether or not to follow his Nazarite vow and how Joseph made very godly choices as he chose to stand firm in the midst of temptation and sin!

PRACTICAL LIVING will teach the children how to use good table etiquette, how to use the S.A.Y. Yes!® Bank, what the S.A.Y. Yes! standards are and how to be prepared in an emergency.

READ ALOUD, CRAFTS and **RECREATION** will teach them how to keep going with the little engine that could, how to make good choices as they play games and many other things.

We pray that through this unit on choices the children to that you are ministering to will begin the exciting adventure of learning about God’s Word through experiential learning. We also hope that they will begin to see that there is always a choice to be made in every situation. We want to equip them with the skills to be able to make the right one. The one that honors God! We also hope that this unit provides you, as a staff or volunteer, with the help you need to feel equipped to teach the children about God each day that your doors are open. We hope that this curriculum will be a tool that brings God down to a personal level with each of the children with which you are working.

NEW!

Introduction to Gospel-Focused Lessons

(used by permission)

The entire Bible is about redemption. The story line could be titled “The Great Rescue” or “The Return of the King;” for from the moment God stepped into the Garden to look for Adam and Eve after they sinned (Genesis 3:8), the Bible is a record of His undertaking to restore fallen creation.

It follows then, that the central character of the Bible is Christ. When Jesus spoke with the disciples on the road to Emmaus, “beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself” (Luke 24:27). From the creation account to the description of the New Jerusalem, every story, every character, and every principle points us to Him.

Therefore, as teachers and students of the Word, we must be very careful not to leave Him out. Jesus reprimanded the Jews of His day, saying, “You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life” (John 5:39-40). How easy it is for us to do the same thing! We have to remember that Jesus is:

- Central to every passage in the Bible. Like the Ethiopian eunuch that Philip met in the desert (Acts 8:26-35), if we don’t understand that a passage is pointing us to Christ, we will misinterpret it.
- Critical to every passage in the Bible. Jesus said, “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). We cannot obey a single passage of Scripture without His power in us. Neither can our students.
- The Point of every passage in the Bible. Paul said, “I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified” (1 Corinthians 2:2). The main reason for studying any passage of Scripture is to learn more of Him. There really is nothing else to know.

If we leave our students with a “You can do it (by yourself, apart from Christ)” message, our teaching is not Christian teaching. Despite our intentions to give them biblical principles with which to govern their behavior, we actually leave children with something very unbiblical: moralism or legalism. Moralism says, “It’s up to you to become a good person. Good people are favored by God, so be a good person!” Legalism adds that following rules is the way to become a good person. Often our lessons are backed up by biblical stories or principles, but our underlying message (ex. “Daniel was courageous, so go be courageous!”) could be preached by any Mormon, Muslim, or Jew!

The goal of moralistic teaching is to produce good or nice people. A moralist sees sin as manageable and holiness as obtainable. Even if God gets lip service, a moralist’s power source is herself and she takes the credit for the final product. Moralism only whitewashes the grave. In contrast, Christian teaching encourages dependence on the Holy Spirit in order to become faith-full people. Christians view sin as uncontrollable without the Holy Spirit’s power; therefore they know that holiness is a supernatural work for which God gets all the credit! The goal of Christian teaching is not ultimately to create well-behaved children but to reach children’s hearts. That goal can only be accomplished by the Spirit, so both teachers and students are utterly dependent on Him!

Week 1: Right or Wrong

Moralism is not good news, and there is no hope in it. It is really no gospel at all! (Galatians 1:7). If moralism is what we are teaching, we have missed the point of Scripture; we have forgotten the big story of redemption. Christ alone provides the full payment required to cover our sins, the perfect obedience necessary to win the Father's constant approval, and the dynamic power essential to transform our lives to His likeness. We must always point our students to Christ as our only hope. The following revisions and additions to the S.A.Y. Yes!® Curriculum are an attempt to steer us in that direction.

RIGHT OR WRONG: WEEK 1

WEEK 1 - BIBLE CLUB

LESSON AIM: To help the child understand that he/she has the freedom to make right or wrong choices; to give the child the source to all right choices.

SCRIPTURE Genesis 2:15 - 3:24; James 1:2-8

MEMORY VERSE: “If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.” James 1:5

God created man, Adam, and placed him in a beautiful garden. God gave man His first commandment. Man could eat of any tree in the garden except one. Along with the command, came the warning of the consequence if Adam chose to disobey. Eating of the forbidden fruit would bring death.

Adam was free to choose to obey or disobey God. God created man with the “capacity for moral responsibility.”¹

In the next scene, we see that God is concerned that Adam is alone—he needed a helper. Putting Adam to sleep, God takes from Adam a rib and creates woman, Eve. God intended for man and woman to be a unit. Together, they would serve God. History has shown us that society flourishes when man and woman serve together as a unit, walking in the will of God. When man and woman rebel, do their own thing, and serve their own desires, society struggles.

The last verse of Genesis, chapter 2, speaks of the innocence of Adam and Eve, while the first verse of Genesis, chapter 3, speaks of the evil of Satan. Here, man begins the steps toward sin, guilt, shame, and loss of innocence.

- vs. 1&4: Doubt is placed in the mind of the woman.
- vs. 5: God is slandered.
- vs. 6: Looking at what God had forbidden.
- vs. 6: Lusting after that which was forbidden.
- vs. 6: Disobeying God’s commands.
- vs. 6: Peer pressure.
- vs. 7: Awareness of their sin. Innocence lost.

Their initial reaction was to hide from God. When confronted by God, Adam and Eve were quick to blame others.

We can learn and grow from wrong choices. God did not give up on His creations. He killed an animal, using the hide to clothe Adam and Eve, thus **hiding** their nakedness. This is symbolic of the later animal sacrifices and ultimately the sacrifice of Jesus, God’s Son. Adam had hope in the future, as seen in the name he gave his companion. The name, “Eve”, vs. 20, literally means, “living”.

Discipleship
Tip

Ask the children to list all the choices they must make each day. *Encourage* the children to ask themselves before they make a choice, “Would Jesus be pleased with this choice?” Share with the children how you use God’s Word to help you in making choices.

¹ The Bible Knowledge Commentary, Old Testament, pg 31

Hook

MATERIALS: clues, Bibles, small “treasures”

- Lay out a treasure hunt for the kids to follow.
- Have a treasure for each child.
- Give each child the first clue of the treasure hunt. It will be a Bible verse they are to look up and read.
- The leader is **very clear that the only way** to get to the treasure is to follow the directions as they are written down.
- The first clue may be Matthew 3:10 (the ax is already at the root of the tree). Then they would look for a tree where the second clue would be posted.
- Make the clues fit your facilities. Suggested verses and places in which to send the kids are found on the following page.
- As the kids start out looking for the second clue, have other adults come and try to persuade the kids to follow them. “We will take you right to the treasure. You don’t have to waste your time looking up those verses.”
- If the child(ren) choose(s) to go with an adult who is tempting them with an “easy way to the treasure” they just wander around endlessly.
- The children who take the time to look up the verses and follow the clues should be led to a treasure (small candy bar, gift pencil, etc. 1 per child)

DEBRIEF

- 1) What did you think when you were first told of the Treasure Hunt? What feelings did you have? What did you think when adults suggested they could get you to the treasure without you having to really work for it?
- 2) If you made the wrong choice and followed the directions of the adults, how do you feel now? Why did you choose to follow the adults?
- 3) If you made the right choice and followed the clues how did you feel when the adults were trying to get you to follow them?
- 4) What did I (the leader) say that would have told you what you were to do? (Answer: The only way to the treasure is to follow the directions as they are written)

SOME REFERENCES TO USE IN TREASURE HUNT:

New International Version of the Bible

Matthew 11:11	Nursery door
Genesis 2:23	Women's restroom door
Exodus 17:1	Water fountain
Proverbs 3:18	A tree
Matthew 3:11	Baptismal
Isaiah 28:20	Baby's crib
Joshua 1:8	Stack of Bibles
Proverbs 30:8	Kitchen
Nehemiah 4:17	A Wall
Ephesians 2:21	Corner of a building
Matthew 5:40	Coat closet
I Chronicles 15:16	Piano or Organ
Proverbs 3:11	S.A.Y. Yes!® Standards
Deuteronomy 6:9	A door frame
Psalms 110:1	A footstool
Psalms 100:4	A gate
Revelation 22:5	A lamp
Genesis 2:7	Men's restroom door
Ecclesiastes 3:3	A clock
Matthew 13:25	A patch of weeds

Bible Story

MATERIALS: sand, cake pan, popsicle sticks, marking pens, construction paper, glue

BEFORE BIBLE CLUB

- Make the Garden of Eden, Adam, Eve.
- Use popsicle sticks to make the naked Adam and Eve - leave the popsicle stick bare except draw a face at the top.
- Use construction paper to make trees, bushes, animals - glue them onto popsicle sticks. Don't forget the tree of knowledge and the serpent.
- Place the sand in the cake pan. Make sure it is deep enough for the popsicle sticks to stand on their own when pushed into the sand.
- Placing the trees, bushes, animals in the sand make the Garden of Eden.
- Practice telling the story using the Popsicle stick figures.

DURING BIBLE CLUB

- Tell the children to listen carefully to the story, for at the end you will be asking them questions.
- Use the Popsicle stick figures to tell the story.
- Put the following story into your own words. It is most effective when you “tell” the story as opposed to reading it or quoting it from memory.
- If you have High School kids with whom you are working, copy the story and have them read it to themselves.
- Then have them look the passage up in the Bible. Be sure to cut off the top portion with the directions for the younger children.

“Creation”

When God created the world, He first created a beautiful garden. He named the Garden, “Eden”. It was more beautiful than anything we have ever seen. God also created animals to go into the garden. Then He created Man.

God put Man in the garden and told him he was to care for everything in the garden. God told man that he was **free** to eat from every tree in the garden **except one**. God named that tree, the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

At that time, Man had never experienced anything bad. Everything in the garden was good. The animals were all his friends, none of them would ever try to attack him. There were no poisonous plants. Everything was safe.

Can you imagine what it would have felt like to be where everything was safe?

God told Man there would be a consequence if he ate of the tree of knowledge. The consequence would be that man would die.

Now God noted that man was alone. Yes, he had animals, but animals could not be his friend in the way he needed a friend. They couldn't talk with him, they couldn't reason

with him. So God put man to sleep and took a rib from his side and created woman. The man was pleased with the woman.

The man and woman were both naked, but they felt no shame.

Now Satan, in the form of a snake came and asked the woman, “Did God really tell you couldn’t eat from a tree in the garden?”

“God said we could eat from anything except the tree in the middle of the garden. He said that we were not even to touch it or we would die.” The woman answered.

“You won’t die! God doesn’t want you to eat it because He knows that if you do you will know the difference between good and evil and you will be just like Him,” Satan lied.

The woman looked at the tree and the fruit on it. It sure did look good. She thought it also might even make her wise. The woman chose to listen to Satan’s lie and disobey God, so she took some of the fruit and ate of it. She then gave some of the fruit to her husband and he too chose to disobey God. He ate of the fruit also.

Suddenly they realized they were naked. They covered their bodies as fast as they could, and sewed together some fig leaves. Then they heard footsteps in the Garden—they knew God was walking in the garden.

They hid from God, for they felt guilty for what they had done. God called to the man.

“Where are you?”

“I heard you walking in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked,” the man answered.

“How did you know you were naked? Did you eat of the tree of knowledge?” God asked.

“The woman told me to,” the man responded.

“What have you done?” God asked the woman.

“The serpent lied to me and I believed him so I ate of the tree,” the woman said.

So God spoke to the Serpent, Satan, and told him he would be cursed and would crawl on his stomach and there would be hatred between the children of the serpent and the children of the snake.

Then God spoke to the woman and told her he would greatly increase her pain in having children, and that her husband would rule over her.

Finally, God spoke to the man and told him that because he had chosen to disobey, the ground would be cursed and man would have to work hard in order to get enough food to feed his family.

God also told man he must leave the beautiful Garden of Eden.

The man, Adam, named his wife Eve which means, “living”. He named her this, for she would be the mother of all the living.

God now killed an animal and from the skin of the animal God made clothes for Adam and Eve.

Adam and Eve now knew both good and evil.

They were dead to the life they had known in the Garden of Eden. Never again would they be as happy as they had been in the Garden.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Who were the characters in our story? *Man [Adam], Woman [Eve], Satan, God*

What did God tell the man he could do? *The man and woman could eat from any tree in the Garden of Eden except for the Tree of Knowledge.*

Why did the woman eat from the tree? *She listened to the serpent's lies.*

What did Adam and Eve do after they had eaten of the Tree of Knowledge? *They covered themselves with fig leaves because they suddenly realized they were naked.*

What did they do when they heard God walking in the garden? *Why do you think they did that? They hid from God.*

In our treasure hunt today who was in charge? *The leader*

What did he/she tell you to do? *They were to follow only the directions that were written out.*

What did you do? Who was acting like Satan? *The adults who tried to get them to do their own thing.*

God has given us the freedom to make choices. Adam and Eve knew what was right - but they chose to disobey. Today in our activity you each knew what was right. Some of you chose to obey, others chose to disobey.

What was the consequence for Adam and Eve because they disobeyed? *They had to leave the Garden of Eden, Eve would suffer pain in childbirth, Adam would have to work hard to provide enough food for his family.*

What was the consequence for those who disobeyed the leader in our activity? *They didn't get a treasure.*

What was your strongest feeling when you had to choose to follow the leader or follow the adults who were going to lead you in the wrong direction? Why do you think you felt that way? Did you do what you felt like doing or what you knew was right.

How do you know what is a right choice? *The Bible is God's Word to us. The Bible has the answer for every question we might have.*

The Bible says we are to obey the one who is in authority over us.

Have them look up Hebrews 13:17. (Some of the children may have never even held a Bible. You may want to place a bookmark in the Bibles before Bible Club so it is easy for the children to find the verse.) There are times when the Bible tells us not to follow the human authority over us. Acts 4:19-20; 5:29. We are not to disobey God's law.

We each want to make the right choices so we don't suffer the consequences of a wrong choice. We can know what a right choice is by studying the Bible and knowing what God wants for us to do. GOD ALWAYS WANTS WHAT IS BEST FOR US! Because God has given us the freedom to choose, we can't blame others when we make the wrong choice.

Lead the children in a time of prayer.

NEW! Bible Club Option

GOSPEL FOCUS

* Note: The students need a basic understanding of the Adam & Eve story before doing this lesson. Consider doing the other Bible Club lesson for this week first or briefly retelling the story before you do this lesson.

LESSON AIM: To help the child understand how Jesus is the solution to the problems that began with Adam & Eve; to show how all people have inherited Adam & Eve’s problems but also have the choice to let Jesus be their solution. Despite Adam & Eve’s choice & despite our bad choices, God is in control & has the power to make things right!

SCRIPTURE: Genesis 2:9,16-17; 3:1-24

MATERIALS: A large piece of chart paper & a marker; cardboard boxes, toy bricks, or large blocks to make a low wall; a clean dress shirt; an old buttoned shirt; 2 hangers; something with which to stain the old shirt (preferably something quick-drying like Crayola® washable markers. However, if you want to get more creative and won’t mind the mess, use paint, mud, ketchup, you name it. Just be mindful to avoid the stain soaking through to the actor’s clothing when he/she has to put the shirt on); tape & a trash bag; clean-up supplies.

CHARACTERS: Two Staff/Helpers to play the roles of Sinner and Jesus. At the appointed times, the Sinner/Actor will put on Adam & Eve’s stained shirt and the Jesus/Actor will wear Jesus’ shirt.

SET-UP:

- Using the chart paper, copy the chart below (leaving the answers out), and hang it up at the front of the room. You will fill in these answers when the children respond to your questions.



	Adam & Eve	Jesus
1	Made <u>wrong</u> choice	<u>Always</u> makes the <u>right</u> choices
2	<u>Gave in</u> to Satan’s tempting	<u>Resisted</u> Satan’s tempting
3	<u>Disobeyed</u> God’s one rule	<u>Obeys ALL</u> God’s rules ALL the time
4	<u>Blamed</u> everyone else for their sin	<u>Took the blame</u> for everyone else’s sin
5	Their choice brought <u>death</u> for everyone.	His choice brings <u>eternal life</u> for all who <u>believe</u> .
6	Their choice <u>separated</u> people from God.	He is the only way people can <u>get back</u> to God.
7	Their choice led to a <u>broken</u> world.	His choice will make the whole world <u>new</u> !

- Use the hangers to hang up the two shirts against the wall on either side of the chart paper. You may want to tape a trash bag to the floor underneath the old t-shirt, especially if you're using mud or paint, etc.
- Explain to the students that we're going to pretend that the old shirt belongs to Adam & Eve and the clean dress shirt belongs to Jesus. Further explain that the shirts will be marked or stained as indications of wrong choices/disobedience.
- As the children say the answers the following questions, use your marker to fill in the blanks on the chart. Suggestion: you may want to have the staff/helper who will be playing the Sinner/Actor, use the markers, paint, etc. to mark or stain the old shirt, as directed.

Adam & Eve

1. Adam & Eve chose to eat the fruit. Was their choice wrong or right? How do you know? *Wrong, because God told them not to do it; because of what happened after they made their choice.*

[Direction] **Staff/Helper** - make some marks or stains on Adam & Eve's shirt

You - fill in the chart on line 1: "Made wrong choice"

2. What did Adam & Eve do when the serpent tempted them? *They gave in.*

[Direction] **Staff/Helper** - make more marks or stains on Adam & Eve's shirt

You - fill in the chart on line 2: "Gave in to Satan's tempting"

3. How many rules did God give Adam & Eve? Did they obey? *Only one. No!*

[Direction] **Staff/Helper** - make more marks or stains on Adam & Eve's shirt

You - fill in the chart on line 3: "Disobeyed God's one rule"

4. Read (or have a student read) Genesis 3:11-13.

"And [God] said, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?' The man said, 'The woman you put here with me – she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.' Then the Lord God said to the woman, 'What is this you have done?' The woman said, 'The serpent deceived me, and I ate.'"

What did Adam say when God asked him if he had eaten the fruit? *He blamed Eve.*

What did Eve say when God asked her what she had done? *She blamed the serpent.*

[Direction] **Staff/Helper** - make more marks or stains on Adam & Eve's shirt

You - fill in the chart on line 4: "Blamed everyone else for their sin"

5. Read **Genesis 2:16-17**.

“And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.”

What did God say would happen to Adam & Eve if they ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? *They would die.*

God had created Adam & Eve to live forever. Along with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, there was also the tree of life in the Garden of Eden. Adam & Eve were allowed to eat from that tree and live forever (Gen 2:9, 16-17). But the day they disobeyed God and sinned for the first time, God kicked them out of the garden, so they could not eat from the tree of life and live forever (Gen 3:22-24). They would one day die. Because we are also sinners, all of us one day must die, too. Adam & Eve’s choice brought death into the world. We are living with the consequences of what Adam & Eve chose, **so really their shirt is our shirt, too!**

[Direction] **Staff/Helper** - put on Adam & Eve’s stained shirt.

You - fill in the chart on line 5: “Their choice brought death for everyone”

6. **Adam & Eve were good friends with God, but do you remember what happened when He came to walk in the garden after they had disobeyed Him?** *They hid from Him.*

Why did they do that? *They were afraid & they felt guilty.*

Have you ever had a good friend who did something to make you mad and then you didn’t want to talk to him/her for a while? **That’s what sin does to relationships!** It gets in the way and keeps us from enjoying even our good friends. God wants to be good friends with all people, but sin is in the way like a wall, separating us from Him.

[Direction] Have the children help stack the boxes or toy bricks between the Sinner/Actor and Jesus’ shirt.

You - fill in the chart on line 6: “Their choice separated people from God”

7. **What were the consequences of Adam & Eve’s choice to sin? We’ve talked about some of them already.** *They got kicked out of the garden. Their relationship with God was broken. They will die one day instead of living forever.*

Read **Genesis 3:17-19**.

“To Adam [God] said, ‘Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat of it,’ ‘Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.’”

What consequences do we read about in these verses? *The ground is cursed. Thorns and thistles will come. Adam will have to work really hard to get food.*

When Adam & Eve lived in the garden, life was perfect. They had all the food they needed growing right there on the trees. No one ever died, and no one ever got hurt. They had each other, and they had God. After they sinned, death and pain, hard work, arguments, loneliness and sadness...came in. If you want to know where all the bad things in the world come from, they all started the day Adam & Eve disobeyed God.

[Direction] **Sinner/Actor** - act very sad—pretend to cry, sit down on the floor & pout, etc.

You – fill in the chart on line7: “Their choice led to a broken world”

Jesus

[Important!] As you ask questions 1 through 3, slowly poise your marker as though you are going to mark on Jesus’ shirt but stop suddenly whenever the children answer ‘NO!’ or say that Jesus doesn’t make wrong choices. Obviously the idea is not to make any marks on Jesus’ shirt! After the children answer and you stop yourself from marking on Jesus’ shirt, fill in the chart on the appropriate lines.

[Direction] **Jesus/Actor** - put on Jesus’ shirt

You – turn and point to Jesus/Actor as you say the following:

Now let’s go back and think about how Jesus is different from Adam & Eve.

1. Adam & Eve made the wrong choice. Do you think Jesus ever makes wrong choices?

No! Jesus is perfect! He never makes mistakes or does anything wrong. Matthew 5:48; Hebrews 2:10

[Direction] **You** – fill in the chart on line 1: “Always makes the right choices”

2. When Satan tempted Adam & Eve, they gave in. Do you think Jesus would give in if Satan tried to tempt Him? *No!*

[Direction] **You** – fill in the chart on line 2: “Resisted Satan’s tempting”

There’s actually a story in the New Testament about how Satan came to Jesus three times to try to tempt Him, and each time Jesus followed God instead of listening to Satan. You can read about it in Matthew, chapter 4.

3. Adam & Eve only had one rule to follow, but they broke it. By the time Jesus was born, God had given people many, many rules to follow. The whole first section of the Bible is full of rules. Do you think Jesus broke any of them? *No!*

[Direction] **You** – fill in the chart on line 3: “Obeys ALL God’s rules ALL the time”

The Bible says that Jesus never sinned (Hebrews 4:15). He never broke a single one of God’s rules. He kept them all, all the time.

4. When Adam & Eve were caught in their sin, they blamed everyone else. **You may know the story about how Jesus died on the cross, but do you know why He died?** *He died for our sins. 1Corinthians. 15:3.*

While Adam & Eve blamed everyone else for their sin, Jesus took the blame for everyone else's sin! We were the ones who should have been punished, but He took the blame and punishment instead. **He took away our dirty shirts!**

[Direction] **You** – help the Sinner/Actor take off the stained shirt and then throw it at the feet of the Jesus/Actor.

Sinner/Actor: Act very happy to get rid of the stained shirt.

You – fill in the chart on line 4: “Took the blame for everyone else’s sin”

5. Adam & Eve’s choice to sin brought death to everyone in the world. Jesus’ choice to always obey God—even when God told Him He had to die on a cross—brought just the opposite.

What is the opposite of death? *Life*

Does anyone know John 3:16? (If someone knows it, let him or her recite it. If not, read the verse aloud).

“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

Adam & Eve brought death, but Jesus brought eternal life! Everyone who believes in Jesus will live forever in heaven!

[Direction] **Sinner/Actor** - act even happier. Say something like, “You mean, I get to live forever? Wow!”

You – fill in the chart on line 5: “His choice brings eternal life for all who believe”

6. When Adam & Eve sinned, all humans were separated from God. Sin is in our way, so we can't get to know Him. But **who can take away our sin?** *Jesus!* **How did He do that?** *By dying for it on the cross.* That's right! He took away our sin on the cross! Not only that, He gave us His perfect record with no sin in it. **It's like we get to wear His clean shirt!** Because of that, we can now get back to God. Jesus told His disciples...

[Direction] **Jesus/Actor:** “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6).

As you say: **He knocks down the wall, so we can get back home!**

[Direction] **Jesus /Actor** - knocks down the wall of boxes or toy bricks, takes off His clean shirt and drapes it over the Sinner/Actor's shoulders, then leads the Sinner/Actor back over to His side of the room..

Sinner/Actor - kneels down & says, “Thank you, Jesus!”

You – fill in the chart on line 6: “He is the only way people can get back to God”

7. The day Adam & Eve sinned was a sad day for the world. It was the day everything went wrong. It's the reason why there is so much pain and sadness and death in our world today. But when Jesus chose to obey God and die on the cross, He made a way for the whole world to be put right again. We're still waiting for that day to come, but listen to this promise that God made about heaven:

“...Now the dwelling of God is with men, and He will live with them. They will be his people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away...I am making everything new!” Revelation 21:3-5

[Direction] **Sinner/Actor** - Rejoice! Jump up & down & act really excited!

You – fill in the chart on line 7: “His choice will make the whole world new!”

Conclusion:

Did you know that the story of Adam & Eve is a true story and that all of us are in it?

That's right! We are Adam & Eve's great-great-great-great-great-great...grandchildren. Just like Adam & Eve, we also make bad choices. Sometimes we give in to Satan's tempting. A lot of times we disobey God's laws. Sometimes we blame other people when we're the ones who did something wrong. We also will die one day. There's sin in the way of our relationship with God, and the world we live in is broken. But way back on that day when everything in the world went wrong, God told Adam & Eve something very interesting. He promised them that one of Eve's great-great-great-great...grandsons would one day defeat Satan (Genesis 3:15). God was giving them a hint even then that Jesus was coming! He wasn't surprised by Adam & Eve's wrong choice, and He already had a plan for how to take care of it!

Adam & Eve's story had a very sad ending, but that's because it isn't over yet! The happy ending will be when Jesus comes back to fix everything that was broken when Adam & Eve and all of us sinned. We have the choice to believe in Him. If we do, He will take away our sin and bring us back to God so that we can live forever. If you believe in Jesus, you will get to see the happy ending to Adam & Eve's story!

WEEK 1 - SKITS

MATERIALS: butcher paper, marking pens, masking tape

Make a nice looking sign that can be put up in the S.A.Y. Yes!® Center for the week. Write the week's four truths on the sign.

THE WEEK'S TRUTHS:

God has given us the freedom to make choices.

Right choices can keep us from bad consequences.

Right choices bring us peace.

The bible will guide me to the right choice.

NEW!

Based on the new Gospel Focus presented in this week's Bible Club section, here are some **additional truths** for the week:

Even though we make wrong choices and have to live with the consequences, one day Jesus will undo all bad consequences and make a brand new, perfect world!

Jesus takes the blame for and forgives all our wrong choices

Skit #1

CHARACTERS: Reuben and Bobby

SCENE: It is after school on the basketball court.

Reuben: *(Comes in pretending to bounce a basketball)*

Bobby: *(Enters from the opposite direction)* Hey man, it's about time you got here! I've been waiting 20 minutes for you to bring that basketball. Why you so late anyway?

Reuben: Aw it was my mom. She said I couldn't leave the house without doing my homework. But I fooled her. I just breezed through it and wrote down anything that came to my mind.

Bobby: You're a fool, man. What happens when you turn your homework in tomorrow and the teacher begins to grade it. OOOOh are you going to be in big time trouble then!

Reuben: Awww, it's no big deal. *(Throws ball hard at Bobby)* Not to worry!

Bobby: No way! You messed up this time. You are truly a fool - you made a wrong choice. You are going to pay the consequence!

(The boys throw the ball back and forth at each other as they exit.)

DEBRIEF

What would have been the right choice for Reuben to make? *In the Bible we are told to listen when our fathers instruct us and to follow our mother's teaching. Reuben did not listen to his mother. Even when Bobby told him he had made the wrong choice he tried to blow it off. Reuben refused to face the truth.*

Who can tell me what phrase fits today's skit? *God has given us the freedom to make choices.*

How does this phrase fit today's skit? *Reuben had the choice to obey or disobey his mother. It was up to him to decide what he would do. He chose to disobey. The freedom to choose does not mean we will escape harm when we make the wrong choice. Though we are free to choose we still will pay the consequence of a wrong choice.*

What are some possible consequences of Reuben's choice? *Get an F on his test, mother ground him for two weeks, look like a fool in front of the class when he doesn't know the answer to the teacher's question, etc. Have a time of prayer.*

Skit #2

CHARACTERS: Maria, LaTasha

SCENE: Maria is jumping rope in the back of the room. LaTasha runs into the room really excited.

LaTasha: (*Talk over the children so that they are in the middle of the dialogue*) Oh Maria, I'm so excited I can hardly wait. You'll never guess who asked me to go to the movies with her on Saturday.

Maria: Who?

LaTasha: Tonya

Maria: Tonya! LaTasha are you sure you want to go with her?

LaTasha: Aw Maria, you're just jealous.

Maria: LaTasha you know that's not true.

LaTasha: It is so! I bet if she asked you, you'd go.

Maria: No I wouldn't! In the first place, mom wouldn't let me. In the second place, you and I both know that Tonya gets her money to do things by stealing from the stores, and then sells the stuff to kids at school. What if after the movie she wants to go into a store on Saturday? Will you go with her?

LaTasha: Well, why not?

Maria: Remember what we've been learning about making right choices? Think about it, LaTasha. What is the right choice?

LaTasha: Well, I guess the right choice would be to look at what I want to do, and then ask God to tell me from the Bible.

Maria: That's right! And what is the truth about Tonya?

LaTasha: She steals things from stores.

Maria: And what could happen if you are in the store with her and she steals something?

LaTasha: She could get caught and get in trouble and I would get in trouble too.

Maria: If I were you, LaTasha, I would make my choice based on the truth of what you know.

LaTasha: I guess it could save me from a lot of trouble.

Maria: I bet my mom would have a snack for us. Let's go to my house!

(The two girls run out.)

DEBRIEF

What was the choice that LaTasha needed to make? *She needed to look at the truth about Tonya and then make the right judgement to not hang out with Tonya. It could lead LaTasha into trouble. If LaTasha had just done what she wanted to do, she could have gotten into a lot of trouble. By taking the time to think through what she was going to do, she was able to make the right choice.*

What phrase goes with today's skit? *RIGHT CHOICES CAN KEEP US FROM BAD CONSEQUENCES!*

How does this phrase fit today's skit? *LaTasha chose to not go to the movies with Tonya. This protected LaTasha from being blamed for something that Tonya might have done.*

Skit #3

CHARACTERS: LaTasha, Reuben

SCENE: LaTasha is walking home from school. Walk through the children pretending they are grass in an empty lot.

LaTasha: (*Talking to herself*) I don't know if I made the right decision or not yesterday. Tonya was going to pay my way to the movies, and she would have probably bought me a coke and popcorn. Grandma doesn't have any money to give me to go to the movies.

Reuben: (*Runs in*) Hey LaTasha, wait up!

LaTasha: Oh hi, Reuben.

(They keep walking through the kids as they talk, forcing the kids to turn their heads to follow them.)

Reuben: I'll walk home with you. Bobby's dad picked him up from school today. He's going to spend the night with his dad. Where's Maria?

LaTasha: Your mom said she could stay and help Mrs. Perkins this afternoon.

Reuben: Oh yeah, I forgot. Hey, Maria told me about your wise choice yesterday.

LaTasha: I don't know. Maybe it wasn't so wise.

Reuben: What do you mean?

LaTasha: Welllll, Grandma doesn't have money for me to go to the movies. So when will I ever get to go?

Reuben: Yeah, but what if Tonya stole something when you were with her? Even if she didn't get caught, you know that is wrong. How would you sleep at night thinking about that?

LaTasha: I don't know. (*Stepping around some kids*) They need to cut the grass out here.

Reuben: It sure has gotten thick. (*Moving through some kids, perhaps separating them like you would tall grass.*) But, what if after Tonya steals something you remember the cameras that are in the store. You'd be thinking all the time about when they look at those videos - "what if they see me with Tonya and come after me?"

LaTasha: I guess you're right.

Reuben: What's the big deal about a movie anyway? I think you're going to be much better off. I think not having to worry and be afraid of someone catching you, is worth a lot more than going to a movie. There will be lot's of movies you can go to in the future.

LaTasha: Oh, it looks like Grandma is home from work. I'll see you tomorrow Reuben. (*She runs off*)

Reuben: O.K. LaTasha. (*He exits*)

DEBRIEF

Why was LaTasha having second thoughts about her decision? *(She really wanted to go to the movie but she didn't have the money to go. Her desire, what she wanted to do, was blocking out what she knew to be the truth.)*

The Bible tells us that making the right choices helps us to sleep at night. Making choices by seeking the truth in the Bible keeps us from being afraid when we lay down at night.

How did making the right choice keep LaTasha from having to be afraid when she laid down at night? *(She didn't have to worry that they would look at the videos and see her with Tonya when Tonya stole something.)*

Sometimes it is hard to give up something we really want to make the right choice. But when we do, we will be better off in the end.

How we feel about ourselves is worth more than things we can have or places we can go. LaTasha wouldn't have felt good about herself if she had been with Tonya, when Tonya stole something. **RIGHT CHOICES BRING US PEACE** *(Have the kids find the phrase that fits today's skit.)*

Skit #4

CHARACTERS: Maria, LaTasha, Reuben

SCENE: Maria and LaTasha are playing with their dolls at Maria's house.

LaTasha: Your doll has the prettiest hair. I love to comb it.

Maria: I like all the clothes your Grandma made for your dolls. I love putting different outfits on them.

LaTasha: Reuben was sure nice to me yesterday.

Maria: *(Surprised)* He was?

LaTasha: He helped me see how important making the right choice really was.

Maria: What do you mean?

LaTasha: I really wanted to go with Tonya to the movies. But Reuben helped me see how scared I'd be if Tonya stole something. Even if we didn't think she was seen, maybe one of those cameras would have gotten her on film. I would always be afraid someone would come for me sometime.

Maria: That's right. I never thought of that. Choices! Making the right choice covers a lot of things doesn't it?

LaTasha: It does. But, how do we know what the right choice is?

Maria: I don't know. Reuben's in his room, let's go ask him.

Reuben is in another part of the room where the girls have to walk through the children to get to him.)

Maria: Reuben?

Reuben: I'm in my room Maria.

Maria: Reuben, LaTasha has a question for you.

LaTasha: How do we know what the right choice is?

Reuben: I was just reading my Bible and I was reading in Psalm 119. Listen to this!

(You probably would want to read it right from the Bible. Psalm 119:1-16)

LaTasha: Wow! But I don't know that I understand all of it.

Reuben: Well, statutes are laws or rules. It says that if we obey the rules or laws that God has given us in the Bible, then we will never feel shame.

LaTasha: But what's it mean about "hiding your word in my heart?" How do I do that?

Reuben: By memorizing verses from the Bible, you hide God's Word in your heart. Nobody can ever take God's Word away from you when you have memorized it.

LaTasha: But why do that?

Maria: So you have it when you need it. Like the other day when I was trying to tell you not to go with Tonya. The reason I knew that would be a bad choice was because I had memorized, I Corinthians 15:33, "Do not be misled: 'Bad company corrupts good character.' "

Reuben: Great example, Sis! See, the Bible tells us that we must be careful of who we choose to be our friends.

LaTasha: I've sure learned a lot this week. I'd better get home, Grandma is probably wondering where I am.

(The girls walk back through the kids and exit.)

DEBRIEF

Where do we go to find out what choice is the right choice? (*The Bible*)

How do we know what the Bible has to say? *By reading the Bible, by going to church on Sunday* [This is a great opportunity to invite the children to attend Sunday mornings. Have fliers with times and days of services.

Give S.A.Y. Yes!® dollars for attending church on Sunday. Have children bring a bulletin, as proof they were in church on Sunday.], and learning about the Bible, by coming to S.A.Y. Yes! Center and learning about the Bible, by memorizing verses so we have them when we need them.)

I would like to challenge each of you to read the Bible and begin memorizing verses.

Who can tell me what today's phrase is? THE BIBLE WILL GUIDE ME TO THE RIGHT CHOICE!

NEW!

Skit #5

CHARACTERS: LaTasha and Reuben

SCENE: LaTasha is sitting on her front steps crying with her head buried in her knees. Reuben walks by and notices her.

Reuben: LaTasha! What's wrong?

LaTasha just cries harder and doesn't answer.

Reuben: (*looking a little impatient*) Is this about Tonya? Are you still trying to decide whether or not to go with her to the movies tonight? I thought you made up your mind already.

LaTasha: (*sitting up, offended*) I did! I told Tonya I couldn't go to the movies with her, but she got all mad at me and said she wouldn't be my friend anymore! I thought you said if I made the right choice everything would turn out OK.

Reuben: (*sitting down beside her on the step*) Oh, LaTasha, I'm sorry. That really stinks about Tonya. *You're* making the right choice but *she* isn't! Sometimes what other people choose messes up our lives, too.

LaTasha: What do you mean?

Reuben: Well, like Bobby's mom. Her choice to drink all the time really makes things hard for Bobby, but it's not his fault.

LaTasha: Well, I don't think that's fair.

Reuben: Yeah, me either.

LaTasha: So what's the point of making the right choice then if it doesn't do you any good? (*putting her head back on her knees*)

Reuben: Now wait just a minute! It has too done you some good!

LaTasha: Like what? (*peeking at Reuben with one eye, head still on her knees*)

Reuben: Well, you don't have to worry about getting caught for stealing if Tonya won't even hang out with you.

LaTasha: (*reluctantly sitting up again*) Yeah, I guess that's true. I still don't think it's fair, though, about her choice messing up *my* life.

Reuben: (*sarcastically*) Oh yeah, and I guess you've never made any bad choices that affected somebody else.

LaTasha: Not *me*.

Reuben: Aw, come on. Just think about it.

LaTasha: (*thinking a moment*) You mean like the time I cheated off Jasmine's spelling test last year and she ended up in trouble too even though she didn't do anything?

Reuben: *(nodding)* Uh-huh. That really wasn't fair to Jasmine.

LaTasha: You're right about that. *(Thinking again for moment)* Well, isn't God ever going to fix it?

Reuben: What are you talking about?

LaTasha: I don't know. All the bad choices people make and the other people who get hurt by them.

Reuben: *(laughing a little bit)* Oh, that. Come on, what have we learned at SAY Yes! about heaven?

LaTasha: Uh. . . that there's no crying or sadness or pain there?

Reuben: Right! There's no death either. Everything that's wrong now – Tonya's bad choices, my bad choices, *your* bad choices – God's going to make all right in heaven.

LaTasha: Well, I can't wait for heaven then.

Reuben: Me either! But you know you don't have to wait for everything. God does promise to give us wisdom so we can make good choices--

Latasha: *(interrupting)* Oh yeah! That's just what our memory verse is about this month!

Reuben: Right. AND, God is always with us even when everything is falling apart because of people's bad choices.

Latasha: But I don't see Him!

Reuben: I know, but He's still here.

Latasha: *(thinking for a minute)* Do you think...maybe He sent me *you* today since I was feeling sad?

Reuben: *(a little embarrassed)* Maybe so. *(changing the subject)* Hey, why don't you ask your grandma if you can come over to me and Maria's house tonight? I think we're going to rent a movie.

LaTasha: Ok. Reuben?

Reuben: Yeah?

LaTasha: Thanks.

Reuben smiles. The two run back into the house.

DEBRIEF

What happened even though Latasha made the right choice? *Tonya got mad at her and said she wouldn't be her friend anymore.*

What did LaTasha think was unfair? *That sometimes other people's bad choices affect us even when we make the right choice.*

Had LaTasha ever made any bad choices that affected someone else? What? *She cheated on her spelling test last year and got Jasmine in trouble.*

Can you think of any choices you make that affect others?

What did Reuben remind LaTasha about heaven? *There's no crying or sadness or pain or death there. All the bad things about the world will be right!*

Who can tell me what today's phrase is?

EVEN THOUGH WE MAKE WRONG CHOICES AND HAVE TO SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES, ONE DAY JESUS WILL UNDO ALL BAD CONSEQUENCES AND MAKE A BRAND NEW, PERFECT WORLD.

WEEK 1 - MEMORY VERSE

These games are to be used during transition times, or when you have finished an activity early and need to fill some time.

SCRIPTURE: “If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.” James 1:5

EXPLANATION OF VERSE:

Wisdom is not knowledge. It is the ability to make the right choice in all circumstances. God will give wisdom generously to all who ask. The requirement for receiving wisdom is that it must be asked for in faith (vs. 6).

TEACHING THE VERSE

- Read the scripture to the children.
- Teach two of the actions from below at a time.
- Each time you teach two new actions, start at the beginning again. This is so the children do not forget the previous actions.
- Do this until you’ve completed the verse.
- Then, do it two more times as a group.
- If you have the time, separate the children into two groups and see who does the best job reciting the verse.

VERSE ACTIONS

IF	clap
ANY	throw arms wide
OF	make “O” with hand
YOU	point to someone
LACKS	put hands on head like you forgot
WISDOM	put hand under chin like in deep thought
HE	act like you are tipping a hat
SHOULD	shake finger
ASK	point to mouth
GOD	point to God
WHO GIVES GENEROUSLY TO ALL WITHOUT FINDING FAULT	
have them suck In breath and say the phrase in one breath really fast	

Week 1 – RIGHT OR WRONG

AND	stomp
IT	clap
WILL	put one hand in a fist and pound it into your other hand
BE	act like your finger is a bee
GIVEN	extend one hand palm up and open
TO	hold up two fingers
HIM	act like you are tipping a hat

WEEK 1 - PRACTICAL LIVING

As you begin the year, set table standards for snack time which will be followed throughout the year. Kids will test any boundaries we set for them, it is up to us to be loving but firm.

This is taught during your normal Practical Living time. If possible, return to your snack room having the children sit where they normally would sit for snack. If you can not use that room during Practical Living, use the tables they would use for tutoring. You might then use the set up time as part of the teaching. You will be setting a standard for snack time, as well as teaching the children proper table etiquette.

Table Etiquette

MATERIALS: tables, chairs, napkins, plate or tray with food, trash can

You will be setting a standard for snack time, as well as teaching the children proper table etiquette.

SUGGESTIONS:

- Have the children assigned to a certain table or section of table depending on their age. For example: all first and second graders sit together, all third and fourth graders sit together etc.
- Volunteers should be assigned to sit with the same group of children each time they are at the center, preferably the age group they will be helping with homework.
- Children remain at the table until they are excused by the leader.
- Learning to eat slowly and talk with friends and family over a meal is healthy.
- Snack time is a great time to learn how the child's day has been, for the child to relax a little, for him to feel the security of an adult who cares about what is going on inside of him.
- Since the use of plates may be expensive, snacks may be placed on napkins. Each child should be given two napkins, one on which to put the snack and one to use as a napkin.
- If they want something they ask the person closest to the item: "Tasha, would you please pass the oranges?" "Thank you, Tasha." "You are welcome Hector."
- As the children eat, talk about what they would be, if they could be anything they wanted to be.
- It is important for the children to learn to pick up after themselves. How do you want them to dispose of their trash?
- Think of other table etiquette you may want to teach them.
- We will do restaurant etiquette at a later time.

DEBRIEF

What are right choices you must make to have proper etiquette? Use "please" and "thank you", be patient and wait for things to be passed to you, eating slowly and carrying on a polite conversation, etc

How can making the wrong choice in etiquette affect you? *If you grab for some food without politely asking, you may not be allowed to have any. If you are in someone's home you may not be invited back.*

Why do you sometimes choose not to use proper etiquette? *Are super hungry and can't wait to eat, just forget, can't think of anything to talk about, etc.*

What could you do to prepare yourself to choose proper etiquette? *Practice everyday at the S.A.Y. Yes!® Center, realize how important it is so you don't forget, have some set questions you can discuss around the table (What was the best thing that happened to you today? What are you looking forward to tomorrow?)*

What do you need to do tomorrow? What have you recently learned in your study of the Bible? *Challenge them to think of some questions they would always have ready.*

WEEK 1 - READ-A-LOUD

“The Little Steam Engine”

Taken from an early-twentieth-century reader *The Book of Virtues*, pages 530-532

SUMMARY: This story is about a little engine given a large task. Through determination and working with another, he is able to accomplish the task he has been given.

In this first week you want to set the children on a course that will direct them for the rest of their lives. You want to help them begin to dream of what they can become. But first they must believe that they can accomplish great things.

PRE-READING QUESTIONS

- 1) What do you think the little engine could do? (This might tell you who has heard the story before. That information may give you some idea of how much your children have been read to.)
- 2) Do you think the little engine thinks he can do what he is asked to do? Why or why not?
- 3) As I read, paint a picture in your mind of what everything looks like. Begin with a picture in your mind of what the little steam engine looks like. What color is it?

POST-READING QUESTIONS

- 1) What pictures did you see in your mind as I read?
- 2) Could the little steam engine make it over the hill by herself? What did she need to make it?
- 3) Why didn't the other engines help the little steam engine?
- 4) Have you ever helped someone? Have you ever needed help?
- 5) Have you ever thought that you couldn't do something but found out that you could?
- 6) What do you think you could do when you grow up? Help them to dream: High school graduate, college graduate, doctor, lawyer, gardener, nurse, mother, teacher, dentist, grocer, businessman/woman, politician, pastor, etc.

Show pictures of people in different professions.

- 7) How do these different professions help the community?
- 8) If you were to become one of these professions, how would you like to help your community?

For the next couple of weeks we will be taking about choices. Making the right choices is what we need to do if we want to accomplish great things, but sometimes, as it was for the little engine, it is difficult to get where we are going. We must work hard, and we must determine that we won't give up, but we will often need someone else's help, and we will always need God's help in everything we do. No one can make the right choices on his or her own. But don't worry! God has promised to always help us make good choices and stick to them!

James 1:5 (This week's memory verse) *“If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.”*

Philippians 4:13 “I can do everything through him who gives me strength.”

What a comfort to know that I don't have to depend on my own strength and ability. The Creator of the Universe wants me to depend on Him. I can't do anything on my own, but I can do everything with His help!

WEEK 1 - CRAFTS

✂ Jar Candle Holder

MATERIALS: 1 jar (any size, from baby food jars to mayonnaise jars) per child; tissue paper, white glue, jar lids (or something for glue), old used candles.

THEME: Jesus is the light of the world. Jesus shines His light of truth and wisdom into the darkness of the world. The candle reminds us that Jesus is the light. Before making choices we want to ask ourselves, “Will this shine Jesus’ light to the world?”

- Have a sample for each group of children.
- Give each child a jar, some tissue paper and some glue.
- Show them how to take a small piece of tissue paper, squeeze it together to make it puffy, put some glue on the end and place it on the jar.
- Continue to do this until there is no glass showing.
- An adult melts some wax from the candle into the bottom of the jar and then sets the candle into it. (You may want to eliminate this step and just let the children get their own candles at home)

GUIDED CONVERSATION

- As the children work on their candle holders talk about the darkness in the world brought about by bad choices, bring the students back to the idea that Jesus will one day undo all the bad consequences to all our choices. Tell them about how God will be our light in heaven & we won’t even need the sun (Rev 21:23; 22:5)!
- Give them your own examples of how Jesus’ light of truth has given you wisdom to make the right choices.
- If children don’t know who Jesus is, tell them that they will be learning more about Him in the weeks to come. Tell them Jesus is God. He loves them very much and He has all truth.
- **NOTE:** The guided conversation during craft time is very important. Children will open up and talk when their hands are busy.

WEEK 1 - RECREATION

DAY ONE: Nation Ball

MATERIALS: two large rubber balls

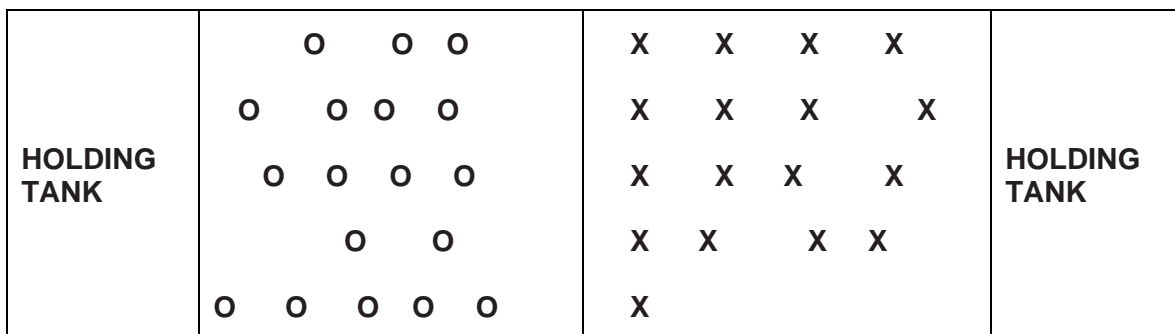
OBJECT: to get all of the players of the opposing team out of the game.

SETUP:

- Divide group into two large teams. Mix the ages. This is a great game for teaching teamwork and family unity.
- Each team is given an equal amount of space on a cement or hardtop surface.
- All but one member of the team stands in their space.
- The extra player serves as goalie, he/she is the only one that can leave the space to run after a ball.
- The goalie stands behind the opposing team.

TO PLAY:

- To begin, one ball is given to each team.
- When the signal is given the person holding the ball throws it, trying to hit an opposing player below the waist.
- If the player is hit he/she must go to the holding tank where the opposing goalie is standing.
- If a child is hit by a ball above the waist he does not go to the holding tank and a member of his team gets to come out of the holding tank.
- If the opposing player catches the ball thrown at him one of his teammates may come out of the holding tank.
- Players in a holding tank come out in the order in which they entered the holding tank.



OBSERVE

- The children may have knowledge of the rules of the game, but do they make the right choices?
- Do they work as a team?
- Do they develop a strategy?

DEBRIEF

- 1) After playing a couple of games ask: who can tell me a right choice they saw someone else make? Why was it right?
- 2) Why was it important for you to choose to work as a team rather than by yourself? (Making the choice to work as a team rather than as individuals would help them win. Choosing to take the time to develop a plan to keep as many of their players in as possible, or how to keep the best players in the longest, helps everyone on the team.)
- 3) Where will you get the power to make the right choice?
- 4) What should you do if you make the wrong choice?
- 5) What will Jesus do if you make the wrong choice?
- 6) Even if you lose the game, whose perfect score can you have?
- 7) Even if you won the game, whose score is even better than yours?

DAY TWO: Newspaper Balloon Relay

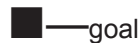
[For younger children, use this game if you feel the younger children wouldn't be able to participate with the older children in balloon ball]

MATERIALS: balloons (one for each team plus extras - just in case), sheet of newspaper per child

OBJECT: be the first team to get players to goal and returned with a whole balloon.

SETUP:

- Divide the players into two teams.
- Players stand in two lines.
- This is best played on carpet or tile.



TO PLAY:

- The first player in each line is given a balloon.
- Each player is given a sheet of newspaper. The individual can decide how to fold the newspaper for most effectiveness.

- When the counselor says, " go", the players with the balloons drop the balloons to the floor and using the newspaper begins to fan or push the balloon towards the goal.
- The players maneuver the balloon around the goal and return to their teams.
- The second player then does the same.
- Play continues until all the players have been to the goal and back.

OBSERVE

- Will they make the right choice and help each other prepare their papers? Will they encourage each other?

DEBRIEF

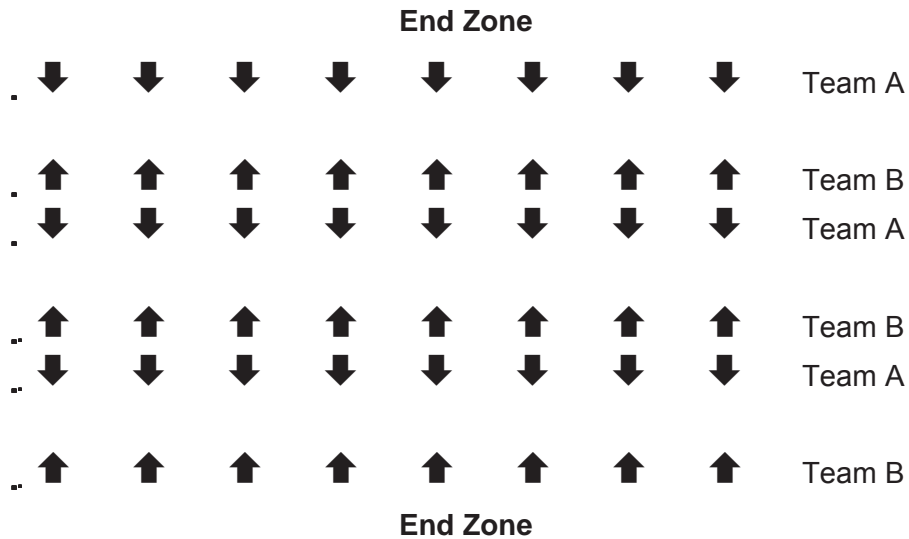
- 1) What was a good choice you saw someone make?
- 2) Was anyone tempted to make a wrong choice? What was the wrong choice you were tempted to make?

ALTERNATIVE GAME: Balloon Ball [For children 1st grade and older]

MATERIALS: A chair for each participant (unless the leader elects to have participants sit on the floor); balloons

OBJECT: To get the balloon into the opposing team's end zone.

SET UP: Arrange chairs as shown



TO PLAY:

- Divide players into two teams.
- The players sit back to back with opposing teammates.
- All players facing the same direction are on the same team. When all players are seated the Counselor tosses a balloon into the center of the group.
- The players may not stand.

- Players bat the balloon with their hands trying to move it towards the opposing team's end zone.
- Counselors should stand along the sidelines to throw back any balloon which goes out-of-bounds.

OBSERVE

- Watch to see which children are selfish and try to always hit the balloon.
- Which children think of others while they are playing?

DEBRIEF

- 1) Who chose to let others hit the ball when they really wanted to be the one to hit it?
- 2) What was the most difficult choice you had to make during the playing of this game? Why was it difficult for you?

DAY THREE: Hide And Seek

MATERIALS: None

OBJECT: To be the last person found

SET UP:

- This game can be played either inside or outside.
- Be sure to set boundaries of where they are allowed to go to hide.
- Where you play will depend on your facilities.
- If you have no outdoor space in which to play don't let that stop you. Kids can have great fun finding hiding places inside. It challenges them to be a little more creative.

TO PLAY

- One player is chosen as "It"
- While he counts to 50 everyone else scatters and hides
- "It" calls out, "Here I come, ready or not", and takes off in search of the others
- If "It" spots someone, he calls out the person's name and runs back to the home base
- If the person whose name was called beats "It", he can go out and hide again
- If "It" reaches home first, then the player called joins "It" in searching for the others
- To avoid cheating, those who join "It" can be given a red piece of paper they show when they call out someone's name (anyone who cheats should automatically be out of the game - they sit and watch)
- The last person called can either be the next "It", or he gets to choose the next "It."

DEBRIEF

- 1) Who made wise choices while you were playing?
- 2) Why do you think their choices were wise?
- 3) If children cheat, talk about how that affects the fun of the game. Cheating is a wrong choice which affects everyone. The person who is cheating may think they are getting away with it, but they don't even realize how much fun they are throwing away by making that wrong choice. When we cheat, we know inside, that we are really losing. The people who it is most important to be honest with, is ourselves.

DAY FOUR: Shoe Scramble

MATERIALS: None

OBJECT: To be the first team to have all its shoes back on, laced, buckled, etc.

SET UP:

- Divide players into even teams
- Have all players remove their shoes and place them in one big pile. Mix up the pile, make sure no shoes are tied together, and place the pile an equal distance from all the teams

TO PLAY:

- When the counselor says, "Go," the first player from each team runs to the pile, finds his shoes and returns to his team tagging the next player
- The second player runs to the pile and finds his shoes, returning to tag the third player
- The next player may go before the first player has his shoes completely on and tied
- Every player must have his shoes on and tied before the team is declared a winner

OBSERVE

- Will they make the right choice today without you having to say anything?
- Are they learning? In the heat of competition we are able to see what is actually going on inside of the child.

ALTERNATIVE GAME: Free Play

MATERIALS: balls, jump ropes, marbles, jacks, etc..

- Let them use the remaining time for free play. Free play provides a great opportunity for the kids to make choices.
- Tell them they may play whatever they wish.
- Let them create their own games and organize themselves. How will they play together without adults telling them exactly what to do?
- For safety reasons you need to be out there with them, but let them direct the action.

DEBRIEF

- 1) Who did you see choose to include someone who wanted to play with him/her?
- 2) What other choices did you see being made while you were playing?

LIFE OR DEATH: WEEK 2

WEEK 2 – BIBLE CLUB

- LESSON AIM:** To help the child understand the importance of making the right choices.
- SCRIPTURE:** Esther
- MEMORY VERSE:** “Now choose life so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him.”
Deuteronomy 30:19 & 20

The story of Esther takes place sometime between 485 BC to 465 BC. This is when Xerxes reigned as King of the Persian Empire.

The story of Esther shows that the way we handle today will leave handprints all over tomorrow. Xerxes treats his wife as a possession, rather than as an individual to be cherished. As a result, his irrational impulsive behavior sets him up to make a foolish demand of Queen Vashti. He is not a man to be refused - he is enraged. He decides that the Queen must go.

Thus, the stage is set for Esther, a young Jewish woman, to be gathered into Xerxes' harem, and eventually she's selected as the next queen. Esther is a Persian name meaning “star”. She also had a Hebrew name, Hadassah, which means “myrtle”.

Esther was raised by her cousin, Mordecai. They too, had choices to make, choices which would alter the course of history.

Mordecai told Esther, not to tell anyone that she was a Jew. Though God is never mentioned in the entire book of Esther, His sovereignty is evident throughout.

In the book, Esther is the only person who might be able to save her people. Fear can keep one from making the right choice. God's plan will always be carried out. We will be the losers if we choose to go our own way and don't carry out God's will. Esther knew from where her source of power would come so she told Mordecai to assemble everyone and have them fast and pray. Mordecai and Esther's choice to obey saved a nation of people. Mordecai was honored and became great in the country.

Discipleship
Tip

Ask each child if he/she can remember the most difficult choice he/she had to make. **Share** the most difficult choice you had to make and what happened. **Encourage** the children to seek God's will when making difficult choices, even if it seems impossible.

THINK OF THE IMPORTANCE OF EACH CHOICE THAT WAS MADE. Mordecai and Esther by choosing to take the difficult path chose life.

HOOK

MATERIALS: Treats

OBJECT: Play a simple game. Do not make any comments about consequences.

Find The Leader (Suggested Game):

- Players sit or stand in a circle
- One player is sent out of the room
- While he is out of the room a second child is chosen to be the “leader”
- The other players do whatever the “leader” does
- The first player is brought back into the room and is given three guesses to discover who the leader is
- If he finds the leader, he can choose the next person to go out of the room
- If he cannot find the leader, the leader gets to be the next one to go out of the room.
- As the children play observe the choices they make. Make note of who does what.
- When the game is over, have a treat for the children who made right choices (they participated, they didn’t act out, they followed the rules, they didn’t complain, etc..)

DISCUSSION:

Why do you think treats were given only to certain people?

Be ready to be specific about the choices that individuals made in their behavior.

Those who did not receive a treat, do you remember what you did, so that you didn’t get a treat? Did you think about what you were doing? Did you think of the possible consequences?

There is a consequence to every choice we make. Some of you chose to participate— to obey the rules, and to be polite. As a result, you received a positive consequence of a treat. Some of you chose to do your own thing, to disobey to make the time less enjoyable for others. As a result, your consequence was not good.

Sometimes we aren’t even aware of the consequence of our behavior, but there is always one. Sometimes the consequence doesn’t happen for a long time. We need to think about our behavior and our attitude at all times.

Bible Story

NEW! You may show the *Veggie Tales* video entitled, “**Ester.**” This veggie tale is a little different style than some others. It is a little more dramatic but it tells the Bible story perfectly. It would be a great way to tell the Bible story for Bible Club time.

OR, you may do the following . . .

Assign parts to different children. As you narrate the story of Esther, have the children act out what they hear. You may need to have an adult direct their actions, if they have not pantomimed a story before.

CHARACTERS: King Xerxes, Queen Vashti, servant, people at parties, 7 friends of King, Esther, Mordecai, Haman, two men who plot to kill king.

Tell the children to listen for choices that people make throughout the story. You will be asking them questions about these choices at the end of the story.

“The Story of Ester”

King Xerxes had a big party. There were many men at his party. His wife, Vashti, was having her own party in another part of the palace.

Queen Vashti was very beautiful and the King wanted to show her off to his friends. King Xerxes had one of his servants go to the banquet room where the Queen was having her party. The servant told Queen Vashti that the King wanted her to come to his party. She said to the servant, “I won’t go.”

The servant went to the King and said, “Queen Vashti won’t come to your party.” King Xerxes became very angry. He was not used to people saying, “NO” to him. After all, he was the King! His every wish was to be obeyed.

The King went to the seven men who were his closest friends. He asked them, “What shall I do?” The men thought long and hard— there was a lot to be considered. If Queen Vashti was allowed to get away with acting this way to her husband, what would their wives do? No, this was definitely not good. They said, “Queen Vashti must go!” The King told Queen Vashti, “You are no longer Queen!”

But now, the King had a problem. How could there be a king without a queen? So again, he went to the seven men for advice. This time they suggested, “Find all of the most beautiful women in the kingdom, and choose a queen from amongst them.”

Now, there was a very beautiful young Hebrew woman, by the name of Esther. Esther had been raised by her cousin, Mordecai. Esther was one of the beautiful young women taken by the King to be part of his harem. Out of all of the women, Esther was the one chosen to be the new Queen.

Mordecai was appointed as an official in the King’s government, and he sat by the King’s gate, doing business every day. One day, while he was sitting there, he overheard two men talking. They were plotting to kill the King.

The next time Mordecai saw Esther, he told her, “There are some men plotting to kill the King!” Esther then told the King - she was sure to let the King know that it was Mordecai who had brought the news. The King investigated, and sure enough, what Mordecai had said was true. The men were planning to kill the King. The King had the two men hung.

At about the same time, the King said to a man named Haman, “I want you to be the top man in the country - except for me, of course!” It was expected that whenever Haman passed by, everyone was to bow down and pay homage to him.

Mordecai was sitting at the gate, with some other men, doing his work, when Haman passed by. Everybody bowed - everybody but Mordecai, that is. Haman became very, very angry. “How dare Mordecai not bow down to me,” he thought. The other men at the gate told Haman, “Mordecai is a Jew!”, so Haman was afraid to touch him. He didn’t know what the other Jews would do to him. So he said to himself, “I will make a plan to have all Jews killed.”

Haman lied to the King. He said, “O King, all those Jews are bad and are not obeying you! If you say so, I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to anyone who kills a Jew. In this way, we will be rid of those who refuse to obey you.” The King thought this was a good idea and he gave Haman his precious signet ring, that only Kings have, to place on the letter that called for the death of all the Jews.

When Mordecai heard of the new law, he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the street and cried loudly. Throughout the kingdom, the Jews mourned.

Then Esther’s maids came and said to her, “Esther, there is a new law that says that the King will pay ten thousand talents of silver, to anyone who kills the Jews, because Haman said that all of the Jews are breaking the King’s laws!”.

Esther also mourned. She then called one of the King’s servants, Hathach, and had him go and get Mordecai.

When Hathach returned, he told her that Mordecai said, “Go, Esther and plead with the King to change his orders!” Esther was very afraid. No one went in to see the king unless he asked for them to come. Doing so could mean your death! Even if you were his wife.

Esther sent the servant back to Mordecai with the message, “I can’t go in to see the King unless he calls for me.

So what should I do now?”

Mordecai sent Hathach back with this message, “Who do you think you are? Do you think you will be protected from this law just because you are in the Palace? You won’t be protected. And who knows, perhaps you were made Queen just for this purpose. You may be there to save your people.”

So Esther sent Hathach back to Mordecai with one last message, “Gather all the people together and have them fast (not eat or drink), and pray for three days and three nights. Then I will go in to see the King.”

So Mordecai did as Esther requested. Esther used great wisdom before she approached the King, she thought through exactly how to approach him. On the third day, she put on her royal robes and went and stood in the courtyard where the King was sitting. When he saw her he reached out for her. She came and stood close to him. “What is troubling you Queen Esther?” he asked.

“Would it be possible for the King and Haman to come to the banquet I have prepared?” Esther asked. The King said, “Sure Esther, I would love to come!” The King sent for Haman and they came to the banquet Esther had prepared.

As the King and Haman ate and drank the King asked Esther, “What would you like from me? You can have anything you request up to half the kingdom.”

“Oh King, if you and Haman would return tomorrow to the banquet I will prepare, then, I will then tell you what I desire.” Esther answered.

When Haman was leaving the banquet room, he passed by Mordecai at the gate. Mordecai did not bow or pay any kind of homage to Haman. Haman became very angry. He felt like jumping up and down, and pulling his hair out.

He went home and counted all the things he owned, he even noted that, besides the King, he was the only one the Queen had invited to her banquet. But still, he was not satisfied, for Mordecai had not bowed to him. He told his wife and friends of his anger, and they suggested that he build a gallows the next day, and ask the King if he could hang Mordecai. Haman liked this suggestion, so he had the gallows made that night.

That night the King could not sleep, so he got up, took out his record books and began to read. He read of how the man, Mordecai had saved his life by reporting the plot of the two men. He asked his servant, “How was Mordecai honored for saving my life?”

“No honor was given to Mordecai,” the servant answered. The King became very upset. He heard a noise in the garden and asked who was there. It was Haman.

The King asked Haman what he would do for a man he desired to honor. Haman thought to himself, “Umm, the King must be wanting to honor me!” So he said to the King, “Give the man a robe that the King has worn, and one of the King’s horses. Also, the King should then have one of his servants guide the horse through the city, while the man rides on the back of the horse.

The King told Haman, “That is a great idea. Quickly, take a robe and horse to Mordecai, the Jew, who is sitting at the king’s gate and do exactly as you suggested.” Haman was very upset. He went home and told his wife what had happened. She encouraged him to continue his plot against Mordecai. Then the King’s servant came to get Haman to come to the banquet which Esther had prepared.

Again, the King asked Esther what she desired. Esther replied, “O King, if it would please you, I ask that you spare me and my people from death. If we had been sold into slavery, I would have kept silent. But this which has been done to us is too horrible to keep silent.”

“Who has done this horrible thing to you and your people?” the King asked.

“The wicked Haman.” Esther answered. The King became very angry and ordered Haman hung on the very gallows which he had made to hang Mordecai.

The King gave the family of Haman to Esther—they became her slaves. To Mordecai he gave his signet ring, which he had taken back from Haman. Esther begged the King to stop the orders of Haman to have all her people killed. The King did as Esther had requested.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Who are the people in our story today? *King Xerxes, Queen Vashti, Mordecai, Esther, Haman*

What decisions or choices did King Xerxes make? *He chose to treat Queen Vashti as property, rather than love her. This treatment made her not respect him, and she refused to do as he wished. He then had to decide what to do. He chose to get rid of her as his Queen. This decision left him without a Queen. He then chose to gather all the beautiful women in the kingdom, into his harem, from which he chose a new Queen. Later, he took bad advice from an untrustworthy person, thus choosing to condemn many people to death.*

What decisions or choices did Esther make? *She had to choose to respect her husband, even though he perhaps, wasn't worthy of respect. She had to choose to approach him even though she was afraid—he could have had her killed. Her choices saved all of the Jews from death.*

What decisions or choices did Haman make? *He chose to think only of himself. He choose to lie to the King. He chose to try and have all the Jews killed. His pride led him to make choices which, eventually killed him.*

When we played “Find the Leader” earlier, what choices did you make? *Help them to think through the different choices they had to make while they played. To participate, to obey, to follow the rules.*

What happened as a result of the choices you made?

What are some choices you have to make every day? What feelings do you have as you make these choices? *(Get up without complaining, get to school on time, obey teacher, obey parents, be polite, be kind to others, etc..)*

What are some possible consequences of the choices you have to make every day?

The choices that Esther had to make could have meant death to her and to her people. How do you think she knew what choice to make? *Have the children look up Esther 5:16-17. She had everyone praying and fasting. [You may want to explain fasting]. She relied on God to show her what to do. We need to get others involved in praying for us, so that we will have the strength to do what we need to do.*

What are some life and death choices you have to make? *(What friends you will hang out with; studying hard, so that when you are an adult, you can have a good job; being kind to others; learning more about Jesus and what He says is good; places you go.)*

What can you do to make sure you know what the best choices are? *(Study the Bible, go to Sunday School and church, pray and ask others to pray for me, seek friends who want to live according to God's ways, etc.)*

Challenge the children to find two adults who will commit to pray for them every day. They should let their prayer partners know what they need prayer.

Have a time of prayer. Ask the Lord to help each one make the choices He wants them to make.

NEW! Bible Club Option

GOSPEL FOCUS

*Note: The students need a basic understanding of the Esther story before doing this lesson. Consider doing the other Bible Club lesson for this week first, watching the VeggieTales version of *Esther* or **briefly retelling the story** (from Bible Club) before you do this lesson. Emphasize the idea that Esther risked death to talk to the king, because it was her only chance to rescue her people.

LESSON AIM: To help the child understand how Jesus and Esther both chose to risk death in order to save their people. However, though Esther thought she *might* die, Jesus knew He would! This demonstrates His great love for us!
 To help the child understand he/she now has a choice of whether or not to believe in Jesus and what He did for us.

SCRIPTURE: Esther 4:14, 16; 7:3; 8:3; various New Testament scriptures

MATERIALS: Two pieces of chart paper; several markers; two old blankets, enough small treats for all the students to have one; duct tape (or wide masking tape); extra SA.Y Yes! dollars; the scrambled word puzzles and story flow charts (included at the end of this section).

SETUP:

- Copy the following (leaving the blanks empty) onto the two pieces of chart paper and hang them side-by-side at the front of the room.

Esther
1. <u>Spoke</u> to the King for the people.
2. <u>Saved</u> her people.
3. Became queen at <u>just</u> <u>the</u> <u>right</u> <u>time</u> .
4. She said, “ <u>IF</u> I die, I die,” so her people would have a <u>chance</u> to live.

Jesus
1. Is the <u>middle-man</u> between The King (God) and the people.
2. <u>Saved</u> His people.
3. Came to earth at <u>just</u> <u>the</u> <u>right</u> <u>time</u> .
4. He said, “ <u>When</u> I die, I die,” so we could live <u>forever</u> .

- Photocopy the (8) scrambled word puzzles (with their verses). See pages at end of this section. Trim the outside edges.
- Spread the blankets out on the floor at the front of the room. Leave a couple of feet between the blankets so that a student could, with a some effort, jump from one blanket to the other. Tape the edges (or at least the four corners) to the floor to keep the blankets from bunching up or sliding around.

Intro:

Tell the group that today you are going to talk about how the story of Esther and the story of Jesus are alike. Tell them you are going to need their help to fill in the chart comparing Esther and Jesus and then to act out two stories showing the same ideas.

The Chart:

- Divide the students into eight groups and give them each a puzzle. Your groups should have two to four students depending on how many students you have total.
- Have each group work together to read their Bible verse and unscramble the word(s) that goes in their blank(s).
- As each group figures out their words, they should raise their hands and get permission from the leader to go up and write their answer in the blank(s) on the big charts at the front of the room.
- When all the groups are finished, go over the answers together with the whole group. Have each group read the scripture from their puzzle card aloud to the group. Leave the chart somewhere at the front of the room while you have the students help you act out the object lesson.
- You may use the following script or your own version of it to explain the lesson.

The Object Lesson:

Now I need your help to act out two stories that will give us a picture of what Esther did for her people and what Jesus did for us. As part of the story, I need to borrow one SAY Yes! dollar from each person. (Collect these and put them in a pile at the front of the room.)

Half of you will help with the first story and half with the second. I also need one special volunteer for each story.

(Divide the group in half where they are sitting and choose your two volunteers. Don't choose volunteers who might be sensitive about their weight. Do choose volunteers who have at least a couple SAY Yes!® dollars. This will make sense later! For the sake of this explanation, we'll say the volunteers' names are Alexis and Tremain. Everyone should still be sitting at this point.)

Imagine that those blankets (point to the blankets spread out at the front of the room) are baskets attached to the bottom of two hot air balloons. Do you know how hot air balloons work? (Talk briefly about the fire inside the balloon, which creates the hot air that makes the balloon rise, allowing passengers to float along in the attached basket.)

Story #1

In a moment Group #1 is going to get in the green (or whatever color your blanket is) hot air balloon by standing on the blanket. Once you get on the blanket, be careful not to step on the floor, because it's a long way down! (Have Group #1, including Alexis (the special volunteer), go up and stand on one of the blankets.)

You are all floating along in your hot air balloon. You're way, way up in the sky, looking down on all the tiny buildings and houses and cars. Oh look! There's the SAY Yes!® center! Wave at your friends! (Group #1 and Group #2 can wave at each other.) But wait a minute! You guys aren't floating as high anymore. I think you're sinking! You must be too heavy for the balloon! Oh no! You're sinking faster and faster! What are you going to do?

Lucky for you, you have Alexis with you, because she knows how to help. She notices another hot air balloon floating nearby. (Point out the other blanket.) She knows if she can just jump over to that hot air balloon, your balloon will be a little lighter and you will all be OK. Alexis, do you think you can jump that far? You don't want to miss, because it's a loooong way down!

Alexis, before you decide whether or not you want to try to jump and save your friends, I'm going to make this story have some real consequences. (Show the Story #1 Flow Chart as you explain her options.) If you're willing to jump, this balloon will not crash and everyone in it will get their SAY Yes! dollar back. (Point to the pile of dollars you borrowed at the beginning.) If you make it over to the other balloon, everyone in Group #1, including you, will get an extra SAY Yes! dollar and a treat! (Show them the treats you have.) If you jump, but you don't make it to the other balloon, your friends left in the balloon will still be OK. They won't crash, so they'll get their dollars back; but they won't get any extra dollars, and no one will get a treat. And unfortunately, Alexis, if you don't make it, you will lose all of your SAY Yes! dollars today, because you will fall down to the ground. If you decide you don't want to risk falling and losing the rest of your dollars, that's fine—it's your choice—but this whole balloon is going to crash and I will get to keep the dollar I borrowed from everyone at the beginning of this lesson.

Group #1, what do you think Alexis should do?

Group #2, what do you think Alexis should do?

Alexis, what's your decision?

(Let Alexis jump—or not, depending on her decision—and follow through on the consequences. Have Alexis and Group #1 sit down. They can enjoy their treats—if they got treats—during the debrief and while they watch Group #2 act out the second story.)

DEBRIEF

IF she jumped
<p>Alexis, why did you choose to jump even though you knew you might lose all your dollars?</p> <p>Group #1, how do you feel about Alexis' decision to jump for you?</p> <p>Does anyone know how what we just acted out is like the story of Esther? (In our story, Alexis jumped even though she knew she might lose her dollars. She did it so Group #1 wouldn't crash and wouldn't lose their dollars. In the story of Esther, Esther went to talk to the king even though she knew she might die. She did it to save her people.)</p>

IF she DID NOT jump
<p>Alexis, why did you choose not to jump?</p> <p>Group #1, how do you feel about Alexis' decision NOT to jump for you?</p> <p>Does anyone know how what we just acted out is different from the story of Esther? (In our story, Alexis chose not to jump because she didn't want to risk losing her dollars. That was her choice, and it's OK that she made that choice; but in the story of Esther, Esther chose to talk to the king even though she knew she might die. She was willing to take that risk to save her people.)</p>

Story #2:

Now, Group #2 is going to get a chance to act out a story a lot like the first story but with a few changes. Who was our volunteer for Group #2? That's right. It was Tremain. Tremain, you are going to have a very tough decision. (As you say this, move one of the blankets so that there is **so much room** between the two blankets that it would be absolutely impossible for anyone to jump between them. Then have Group #2 come up and stand on one of the blankets).

OK, you are all floating along in your hot air balloon. You're way, way up in the sky looking down on all the tiny buildings and houses and cars. Oh look! There's the SAY Yes![®] center! Wave at your friends! (Group #1 and Group #2 can wave at each other again.) But wait a minute! You guys aren't floating as high anymore. I think you're sinking! You must be too heavy for the balloon! Oh no! You're sinking faster and faster! What are you going to do??

Tremain, you have the same choice Alexis had, but with a few changes. You may have noticed that the other balloon moved farther away. Do you think you can jump that far? Remember, you don't want to miss, because it's a loooooong way down!

The other changes are these. (Show the flow chart for Story #2.) If you're willing to jump, this balloon will not crash, and your group will get their dollars back. They will also each get an extra dollar and a treat! You, however, will lose all your dollars today as you fall the looooooong way down to the ground, and you will not get a treat. If you decide you don't want to risk falling and losing your dollars, that's fine—it's your choice—but this whole balloon is going to crash and I will get to keep the dollar I borrowed from everyone at the beginning of this lesson. (Remember: You should have arranged the blankets so that if Tremain jumps, there's no way he can make it.)

Group #2, what do you think Tremain should do?

Group #1, what do you think Tremain should do?

Tremain, what's your decision?

(Let Tremain jump—or not, depending on his decision—and follow through on the consequences. Have Tremain and Group #2 sit down.)

Debrief:

IF he jumped
<p>Tremain, did you think you would make it to the other balloon when you jumped?</p> <p>Why did you choose to jump even though you knew you would lose all your dollars?</p> <p>Group #2, how do you feel about Tremain's decision to jump for you?</p> <p>In our story, Tremain jumped even though he knew he would fall to the ground and die, but he did it so the rest of his group wouldn't crash. In real life Tremain was willing to lose all his dollars so his group would get their dollars back AND would get an extra dollar plus a treat; that's pretty impressive.</p>

IF he DID NOT jump
<p>Tremain, why did you choose not to jump?</p> <p>Group #2, how do you feel about Tremain's decision NOT to jump for you?</p> <p>In our story, Tremain chose not to jump because he knew he would lose all his dollars. ***Note: The point of this is illustration, not making Tremain feel guilty if he chose not to jump! Reassure him about his decision and let him know this was just to give us an idea of what it was like for Jesus to choose to come to earth knowing He was going to have to die for us.</p>

Does anyone know how what we just acted out is like the story of Jesus? *When Jesus came to earth, He knew He was going to die, but He came anyway so He could save His people.*

How was Tremain's decision different from Alexis' decision? *Alexis thought she might fall and lose all her dollars, but she had a chance of making it, and she didn't want her group's balloon to crash. She wanted them to get treats. Tremain knew he would fall and lose all of his dollars, but he still didn't want his group's balloon to crash. He sacrificed his dollars so they could get treats. It's kind of like he bought the treats with his dollars.*

How was Jesus' decision different from Esther's decision? *Esther knew she might die for talking to the king, but it was her only chance to save her people. Jesus knew He was going to die, but He knew it was the only way to save us!*

Romans 6:23 says the wages of sin is death. If you sin even once, you have to die. We learned in the story of Adam and Eve how they sinned once and now all humans will one day die. But this verse also means that if you sin, you cannot live with God in heaven after you die.

What happened to Jesus after He died? *He rose from the grave.*

(If Tremain jumped) We're going to pretend Tremain also rose from the dead, so he's going to get his dollars back plus an extra *two* dollars and a treat!

Conclusion:

But back to the real story. You're right! Jesus rose from the dead, and He is still alive today! So now you have a choice to make. It's the most important choice you will ever make in your whole life. It's a choice between death and life.

You can choose not to believe in Jesus because you want to stay in charge of your own life. The consequence of that choice is that God will not let you into heaven and you will not live forever.

Or you can choose to believe in Jesus and let him be in charge of your life. The consequence of that choice is that you will live forever in heaven with God!

You might not be ready to make that choice, and that's OK. It is a really big choice. But if you are ready or if you have more questions about it, I want you to talk to me or to one of the other leaders about it. You can just say, "I'm ready to make my choice." Or "I have a question about my choice," and we will talk to you about it. We will also be talking about it a lot during Bible Club throughout the year.

For today, if you forget everything else, remember this:

Jesus loves you so much that He chose to die so you could live with Him forever!

Scrambled Word Puzzles

1. _____ to the King for the people.
(k s e o p)

Then Esther spoke to the king again, throwing herself at his feet and crying. She begged him to do something to stop the evil plot that Haman, the descendant of Agag, had made against the Jews.

Esther 8:3 TEV

2. _____ her people.
(v s d e a)

“If it please Your Majesty to grant my humble request, my wish is that I may live and that my people may live.”

Esther 7:3 TEV

3. Became queen at _____
(t j s u) _____
(h e t)

(t i r h g) _____
(i t m e)

“Yet who knows—maybe it was for a time like this that you were made queen!”

Esther 4:14 TEV

4. She said, “ _____ I die, I die,” so her
(f i)

people would have a _____ to live.
(e c c n h a)

“I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. If I must die for doing it, I will die.”

Esther 4:16 TEV

1. Is the _____ - _____ between
(l m d e d i) (n m a)

The King (God) and the people.

For there is one God and one who brings God and mankind together, the man Christ Jesus.

I Timothy 2:5 TEV

2. _____ His people.
(a s v d e)

She will have a son, and you will name him Jesus—
because he will save his people from their sins.

Matthew 1:21 TEV

3. Came to earth at _____
(u t s j) (e h t)

(g i r h t) (i e m t)

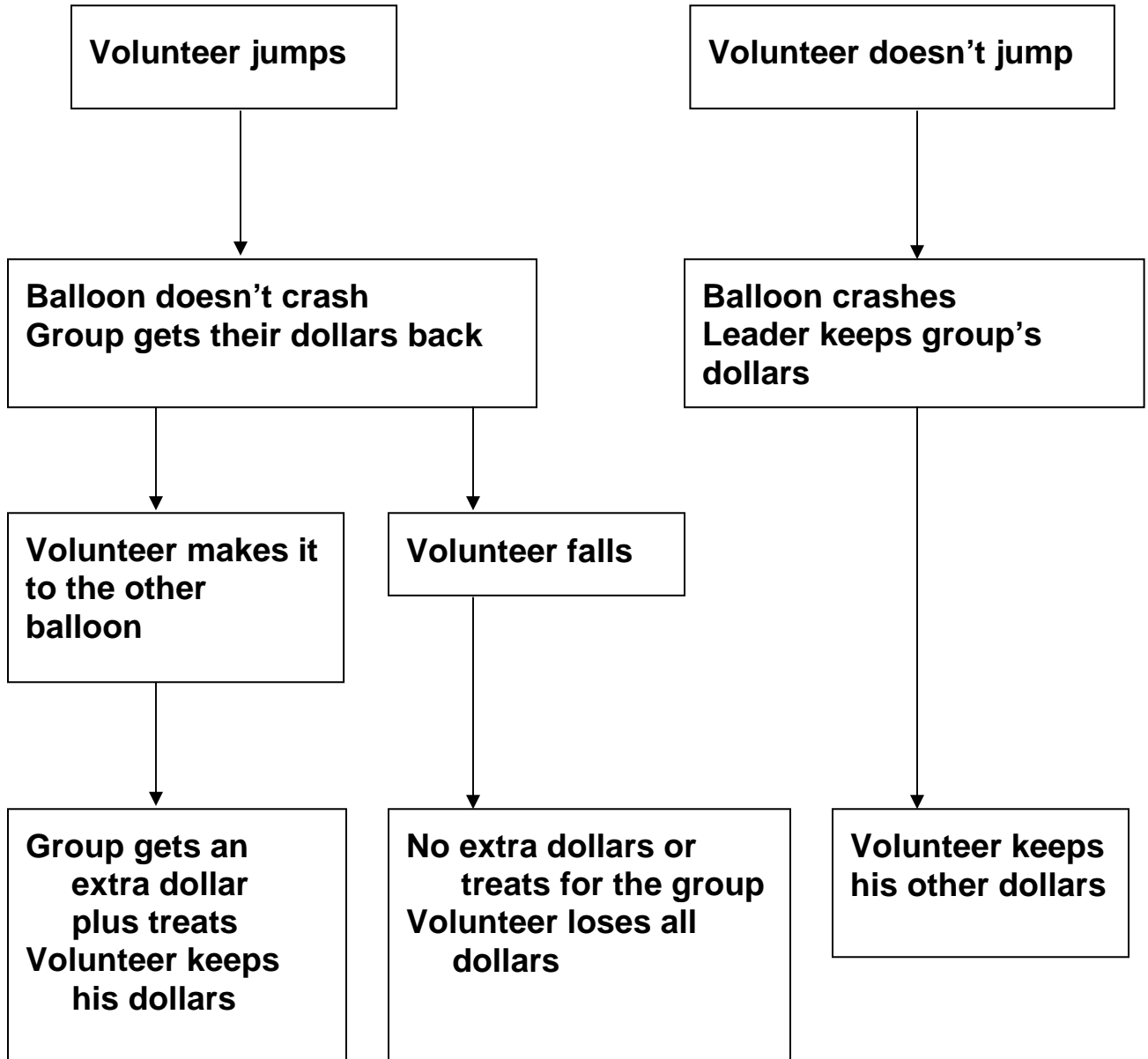
But when the right time finally came, God sent his own Son.
Galatians 4:4 TEV

4. He said, “ _____ I die, I die,” so we
(n w e h)
could live _____.
(r o v e e r f)

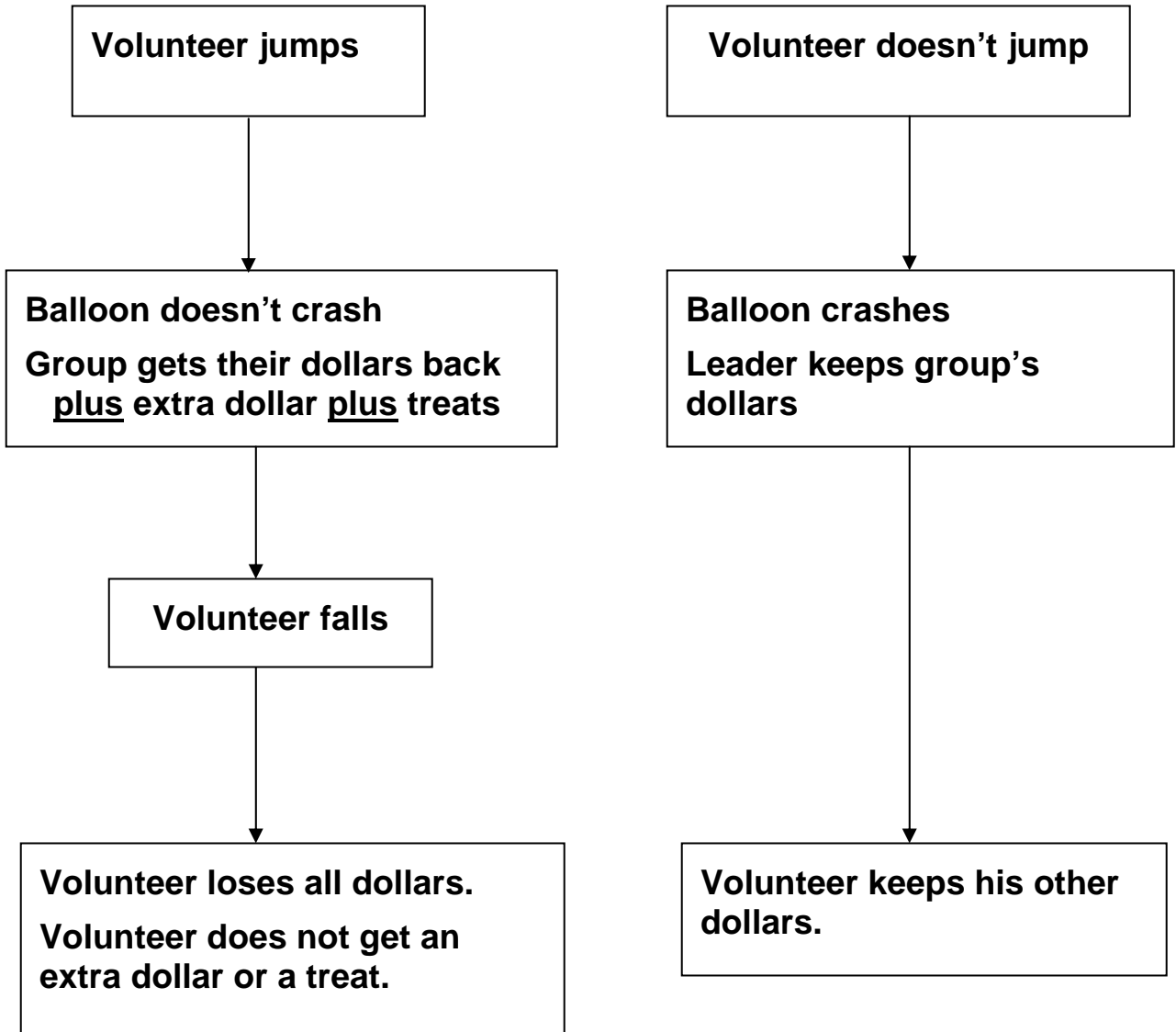
Jesus took the twelve disciples aside and said to them, “Listen! We are going to Jerusalem where everything the prophets wrote about the Son of man will come true. He will be handed over to the Gentiles, who will make fun of him, insult him, and spit on him. They will whip him and kill him, but three days later he will rise to life.

Luke 18:31-33 TEV

Story #1 Flow Chart



Story #2 Flow Chart



WEEK 2 - SKITS

Skit #1

CHARACTERS: Reuben and Bobby

SCENE: Bobby is looking for wisdom in all the wrong places. Bobby enters and begins searching for something, out amongst the kids. Look in their hair, underneath them, behind their ears, etc..

Reuben: (*Enters calling for Bobby*) Bobby, Bobby where are you?

Bobby begins acting like he is trying to dig into the ground, he is oblivious to Reuben's calls.

Reuben: Bobby! What are you doing, digging in the dirt?

Bobby: Huh? Oh! Hi Reuben.

Reuben: Bobby! What are you doing?

Bobby: Oh, uh, I'm looking for something?

Reuben: Did you lose something?

Bobby: No, I never had it! At least that's what my mom says.

Reuben: What do you, mean? You're not making sense—.

Bobby: My mom got really mad at me this morning. She said I was stupid, she told me to get out of the house until I found some wisdom. So I've been looking everywhere for wisdom.

Reuben: Bobby, wisdom isn't found buried in a park, like some hidden treasure.

Bobby: I know, but I had to do something. I hurt so bad inside when mom yelled at me, I just had to go and do something.

Reuben: I'm sorry your mom got so mad at you. Has she been drinking again?

Bobby: Just a little. What can I do Reuben? How can I grow wise? I'm always making the wrong choices.

Reuben: We studied a Bible passage in Sunday school yesterday that I think will help you. Come on, let's go to my house and I'll show you.

They take off and run to another part of the room, which is Reuben's house, a Bible is there.

Reuben: Mom, Mom, I've brought Bobby home with me.

Mom: (*Just a voice from somewhere*) O.K. Reuben. There are fresh baked cookies in the kitchen if you want.

Reuben: Here's my Bible. Let's look up Proverbs 2 (*the passage is 2:1-11 it is a long passage to read, so kind of paraphrase it*) See, Bobby, it says here that if you memorize God's word, God will give you wisdom.

Bobby: Hey Reuben, look at this, I wasn't so far off. It says that if I call out and search for it as hidden treasure I will find it. Maybe that's why I didn't find it. I should have called, (*Bobby yells*) "Wisdom, here Wisdom, come to me, Wisdom."

Reuben: I don't think that's what it means. What I learned in Sunday School is that the key, is in verse one. Knowing the commands of God. When you do that, you are calling out for wisdom, you are searching for wisdom.

Bobby: Look down here. It's not just knowing God's commands, but it is doing them, too. I need to know God's commands and I need to do what those commands tell me to do.

Reuben: You can start by reading your Bible every morning before you go to school.

Bobby: I can also get up on Sunday mornings and go with you to Sunday School. Growing in wisdom isn't going to be easy. It is going to take time.

Reuben: Yeah, but you can do it. We can both do it. Let's go get those cookies.

The boys walk out.

Leader: **Reuben learned today that wisdom is not hidden in the earth, it is not something he could search for amongst things. Wisdom comes from God, through the Bible which God gave to us.**

For us to gain wisdom, and to be able to make the right choices, we must go where we can learn about how God has told us to live our lives. We can read the Bible every day. We can go to church on Sunday and at the S.A.Y. Yes!® Center, you will learn about God's commands too.

This week's banner phrases

God will lead us to the right choice.

Memorizing God's word helps to make right choices.

Choosing to obey leads to life.

The wrong choice leads to death.

As God gives us wisdom He gives us the ability to make the right choices. His wisdom leads us to choices, which brings us life. Bobby wasn't dead, but his wrong choices had made his life unhappy.

Skit #2

CHARACTERS: Maria, LaTasha

SCENE: Maria and LaTasha are in Maria's bedroom. Maria is being punished for making a wrong choice.

Someone can walk in, carrying a sign that reads, "MARIA'S BEDROOM"

Maria stomps into the room and sits down. She is pouting perhaps even crying. She can go and sit down right in the middle of the kids. If she has to move kids out of the way, she can say something like, "These stupid toys are always getting in the way."

Maria: I don't see why I always get punished. *(In a whiny mocking tone)* No T.V. for a week. It's not fair.

Latasha: *(Pretends to knock on a door frame and peek her head in a door)* Knock, Knock. Can I come in Maria? Your Mom said it was O.K..

Maria: My mom said you could come in? I thought she would keep me from my friends forever.

Latasha: Why'd you say that?

Maria: Well, I can't watch T.V. for a week, for some dumb reason.

Latasha: What did you do?

Maria: Nothing!

Latasha: Aw Maria, you must have done something. Out of all my friends, you have the best parents. Your mom and dad never yell at you, unless they have a real reason. They never get drunk, your mom is always home when you get home, even your dad does things with you. You are the only real family I know. How can you get mad at your Mom?

Maria: Well, my mom told me to do the dishes and I told her I couldn't.

Latasha: *(In a shocked voice)* You told your mom you couldn't do the dishes?

Maria: Well, I was in the middle of a T.V. program. I asked why she couldn't wait until it was over.

Latasha: What did she say?

Maria: She said Mrs. Garcia was coming over and she wanted the house clean.

Latasha: What did you say then?

Maria: I told her to do them herself.

Latasha: You didn't!? How could you talk to your mother like that?

Maria: Well, it was an important program.

Latasha: What were you watching?

Maria: *(Choose a program that the children in your neighborhood watch)*

Latasha: You really did mess up. You didn't use wisdom at all. Maria, that program is always repeated on Saturday mornings. You could have seen it this Saturday. Now you don't get to see it at all.

Maria: Well, how was I to know?

Latasha: Remember in Sunday School what Mrs. Smith said? She said that if we trust God and do what He tells us to do, then everything will work out O.K..

Maria: Well, how was I to know what God wanted me to do right then?

Latasha: You're the one who told me that we're supposed to respect our parents. You said that's what the Bible says. I don't think you respected your parents.

Maria: I guess I did mess up. I kind of dissed my mom.

Latasha: Not kind of. You did! Come on, let's go out and play jump rope.

The two girls get up and run out.

Leader: **Maria was very disrespectful to her mother. She did not follow God's command to respect her parents, even though she knew the command.**

When we don't follow God's commands, it shows that we don't trust God to work things out. We think we have to do it our way - that just gets us into deeper trouble, or makes our life worse.

Going against God's commands leads to wrong choices. When we go against God's commands we show we don't trust God.

What is the saying for today? (*Have them pick today's phrase off the banner.*)

Choosing to obey leads us to life. God has us do only what is right.

Skit #3

CHARACTERS: Bobby, Reuben, Leader

SCENE: Bobby is walking down the street talking to himself, when Reuben finds him.

Bobby: (*As though he is walking down the street, talking to himself. He walks out amongst the kids*) You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol. You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God. Observe the Sabbath....

Reuben: (*Runs in from in back of Bobby*) Bobby, hey Bobby. Where you going?

Bobby: Oh, hi Reuben. My mom was drinking again and got mad at me. So I decided to take a walk, and work on the verses I've been learning.

Reuben: That's a great idea. What verses have you been memorizing?

Bobby: Well, it's not exactly verses. I've been trying to memorize the Ten Commandments.

Reuben: Has it helped?

Bobby: Well, it takes my mind off of my mom and the way she gets. But there's something I don't understand.

Reuben: What's that?

Bobby: One of the commandments says to "Honor your mother and father." How can I do that? I don't even know who my dad is and my mom is drunk most of the time. I don't know how I can honor them.

Reuben: That is a tough one. What if we go ask (*name of leader*) over at the church?

Bobby: O.K. Let's go.

They run around the children and come to where "Leader" is working.

Leader: Well hi, boys. What's up?

Reuben: We have a question for you.

Leader: Well, I hope I have an answer for you. Let's see. What's the question?

Bobby: I've been memorizing the Ten Commandments, trying to learn more of God's Word, so I can be wise. But the Bible says that I am to honor my parents, and I don't even know my father and my mother is always drunk. How can I honor them?

Leader: That is hard. But Bobby, do you love your mother?

Bobby: Sure I do. When she's not drinking, we have a lot of fun together.

Leader: Your admission of love is part of the honor. You don't have to like her actions in order to love her. Do you pray for her?

Bobby: Not every day.

Leader: Well, you have committed to memorize scripture verses so you can make the right choices. Why don't you also commit to pray for your mother everyday? That is a way to honor your mother.

Bobby: WOW! This has been really helpful. Thanks!

Reuben: I knew you'd have the answer. Thanks!

The boys take off.

Leader: Bobby is seeking to learn to make the right choices by memorizing scripture. He also sought to know how to make the right choice by asking for advice from a Christian friend. Then together, they sought out someone who was older and had a better understanding of the scripture, for even more help. Both Reuben and Bobby have sought after what is right.

What do you think the saying for today is? (*Memorizing God's Word helps us to make right choices.*)

Where can we find what is right? (*The Bible, going to church, an adult who has walked with Jesus for many years, practicing the commands of God, etc..*)

Play a memory verse game.

Skit #4

CHARACTERS: Reuben, Maria, Mom

SCENE: Reuben and Maria are fighting in their living room.

Today has a new character - Reuben and Maria's mom. The individual who normally plays LaTasha could play Mom, with a different hair piece. Or, if there are extra adults, you can have one of them play Mom.

Reuben runs into the room, with Maria chasing him. Run in and out amongst the kids.

Maria: Oh, you've done it now! Just wait. I'm going to get you if it's the last thing I do.

Reuben: Ha! You couldn't catch me if your life depended on it. You're nothing but a little sissy girl.

Maria: OOOH!!! (*Acts as if she is picking something up and then throws it*) Here! Take this!

Reuben jumps out of the way

Mom: (*Enters immediately*) What was that crash? My vase, my brand new vase. How did that vase get from the table over here, to the floor over there?

Reuben and Maria look at each other.

Maria: I, I threw it!

Mom: You what!?

Maria: I threw it at Reuben.

Mom: Why? Why would you take something you knew was special to me, and throw it across the room at your brother?

Maria: He took my diary. I was mad at him. I couldn't catch him (*she begins to cry*) I'm sorry MAMA!

Mom: I think we need to sit down and talk.

Reuben: I'll leave the two of you alone.

Mom: Oh no, you don't. You are a part of this talk, too. You two sit down right here, while I go get my Bible.

Reuben: *(As mom leaves, to Maria)* Now look at what you did. You've gotten both of us in trouble!

Maria: Me!! You're the one who started it. If you hadn't taken my diary, none of this would have happened.

Mom: *(Returns with her Bible)* I can't leave you two for a few seconds, without your squabbling. *(Mom opens her Bible to Romans 12:19-21)* "Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will re pay,' says the Lord. *But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*" Maria, what does this passage say to you?

Maria: When Reuben took my diary, I should have loved him and let God get back at him for me.

Mom: Very good! Sometimes we don't even see how God takes revenge. But He promises He will. When you let anger take over and you went after Reuben, you got in the way of God's revenge and you also made things really bad for yourself. Maria, you tried to overcome evil with evil. Now, both of you, you are grounded and cannot go to the SAY Yes!® field trip on Saturday.

Reuben: Hey! That's not fair! All I did was take her diary. I don't think my punishment should be so bad.

Mom: But, Reuben, Maria wouldn't have gotten angry and thrown the vase if you hadn't taken her diary. So you are as guilty as she is.

(Have the verse written out on poster board so the children can read along with you.)

Mom: Now there is one more verse I want you both to read. It is in Proverbs. Actually, it is a verse I will be teaching to the children in my Sunday School class, so I have it written out on this large sheet of paper. "Do not rebuke a mocker or he will hate you; rebuke a wise man and he will love you. Instruct a wise man and he will be wiser still; Teach a righteous man and he will add to his learning." Proverbs 9:8 & 9 What do you think this verse means?

Reuben: Does it mean that a person who is wise won't get angry when he is taught something, or when he is corrected?

Mom: That's right, Reuben.

Maria: What does "righteous" mean? *(points to the word, "righteous")*

Mom: What is the smaller word within the bigger word?

Reuben: Right.

Maria: Oh, I get it. Teach a person who already does right things, and he will learn even more.

Mom: Right again! Now then, how you take the discipline I must give you, will tell us a lot about your hearts.

Reuben: I think I've learned a lot today.

Maria: Me too!

Mom: Good! Let's go get something to clean up this mess and then you can help me fix dinner. *(They all leave.)*

DEBRIEF

How will Mom know whether Reuben and Maria are wise? *(By the way they accept their punishment.)*

A wise person learns when he is taught. He learns to make right choices. He doesn't fight against the teaching by refusing to change his behavior. We all make mistakes - but we will either learn from those mistakes or we will go on to do the same thing over and over.

What does a wise person do? *(He learns.)*

What is the saying for today? *(The wrong choice leads to death.)*

How did Reuben and Maria's wrong choice lead to death? *(Reuben stole Maria's diary, which made her angry. Maria threw Mom's vase and broke it. Both Reuben and Maria lose out on going to the school picnic. That is a kind of death within their lives. They will miss an event that they can never go back and redo. That picnic, with those exact people, will never happen again.)*

NEW!

Skit #5

CHARACTERS: Reuben & Mom

SCENE: Reuben is raking leaves in a neighbor's yard. Mom drives by in her car and slows down to talk to him.

Mom: Hi, Reuben! That's really nice of you to rake Mrs. Robinson's leaves for her!

Reuben: *(still raking, but with slow, tired strokes of the rake)* Uh-huh.

Mom: It's a really big yard. Are you getting tired?

Reuben: Yeah, but I can't stop now. After this, I've gotta go ask Mr. Green if we can do his yard.

Mom: Today? Reuben, it's going to get dark soon. Why are you doing all this?

Reuben: Well. Mrs. Robinson said she'd give us \$10 for raking her yard. If Mr. Green will give us that much, we'll be halfway there.

Mom: *(looking puzzled)* Halfway there? Halfway to what?

Reuben: *(He stops raking for a second and looks at Mom like she ought to know this)* Halfway to buying you a new vase! *(He wipes the sweat off his forehead and keeps raking).*

Mom: *(slowly, finally understanding)* Ohhhh. Is Maria helping with this?

Reuben: *(pointing)* Yeah, she's over there carrying some bags of leaves to the curb.

Mom: *(She looks in the direction Reuben pointed. Then she parks the car and gets out carrying her purse. She walks over to Reuben)* Reuben, stop for a second.

(Reuben stops raking)

Mom: I really appreciate what you're doing – it's very responsible --- but I think you learned your lesson when you had to miss the SAY Yes!® field trip on Saturday.

Reuben: What do you mean?

Mom: (*taking money out of her purse*) I mean that I want you and Maria to take this \$40 and buy me a new vase.

Reuben: (*confused*) But Mom, that's your money and we're the ones who broke the vase! What about all the stuff we've been learning about consequences?

Mom: Yes, all that is true. You and Maria *should* pay for the new vase, but I am willing to pay those consequences for you. (*Giving him the money*) Haven't you been learning about Someone else who was willing to do that?

Reuben: (*thinking a minute*) You mean Jesus?

Mom: That's right! Do you know what it's called when you deserve something bad but you get something good?

Reuben: I don't know, but it sure sounds good!

Mom: (*laughing*) It's called grace. I am giving you grace.

Reuben: (*looking at the money in his hands*) Wow! Thanks Mom! I'm going to go tell Maria! (*he runs away*).

Mom: (*calling after him*) I'll see you at home! (*She smiles, gets back in the car and drives away*).

DEBRIEF

Why were Maria and Reuben raking leaves? *They were trying to earn enough money to pay for the vase they broke.*

Who *should* pay for a new vase? *Maria and Reuben. Why?* *Because they're the ones who broke it. Who actually paid for the vase?* *Maria and Reuben's mom.*

What is it called when you deserve something bad but you get something good? *Grace.*

Have you ever deserved something bad but been given something good instead?

How did Jesus give us grace? *We deserve to die because of our sin, but He died for us!*

What phrase fits today's skit?

JESUS PAID THE PRICE FOR OUR SINS BY DYING ON THE CROSS.

WEEK 2 - MEMORY VERSE

SCRIPTURE: “If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.” James 1:5

Hangman Verse

MATERIALS: Copy of verse per child, 4 sets of numbers written on small pieces of paper, 2 brown paper bags.

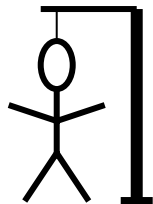
SETUP

- Put two sets of numbers in a brown paper sack (if there are twelve kids on a team, the numbers should count up to 6).
- Put another two sets of numbers in a second brown paper sack.
- Divide group into two teams.
- Give each child a copy of the verse.
- Give time to study the verse.

TO PLAY

- Kids on each team draw a number (give each number out twice on a team, so they can work in pairs. You may want to assign who works with whom, placing younger children with older children.)
- Pair 1 from both teams are called to the front
- Team 1 says the first word, team 2 says the second word, team 1 says the 3rd word, etc.
- If one team cannot continue, or quotes the incorrect word, they must draw the first part of the hangman on the board and Pair 1 from both teams sits down (all four children).
- Pair 2 from both teams are called to the front to continue reciting the verse.

The kids may continue studying the verse if they are not up front - the goal is that they memorize it.



WEEK 2 - PRACTICAL LIVING

Emergency Preparedness

FIRE PROCEDURES

MATERIALS: Have an evacuation route from each room drawn on paper. A bell, whistle, or horn that can be used to sound alarm. S.A.Y. Yes!® Dollars.

Being prepared for emergencies, allows one to make the right choice in the midst of a terrifying time. Being teachable and cooperative in learning the procedures, adds to one's ability to make right choices. Before you begin, make sure you have an evacuation plan worked out for fires, earthquakes, tornadoes, floods, etc. — whatever is relevant to your area.

Take the children through the evacuation procedures. You may want to have them go from each room.

When the “alarm” sounds, the children should:

- get in a line, as quickly as possible
- wait for the “adult-in-charge”, to tell them to walk out
- walk, do not run, to a designated spot out-doors.

Give “S.A.Y. Yes!®” coupons to those children who go through the exercise in a responsible manner.

Return to the inside, and take the children through what they should do if evacuation is not possible.

- Close all doors
- If doors don't have smoke seals, grab anything in the room that may be placed around the door to block smoke from entering the room. Children may need to remove sweaters for such use.
- Lay on the floor as smoke and heat rises.
- Wait for someone to come for you.
- While laying on the floor and waiting, have a time of prayer. You may not want to sing, for you will want to be able to hear, if someone calls for you.

EARTHQUAKE PROCEDURES

Children should be prepared to:

- Stay calm Remain where you are. Stay indoors or outdoors.
- If indoors, “duck and cover” by getting under a desk, table, or chair, if those things are available. Stay away from glass windows. Do not run outside!
- If outdoors, get away from buildings. Go to a clear area, and stay away from walls, utility poles, and downed wires.

AFTER THE QUAKE:

Stay where you are. Do not evacuate unless...

- You see obvious signs of fire.
- You smell gas.
- You are instructed to do so by the fire department, the police, or someone else who is in charge.
- Children, do not leave the building until the Center Director determines it is O.K.
- If parents come for children, they are not to enter the building until the Center Director gives permission.
- Children are to be released only into the direct care of parents.

WEEK 2 - READ-A-LOUD

“The King and His Hawk”

William J Bennett; *The Book of Virtues* pg 37-39

SUMMARY: A mighty king took a day’s journey with his pet hawk. He grew thirsty and couldn’t find any water to drink. At last, he came to some water that was dripping, off the side of a rock. It took forever to fill his cup with the water, but each time he tried to drink, his hawk would come and knock the cup out of his hand. He was angered, and killed the hawk for doing what he did. He dropped his cup between two rocks, and was forced to climb the steep hill, to find the stream from where the water was trickling down. When he did, he found a huge poisonous snake there, dead in the water. He realized that if he had drank the water he would have died. He was very sad that in his anger, he killed his pet.

PRE-READING QUESTIONS

If you were going to write a story about a king and his hawk, what other characters (people or animals), would you have in your story? *You merely want them to think about what kind of story this might be, before you read it to them*

I want two people to tell me about a pet that was very special to them. This is to help them connect to the terrible thing Genghis Khan did, when he killed his hawk.

POST-READING QUESTIONS

Why did the king get so angry at his hawk? *The hawk wouldn’t let him drink his cup of water.*

What did the king do in his anger? *He killed his hawk*

Why was it a foolish choice to kill his hawk? *The hawk was protecting the king. The hawk knew that the water was poisoned and that the king would die, if he drank the water.*

Can you name some times when people have responded in anger, and made things worse than they were before? *Gang members who take revenge, thus adding to everyone’s pain. A child is teased by someone and he tries to beat up the teaser. A sibling gets a special privilege, and the child becomes angry and lashes out, making the parent think twice about giving her a special privilege in the future.*

Does uncontrolled anger bring life or death? *(Have them look up Proverbs 29:22, “An angry man stirs up strife, and a hot-tempered man abounds in transgression.”)*

If time allows, play a memory verse game with this month’s memory verse.

WEEK 2 - CRAFTS

✂ Paper Cup Solomon

MATERIALS: Two cups per child, white paper, crayons or markers, white glue, scissors, fabric scraps (optional)

Solomon was a very wise king. He wrote all of the Proverbs in the Bible, which tell us the importance of wisdom. It will take wisdom to listen quietly and to be taught how to make the cup. When we listen quietly, we learn. When we make the right choices, we behave appropriately.

Have a sample for each group of children.

You may want to have done some of the cutting, before craft time for the younger children.

- Give each child two foam paper cups.
- Place one cup upside down on the table to make the body of Solomon.
- The body can be decorated with markers, and/or crayons, or with fabric.
- The second cup is cut on the top to make it look like the top of a crown.
- A strip of paper, long enough to go two-thirds around the head is cut for the hair. The strip can be fringed. It is glued on the cup, just below the crown.
- Using markers, draw a face on the second cup.
- Now glue the bottom of cup #1, to the bottom of cup #2.
- Use the white paper to make two arms for King Solomon. With glue, attach the arms to the body.

GUIDED CONVERSATION

As the children work on their “King”, talk about wisdom. In a natural flow of conversation, as you all work together, guide the conversation to the following:

- Share how God has shown you how to make the right choices.
- As you have grown older and gotten to know Jesus better, has it become easier to make the right choice?
- Are you still in the process of learning what is right?
- Do you know of anyone, who you think makes the right choices often?

WEEK 2 - RECREATION

DAY ONE: Capture The Flag

(Another game is given below, if your facilities do not accommodate “Capture the Flag”)

MATERIALS: Two flags of any kind (can be old rags)

OBJECT: Steal the opponents’ flag, then return to your territory without being captured.

SETUP:

- The game is played in two large teams. Make sure there is a mix of ages on both teams.
- This is best played outside, in a large area where there can be many hiding places. If you have no outside area in which to play, it can be fun inside, too. It can be played in a parking lot, by placing cars in strategic spots for the kids to hide behind.
- Divide the playing area in half . You may want to use your entire property.
- Draw an imaginary line designating the teams’ territory.

TO PLAY:

- Each team is given a flag (any rag will do).
- Each team hides it’s flag in a spot as far away from the opposing team’s territory as possible.
- The flags must be placed where they can be seen.
- When the adult leader calls out, “Let the game begin,” all players begin their way into the opposing team’s territory.
- If caught in the opposing side’s territory and tagged, the captured player is placed in “prison.”
- The only way out of prison, is if one of the teammates makes it over, and tags his captured teammate. Both teammates can then return to their own side, by getting a “free walk” back.
- Each team designates a certain spot as their “Prison.”
- All captured players must remain in the prison until they are tagged by a free teammate.
- Prisoners may hold hands to make a chain out of the prison, and everyone on the chain can be released when the first person is tagged.
- Encourage the kids to get together in their teams and create a strategy before the game begins, by asking the following questions:
- Who will go after the flag? Who will stay in their own territory and capture prisoners? Who will be prison guards?
- Who will be decoys? Who will guard the flag? Who will go to rescue prisoners?

- Guards must stand at least 6 feet away from the flag.
- No one has a greater advantage than anyone else. (Sometimes the smaller and younger kids can get away with things easier than the older ones.)

DEBRIEF

- 1) **What choices did you have to make as you played?**
- 2) **Does anyone think they made the wrong choice? Why do you think it was the wrong choice?** *(Be prepared for answers that reflect the children’s drive to win, as opposed to a drive to be holy. Don’t let them tell the wrong choices of others. They are only to talk about themselves.)*
- 3) **Did anyone cheat or complain while you were playing? If so, what were the results of their choices?** *(Try to help them think through the natural consequences. What do others think of us when we cheat or complain? Do we end up losing more than we win?)*

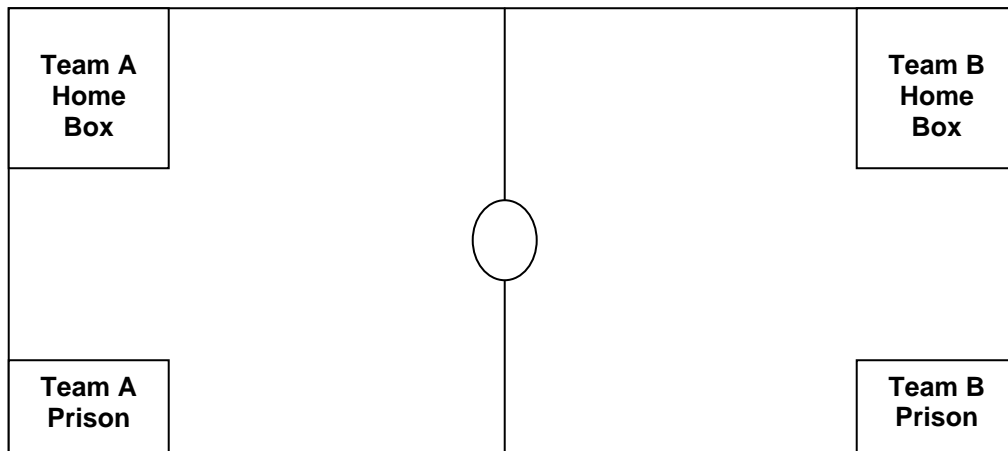
ALTERNATIVE GAME: Prisoners Base

MATERIALS: Masking tape

OBJECT: To be the team with the most players returned to the “Home Box” safely at end.

SETUP:

- Divide the group into teams of 10. If you have four teams, have two teams observe and cheer on the two teams playing.
- Lay out a large playing area with masking tape. Twelve by twelve feet size tape would be great.
- Use the masking tape to make a Team A Home Box and a Team B Home Box.
- Again, use the masking tape to make a Team A and Team B Prison.
- Designate which team is Team A, and which is Team B.



TO PLAY

- Team A gathers in its home box, and Team B gathers in its home box.
- A Captain is chosen for each team, perhaps one of the adults.
- The Captain for team A picks his fastest runner to run to the circle and yell, “My City.”
- At the yell of, “My City”, Team B’s Captain sends out his fastest runner to tag Team A’s runner.
- As soon as Team B’s runner is sent out, Team A’s captain can send out his #2 runner who tries to tag Team B’s #1 runner.
- At that, Team B’s captain sends out his #2 runner who tries to tag Team A’s #2 runner.
- A runner can only tag the person he has been sent out to tag. If he accidentally tags someone else, he must go to prison.
- If a player is tagged, she must go to prison.
- Players remain in prison until tagged by one of their own players.
- If a player gets back to her “Home Box” after tagging the person they were sent out to tag, she is safe.
- If a player does not attempt to get his opponent, he goes to Prison. (Director makes the call)
- The winning team, is the team to have the most players return to “Home Box” safely.

OBSERVE

- As the children play, watch for the different kinds of qualities displayed by the choices the children make. This will tell you a lot about the children’s hearts.
- You will want to help the children relate their choices to the qualities displayed, and then to what is happening in their hearts.

DEBRIEF

- 1) **What choices did you have to make as you played?**
- 2) **Does anyone think they made the wrong choice? Why do you think it was the wrong choice?** *(Be prepared for answers that reflect the children’s drive to win, as opposed to a drive to be holy. Don’t let them tell the wrong choices of others. They are only to talk about themselves.)*
- 3) **Did anyone cheat or complain while you were playing? If so, what were the results of their choices?**

(Try to help them think through the natural consequences. What do others think of us when we cheat or complain? Do we end up losing more than we win?)

BE SURE TO DISCUSS THE CHOICES THAT ARE MADE!

WHICH CHOICES LEAD TO LIFE AND WHICH CHOICES LEAD TO DEATH!?

DAY TWO: Circle Relay

MATERIALS: Two large rubber balls

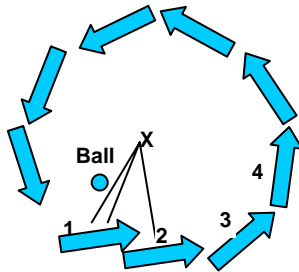
OBJECT: To be the first team to have all its players catch the ball around the circle, and return home.

SETUP

Divide the group into two teams. Each team forms a circle with one player (x) in the middle.

TO PLAY

- “X” throws a ball to “Number One” in the circle who throws it back to “X”. “Number One” then runs to his neighbor, “Number Two”, and catches the ball again, and again throws it back to “X”.
- He continues around the circle until he returns back to his home place.
- When the first player returns home, “Number Two” sets off, and repeats the process.
- The first team to have everyone catch the ball around the circle wins.
- Give a “Spirit Point” to teams who cheer on their runner.



ALTERNATIVE GAME: Pairs Relay

MATERIALS: None

OBJECT: To be the first team to have all its pairs return home first.

SETUP: Each team divides into pairs, facing one another and holding hands.

TO PLAY

- The first pair runs from the starting point to the opposite end with one player (#1) running backwards, pulling his/her partner (#2).
- They then return to the start point with #2 pulling #1.
- Then the second pair sets off.
- The team to have all its pairs return home first, wins.

ALTERNATIVE GAME: Memory Relay

MATERIALS: Masking tape or rope, to mark off half-way point and goal

OBJECT: To be the first team to have every member complete all of the tasks.

SETUP

- Lay out the ropes or masking tape, designating half-way point. Also, mark the goal.
- Players are orally given a set of instructions that they are to do.
- Instructions: Hop half-way, crawl second-half to goal; coming back, run backwards half-way, crab walk last half to home.
- Adults should demonstrate.

TO PLAY

- First player hops, then crawls to a designated spot. Coming home, he runs backwards, and then does the crab walk.
- Tag the second player on his team who repeats what player #1 did.
- Some children may have difficulty remembering, due to learning disabilities, so be prepared to help their memory. We don't want any child to feel "stupid."
- The winner is the first team to have all its players complete the four tasks.

ALTERNATIVE GAME: Newspaper Relay

MATERIALS: Newspapers, two sheets for each team, plus some extras

OBJECT: To be the first team to have all its Players walk on newspaper from one point to another and return.

SETUP: Mark starting point and finishing line

TO PLAY

- When the leader says, "GO", the first person on each team lays down the first sheet of newspaper, steps on it and then lays down the second sheet.
- He then moves to the second sheet and picks up the first sheet, now laying it in front of him.
- Players may move to the finish line only by stepping from sheet to sheet.
- He then runs back with the papers to the second person on his team, who repeats what he has done.
- The first team to have all of its players return home, wins.

ALTERNATIVE GAME: Cotton Ball Relay

MATERIALS: One egg carton per team, one spatula per team, cotton balls

OBJECT: To be the first team to have every player put a cotton ball in the carton

SETUP

- Divide the group into even teams
- Each team is given a spatula, a container of cotton balls and an egg carton
- The egg cartons are laid at one end of the room and the teams line up at the opposite end of the room



□---egg carton



□---egg carton

TO PLAY

- When the Counselor says, “Go,” the first player on each team places a cotton ball on the spatula, and goes as quickly as possible to the egg carton, placing the cotton ball in the egg carton
- If the cotton ball falls to the floor, the player must return to his team and get another cotton ball
- Once the cotton ball is in the carton, the first player may return to his team, handing the second player the spatula
- The second player goes as quickly as possible to put a cotton ball in the egg carton, etc.

OBSERVE

- As the children play observe them. If they seem to be making a lot of bad choices stop and debrief after the first or second relay.

DEBRIEF

- 1) **Which choices, or actions, led to life? Which led to death?**
- 2) **Why did you make the choices you made?**

DAY THREE: Balloon Stomp

MATERIALS: a balloon for each player, piece of string for each player.

OBJECT: To be the team to have at least one balloon unpopped.

SETUP

- Divide the group into two teams.
- Give each player a balloon to blow up and a piece of string with which to tie the balloon to his/her ankle.
- Adults may need to help tie the balloons once they are inflated.

TO PLAY

- When the leader says, “Go” the players attempt to burst as many of the opposing players’ balloons as possible, while trying to protect his/her own balloon.
- Those whose balloons have popped should step aside to watch and cheer the survivors.
- The team who has the last player with an unpopped balloon is the winner.

OBSERVE

- Watch to see if the children whose balloons get popped stay and cheer on their teammates?

DEBRIEF

- 1) **What was the most difficult choice you had to make while you were playing?**
- 2) **As a teammate, what is an important choice you have to make?** (*Supporting and encouraging the others on your team, is like encouraging and supporting yourself. Your success is dependent on the success of the others on your team.*)

ALTERNATIVE GAME: Frisbee Fling

MATERIALS: two Frisbees

OBJECT: To be the team to get a Frisbee over its goal line, to a team member.

SETUP

- Divide the group into two teams.
- Each team marks its goal at a different corner of the playground.
- A player from each team should be stationed at a goal.
- Begin with both teams gathered in the center of the playing area.

TO PLAY

- Randomly toss the Frisbees into the group.
- Team members toss the Frisbee from player to player but are not allowed to run while carrying it.

- A player who intercepts a flying Frisbee cannot move before throwing it again.
- The other players are not allowed to interfere with players throwing the Frisbee. However, the opposing team can jump in and catch the Frisbee, while in motion, and head it towards their goal.
- Team members who are able to throw the Frisbee to the player at their goal win a point.

OBSERVE

- Observe how the teams work together. Are they making the right choices and learning how to work as a team? Or are they playing foolishly, just doing “their own thing”?

DEBRIEF

- 1) **How did you choose to work with your team?**
- 2) **What was the result of choosing to work as a team?**
- 3) **How could someone have chosen not to be a team player?**

DAY FOUR: Lights-Camera-Action

MATERIALS: paper bags, collections of odd things for each team

OBJECT: To create a skit using the collection of odds-and-ends in the bag

SETUP

- Divide into the number of teams that you think would work well. The number of teams will depend on the number of children you have. Make sure there is a mix of older and younger children together.

TO PLAY

- Each team is given a paper bag containing a variety of things.
- The teams are given 10 minutes to make up a little play, introducing every one of the items in some way.
- Each team gets to perform their skit.
- Talk about how they worked together.

OBSERVE

- Observe how the children work together. Have they learned anything this week? Are they making the right choices?

DEBRIEF

- 1) **What choices were made during the playing of this game?**
- 2) **What was the most difficult choice that had to be made?**
- 3) **Are you happy with the choices you made? Why or why not?**
- 4) **What choices did others make that upset you? Why did that choice upset you?**

ALTERNATIVE GAME: Free Play

MATERIALS: balls, jump ropes, Frisbees, chalk to make hopscotch

SETUP: Let the children choose what they would like to play today.

OBSERVE

- Free play is a great time to see what the children are learning about interacting with one another.

DEBRIEF

- 1) **Is it harder to make the right choice when you are just out playing with your friends, than it is when adults are directing your play? If so, why do you think it is harder?**

WEEK 3 – BIBLE CLUB

LESSON AIM: To help the child understand that he/she must daily make choices that will affect his/her life.

SCRIPTURE: Judges 13 - 16

MEMORY VERSE: “If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.” James 1:5

Samson, a contemporary of Samuel, judged Israel for 20 years, beginning when he was a 20-year-old.

The angel, in foretelling Samson’s birth, told his mother that he was to be a **Nazarite**. The word, “Nazarite”, meant, “consecrated” or “devoted”. He was to live completely dedicated to God. The Nazarite vow included three pledges: 1.) to abstain from fermented drink (liquor), 2.) to refrain from cutting his hair, 3.) to avoid contact with dead bodies.

Samson was a man who made many bad choices. His story is tragic, for though he was blessed by God, he allowed his lust, pride, and passion for revenge to dictate the choices he would make. Samson’s fall did not happen because of one moment of carelessness. For him, it was a day-by-day decision to go against God’s laws.

Samson disobeys God’s law with his choice to marry a Philistine woman. The Mosaic law prohibited marrying a non-Israelite. God uses our sinfulness to bring Himself glory and to fulfill His plans, but we still must pay the consequences of our bad choices.

Secondly, Samson deliberately disobeys his Nazarite vow, when he scoops honey from the dead carcass (body) of a lion. Was it pride that drove him to go out of his way to take a look at the dead animal?

Certainly, it was pride that moved him to challenge the Philistine groomsmen to solve a riddle. This would lead to one act of revenge after another. Ultimately, Samson’s lust for prostitutes leads him to Delilah, and his final bad choice, to tell an untrustworthy woman the secret of his strength. Obedience to God was the source of his strength, but when he cut his hair he was disobedient, and thus lost his strength.

In the end, God worked everything out, so that He received honor and glory. Samson, however, had to pay the ultimate consequence for his ongoing wrong choices.

Discipleship
Tip

Ask each child to list the choices they have had to make this day. *Share* with the children, the choices you have made this day. *Rate* the choices according to how they could alter your life. The scale could range from, Number 1, not that important, to number 10, could lead to life or death.

HOOK

MATERIALS: Clip board for each adult, paper and pencils

- Today's Hook is not something you create.
- From the moment that your assigned children arrive at the Center, observe the choices they make as they interact with others.
- Have a sheet of paper on which you can record their actions.

DEBRIEF

At the beginning of Bible Club, have your group sit down on the floor. Talk about the beginning of the day. Ask the following questions:

What have you enjoyed the most about the center today?

What have you enjoyed least about the center today?

Have you been happy with the way you have behaved today? Why or why not?

If you were giving out good and bad consequences today, what would you give yourself for your behavior so far, today?

What about your behavior over the past week?

Tell them that you have been watching them closely today, and have made a written list of their behavior. Tell them some of the things you wrote down.

If there is a situation where one's misconduct led to others, point that out.

Ask the group what they think the consequence should be.

Point out how each individual constantly had to make choices about their behavior, attitude, participation, etc.

Today we are going to learn about a man who made many bad choices. He was chosen by God to do mighty things. God gave him supernatural power, but still, he chose to disobey God. He had to suffer the consequence of his choices. His mistake began with one choice and the refusal to admit it was wrong. From there, he kept on making the wrong choices. There was plenty of opportunity for him to change. As you hear the story, listen carefully and count how many wrong choices he made.

Bible Story

MATERIALS: A bath robe or sheets that can be draped like a robe.

SET UP:

- Today's story is told by one person, as though he was a child at the time that Samson was judge.
- He should dress like a Bible character, perhaps look very old.
- The individual who is best able to be dramatic, should be chosen.
- If a man is not available to tell the story, adjust the script so a woman can tell it.

- As he tells the story, he should walk out among the children. This helps to keep them alert by having to move and turn to follow him.
- Any unexpected actions he can put into his presentation, will also help hold the interest of the children.

“Samson”

Do not read the story word-for-word to the kids. Try to ad-lib the best you can.

Hi, my name is Ahijah (Ruth - for a girl), I was just a little boy when some interesting things happened in my land.

My family was one of the few Hebrew families left in the Sorek Valley, because the remainder of our tribe had gone North.

A man named Samson rose up to do powerful things in our land.

Before he was born, an angel came to Samson’s mother, and told her he was to be devoted to God. The angel said Samson was to take the Nazarite vow, which meant he was not to drink any alcoholic drinks, he was not to touch a dead body, and he was not to cut his hair. Keeping these vows showed his obedience to God.

One day, Samson went to Timnah and there he saw a beautiful Philistine woman (walk out among the girls as though you are looking them over). When he returned home, he told his mother and father that he wanted them to get that girl for him.

(Act really sad.) This was a very bad choice for Samson to make. He was supposed to be devoted to God and yet, he now was disobeying God’s law, which said that an Israelite was not to marry a non-Israelite. Samson’s parents were not happy with his choice of a wife, and they told him so, but they did as he requested.

One day on the way to his future wife’s home, (lunge suddenly towards the kids) a young lion lunged at him. God gave (pretend to be wrestling with the lion) Samson supernatural power, and he killed the lion.

(Be walking, stop suddenly and turn in a different way.) On another day, actually, he was on the way to his wedding, he was walking along the same road, and decided to stop and look at the carcass of the lion he had killed.

When he looked closer, he saw that the bees had made honey in the carcass. Samson leaned down (lean down and act as though you are scooping something, be out in the midst of the kids as you do this) and scooped out some honey. He took some honey to his parents, but he never told his parents where he had gotten the honey.

Do you know why he wouldn’t tell his parents where he had gotten the honey? (He had broken one of the Nazarite vows, which was to not touch a dead body) This was the second bad choice that Samson had made.

Weddings are a great time of celebration, especially for the Israelites. Theirs lasted for seven days. Samson was filled with pride and he gave a challenge to the Philistine men who were to be his companions during the week of celebration. The challenge was in the form of a riddle. If they could solve the riddle, he would give them 30 linen garments and 30 sets of clothes.

The riddle was so difficult; the men realized they would not be able to answer it. The men went to Samson’s wife and told her that if she did not get the answer from Samson

they would burn her and her father to death. They thought that they were surely part of a scheme, to steal from the men what they thought they deserved. Samson held out until the last day of the wedding festivities. Then, his wife's tears affected him, and he told her the answer to the riddle. She told the men, so that they were able to tell Samson the answer. Samson knew that his wife had betrayed him, and given the men the answer.

To get the things which he promised to his companions, provided that they could answer the riddle, Samson went 23 miles away, and attacked some Philistines. He took their linens and clothes and brought them to the Philistines, with whom he had made the wager. Samson was still very angry, so instead of going home to his wife, he went to his father's house.

When he finally went to his wife's house, however, her father had given her to another man. Her father thought that Samson would not be coming back because of his anger. Now Samson was really angry, and he was determined that he would get revenge.

He went out, and burned the Philistines wheat fields. Not only did he burn the grain, that was still waiting in the fields to be harvested, but he also burned the grain that had actually been harvested. The fire spread to the vineyards and olive groves. He destroyed the three main crops of the Philistines.

I will never forget those days. It was a scary time.

The Philistines were so angry, that they took Samson's wife and her father and burned them until they died. So again, Samson was determined to get revenge. He killed many of the Philistines.

The Judeans who were left in the area became frightened, because they didn't know what the Philistines might do to them, because of Samson's actions. They went to Samson, and requested that he allow them to turn him in to the Philistines, so that the Philistines wouldn't have to be scared of him anymore. Samson told them he was agreeable, and allowed them to tie him up. In a way, he was mocking them. He knew that he would be able to easily break the ropes and escape. Samson didn't just break the ropes, but he grabbed a fresh jawbone of a donkey, and killed 1,000 Philistines.

He said, "I have made donkeys out of them."

God was with him through each of these times, even though he had made some bad choices and had disobeyed God's law. He miraculously provided water for Samson when he was thirsty.

Samson made another bad choice, when he decided to spend the night with a prostitute in the Philistine city of Gaza. The Philistines knew he was in their city, and they laid in wait to kill him. Samson, knowing about their plan, arose in the middle of the night and tore out the entire city gate, and carried it to the top of the hill. He left it right there for everyone to see, too! This was a tremendous insult to the Philistines. Samson's ultimate downfall came at the hands of a woman, by the name of Delilah. He fell in love with her, or at least that is what he thought. The Philistine rulers hired Delilah to find out the secret of Samson's strength.

For a while, he teased Delilah, telling her one lie after another. He knew that he wasn't ever supposed to tell anyone that the source of his strength was in his hair. This was one of his vows as a Nazarite, to never cut his hair.

Samson knew that if anyone ever cut his hair, his strength would be gone. Each time Delilah and Samson were together, the Philistines were there ready to pounce on Samson, if he told her the truth. Samson should have known better than to tell Delilah the truth—she had not been at all trustworthy. As usual, Samson did not make the right choice, and he told Delilah that if his hair was cut, that he would lose his strength.

That night, while he slept with his head in Delilah's lap, she shaved off all of his hair. In the morning, when he awoke, he was ready to get up and go out. However, Samson didn't realize that he had lost his strength. But, when he tried to go out, the Philistines jumped on him and he had no strength. He could not fight back.

The Philistines wanted their revenge. They did not want Samson to die quickly; they wanted him to suffer. They poked out his eyes and took him down to Gaza where everyone stared at him. They would take him out, in front of the crowds and make him perform. But as time passed, Samson's hair grew back.

Now Samson's strength didn't come from his hair. He lost his strength because the cutting of his hair was a act of disobedience to God. Growing his hair back didn't necessarily mean that Samson's strength could return.

One day, after having performed, Samson, now blind, asked a servant guide to take him to the pillars of the temple. The servant thought that Samson just wanted to rest.

But, as Samson leaned against the pillars, he prayed, "Oh God, allow me one last act of strength that I might avenge myself. Let me die along with the Philistines." Then, he pushed on the pillars as hard as he could, and the temple crumbled, killing the Philistines and killing Samson, too.

Samson made many bad choices and he had to suffer the consequences. You would have thought he would have learned a lesson from his first choices. It was as if, day-by-day, with each bad choice he made, his heart hardened and he wasn't aware of how bad his choices were. Finally, he had to pay the ultimate price - his life.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

You might want to have paper on which the children can write the bad choices which Samson made.

How many bad choices did you count that Samson made?

Have a Bible for each child. Show them where to find the story of Samson in their Bibles. Have the children read with you Judges 16:30&31

Who else was mentioned in the story besides Samson? (*His parents, his wife and her father, the Philistines, Delilah*)

What was the ultimate consequence of Samson's bad choices? (*He died in the destruction of the temple.*)

Why do you think Samson kept making bad choices? (*Lust, pride, he wanted to get revenge*)

It is important for us to see that Samson didn't suffer the consequence after making his first bad choice.

Perhaps he thought he was getting away with things. God knows everything we do. The consequences will come. Samson didn't have to die. If he had been obedient, he could have been a great man in the history of Israel.

God wanted the Philistines to be punished because of the years of mistreatment of the Israelites. God used Samson's bad choices to fulfill God's plan.

But, Samson was still responsible for his bad choices. It is good to know though that God can work things out for good when we mess up.

What is a recent bad choice you have made? What was the consequence of that choice? What were you feeling when you chose to do what you did? How do you feel now about the bad choice you made?

Have the children look up and read I John 1:9.

When we admit we have made a bad choice, God promises to forgive us.

It is impossible for us to make right choices in our own power. We need the power of God to make right choices.

We can receive God's power when we give Him control of our lives. We give control of our lives to God when we:

Believe that Jesus is the Son of God. - John 3:16

Admit I am a sinner. - Romans 3:23 & Romans 6:23

Repent of my sins. - II Corinthians 7:9&10

Receive Jesus into my life. - John 1:12

Tell that I have given my life to Jesus. - Romans 10:10

If you want to give Jesus control of your life, come and tell me after Bible Club. This allows the Holy Spirit to work rather than responding due to peer pressure, or the desire to please the adult. If the Holy Spirit is moving the child, He will move the child to come to you. True salvation is the work of the Holy Spirit.

See following page for presenting the gospel to a child that comes to you.

PRESENTING THE GOSPEL TO CHILDREN

In presenting the gospel to children, you want to state the facts, perhaps even share your own personal testimony, but in no way pressure the children to respond.

Because children want the approval of adults who they admire, they are apt to respond just because it will make them happy. If the Holy Spirit is working in the heart of the child, all you need to do is present the truth.

You may want to say, “If you want to receive Jesus into your life, come and talk to me afterward.”

Following are steps, if you are starting from the beginning with a child.

When God created man and woman, He placed them in the Garden of Eden. God told them that they could eat of anything in the garden except the fruit on one tree. This was a rule or law God gave them.

Eve, the woman, was tempted by Satan to eat the fruit from that tree. She gave in to the temptation, ate the fruit and then convinced the man, Adam, to eat too. They disobeyed God. They broke God’s rule (law); they sinned.

That was the very first sin. Since then, every man and woman who has lived has sinned (Romans 3:23).

When Adam and Eve sinned, they immediately realized that there was something different - they were separated from God. Not physically, but in their relationship with Him. Have you ever been with somebody, but they were upset with what you had done to them, so you didn’t dare speak to them? In fact, it was almost like you were dead to them.

The Bible tells us that the price that has to be paid for sin, is death (Romans 6:23). This isn’t physical death. It means we can’t be with God. When we talk to Him, He doesn’t have to hear us.

God loves each one of us. He doesn’t want us to be separated from Him, but our sin had to be paid for. So God the Father sent His only Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for us. When Jesus died on the cross, He paid for our sin.

Jesus had no sin of His own. God’s Son, Jesus, came to earth and was born as a man - this is a mystery we don’t fully understand (John 3:16).

Now, if we admit that we are a sinner, if we are sorry for our sin, Jesus will forgive us and we can live forever with Him (II Corinthians 7:9&10).

Jesus has a great plan for you. He wants you to have a joy-filled life (John 10:10).

Therefore, if you speak the truth with your mouth, that Jesus is the Son of God; you believe that Jesus died on the cross to pay for your sin and then arose victorious over death you will be saved. Being saved means you will never be separated from God (Romans 10:9).

THE SIX STEPS

Remember to explain all words that the children might not understand. To be sure that they understand, ask them questions that can't be answered with a "yes" or "no".

JOHN 3:16 BELIEVE - JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

God sent His Son Jesus to pay the price for our sins. Believing that Jesus is God's Son and that He died for our sins, is the first step towards making Him our Savior. (Sin happens whenever we break one of God's laws. Faith is like sitting on a chair and trusting it will hold you.)

Romans 3:23 & Romans 6:23 ADMIT - "I AM A SINNER"

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

We are all sinners. Admitting that we have sinned is the second step. (Ask the child to tell you a sin he/she has committed. Tell them a sin you have committed.)

2 Corinthians 7:9&10 REPENT - OF MY SINS

"Yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves not regret, but worldly sorrow binds death."

God promises to forgive our sins if we confess them. Step three — we must tell God we are sinners. We must tell Him the sins we have committed. He knows, but He wants us to tell Him. (To "repent" means to turn away from our sin. It is being really sad over the sin. It's kind of like the feeling you get, when you've done something you weren't supposed to, and your behavior hurt your mother. You wish you had never done it. "Confession" is telling God how I have broken His rules. He already knows, but He wants us to agree with Him.)

John 1:12 RECEIVE - JESUS INTO YOUR LIFE

"Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."

When we receive Jesus, we tell Him all the things we've talked about above. We tell Him that we believe He died for us. We tell Him that we know we've sinned, and we confess sins we remember. Then Jesus is our Savior.

Ephesians 2:8&9 tells us that our salvation is by faith. Each step is done by faith. ("Faith" is like sitting on a chair because you trust it will hold you.)

Romans 10:10 TELL - THAT I HAVE GIVEN MY LIFE TO JESUS

“For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.”

Once we have given control of our lives to Jesus, it is important that we tell others what we have done. When we do so, some people will be excited. Others may make fun of us because they don't understand. Sometimes, people even get angry because they worship a false god.

John 10:10 AN ABUNDANT LIFE

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”

Jesus wants us to have a life filled with joy. Joy is not the same as happiness; joy is an inner peace, a contentedness. It is feeling safe and secure because we know that Jesus wants what is best for us.

EXPERIENTIALLY PRESENTING THE GOSPEL

MATERIALS: Scrap paper: enough to cover the area you will use for the activity below

Some sort of treasure.

- Have the children all line up on one side of the room against the wall.
- Lay out papers on the floor. Place them so that it would be impossible for the kids to get from where they are, to where you are without walking on the paper. But leave some space between so it looks possible.
- Tell the children they are to try and get from where they are to where you are, without touching a single piece of paper. Make sure that it's impossible, if someone makes it across, the activity will lose it's significance.
- Have a treasure of some kind sitting beside you.
- If they touch a piece of paper they are dead. They must fall where they are.
- You might want to have them try coming across one at a time. They can try to learn from one another, but the “dead bodies” will add to the difficulty. They can't touch the “bodies” either.
- When everyone has had a chance, lay down towels, a strip of paper, or anything to get to each child. Approach each child, one at a time.
- Say to the child, “I do not want you to stay dead. I have come to save you. All you have to do is accept my help.

- Will you accept my help?”
- If he says, “Yes,” have him crawl on the towels, and across the papers to you, and then the treasure. (Alternative: you pick him up and carry him across the papers.)
- If a child says she does not want your help, “pass sentence” and declare that she does not get the treasure.

DEBRIEF:

- 1) Were you eager to get the treasure?
- 2) How did you feel when you couldn’t get across the papers?
- 3) How did you feel when I came to save you?

DISCUSSION:

Take them through The Six Steps

WEEK 3 - SKITS

This week let the children make up skits that have to do with the daily choices they have had to make.

On Monday, take 10 minutes for each group to work on a skit. Then, on each of the following days let a different group present their skit.

OR

You can use skits from the past two weeks that you did not use.

Make Family Time a fun time. You want the children to leave on an “up” note.

Remember, this is not a time for discipline. This is a time to remember the positive things that have happened during the day.

Singing and/or Memory Verse games can be a great part of Family Time.

WEEK 3 - MEMORY VERSE

SCRIPTURE: “If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.” James 1:5

EXPLANATION OF VERSE:

Wisdom is not knowledge. It is the ability to make the right choice in all circumstances. God will give wisdom generously to all who ask. The requirement for receiving wisdom, is that it must be asked for in faith (vs. 6).

Roll Verse

MATERIALS: 2 small balls, or lemons, or something that rolls; a small jar, a copy of the verse for each child.

OBJECT: To roll the ball closest to the jar, so that you can quote the verse and obtain points for your team.

- Give each child a copy of the verse and have them study it for a while.
- Divide the children into two teams.
- Allow each team to choose who will be the first players on their team to play.
- Team A’s player takes his ball and rolls it toward the jar.
- Team B’s player takes her ball and rolls it toward the jar.
- The player whose ball is closest to the jar may attempt to say the verse.
- If the player is able to quote the verse he receives 5 points.
- If the player is not able to quote the verse no one receives any points.
- Continue until all have had an opportunity to roll the ball and say the verse.

WEEK 3 - PRACTICAL LIVING

S.A.Y. Yes!® Banking

MATERIALS: Scissors, sheets of checks, registers and cover, staplers

Set up three different banking accounts:

- **Checking account** on which they can write a check at any time.
- **Savings account** - money must stay in for a certain length of time, but interest will be paid.
- **Christmas account** - money can only be withdrawn during December of each year - a higher interest is paid.

Tithe - it is important to teach the children to tithe. You won't necessarily have an account, but create a way in which the kids can give to God. The coupons they turn in may go to buy something for the Infant/Toddler's Sunday school class or something for the church.

PREPARATION

- Using S.A.Y. Yes!® currency, checks, register, and cover pages (see pages 77-80), set up a bank.
- As the children earn their dollars, give them the option of keeping their money or turning it in at the bank.
- You can type in your center's name and address under "S.A.Y. Yes!® BANK" or in the left hand corner.
- Each child should have one register for each Account they have.
- This is an activity which may need to be explained in the small groups, so that it can be geared to each age level.

THE LESSON

- Let the children put their own checkbooks together.
- Demonstrate how to use a check book.
- Open the bank for the first time today and let them deposit money, then make sure they record it properly.
- Have the store open and have them write checks to purchase items.
- Be sure they know, that if they write a check at the store for more money than they have in their checking account, they will have to pay a fine. Be sure you know what that fine will be.

- What is the interest you will pay in the saving accounts?
- The way we use our money demands daily choices. Do we make good choices or bad choices in the use of our money?
- The children must choose how to use their money. They will make choices each day, which will determine how much money they earn. They then must make choices on how to care for, manage, and use their money.

On-Going Use of Bank

- Let the children know when the bank will be open to deposit money.
- When will the store be open? (Ex. the 3rd Thursday of every month)
- How do they tithe?
- It will be important to be consistent.

S.A.Y. Yes!® BANK


S.A.Y. Yes!® DOLLARS

Refer to your Center's S.A.Y. Yes!® **Forms Packet** for reproducible copies of \$1, \$5 and \$10.

Check

.....

S.A.Y. Yes!® Bank



Check Number _____

Date _____

Pay to the order of _____


\$

_____ DOLLARS

For: _____

.....

S.A.Y. Yes!® Bank



Check Number _____

Date _____

Pay to the order of _____

\$

_____ DOLLARS

For: _____

Deposit Slip

.....

Date _____

DEPOSIT SLIP

Print Name

Account Number

TOTAL CASH			
TOTAL CHECKS			
SUB-TOTAL			
NET DEPOSIT			

S.A.Y. Yes!® Bank

.....

Date _____

DEPOSIT SLIP

Print Name

Account Number

TOTAL CASH			
TOTAL CHECKS			
SUB-TOTAL			
NET DEPOSIT			

S.A.Y. Yes!® Bank

Check Register

.....								
Check Number	Date	Transaction	Transaction Amount		Deposit Amount		Balance	

.....								
Check Number	Date	Transaction	Transaction Amount		Deposit Amount		Balance	

Checkbook Cover

.....

S.A.Y. Yes!® Bank



This checkbook belongs to:

.....

S.A.Y. Yes!® Bank



This checkbook belongs to:

WEEK 3 - READ-A-LOUD

NEW!

“The Tale of Rippon Tance, a Porpoise with a Purpose”

O. Willikers in the Hall of Champions, Chapter 2

Summary: This story is about a porpoise who goes through a series of days making decisions about what to do in different situations. He is very influenced by peer pressure and lets them sway him into many wrong choices. They are choices like lying to his mom, cheating on a test and stealing gum from the store. He redeems himself through repentance when he decides that he can no longer look himself in the mirror when he had done so many mad things.

This week you are talking about daily choices. This character had to make choices every day on whether he would follow his good character or not. Great for older kids especially if this is not your first time to do this unit.

OR, you may choose the following story:

“Boy Wanted”

By Frank Crane *The Book of Virtues*, pg. 78

SUMMARY: A list of things that a good little boy should be. Not really a story, but things that everyone, from mothers to friends, would desire in someone -- a list by which they can evaluate themselves.

- Have one of the staff men mime, while you read.
- If you have no staff men, ask one of the older boys to do the mime.
- Be sure to practice before presenting to the children.
- Remember, this is a **listening** activity. Some children may have difficulty with just listening - that is why the mime is very important.

PRE-READING QUESTIONS

- 1) What do you think the title of this story, “Boy Wanted” means?
- 2) As I read, each of you listen carefully. At the end, you will be asked questions about the reading.
- 3) As I read, listen to words that you don’t understand. If you don’t understand a word, raise your hand, and I will explain it to you.

POST-READING QUESTIONS

- 1) Do you think that these qualities apply only to boys? *Of course not. These qualities are needed in both boys and girls.*
- 2) What kind of “person” is wanted?
- 3) What qualities of this boy would you like to work on in your life?

This is a boy that people would seek after, for he uses wisdom. He probably wouldn’t have a difficult time in developing friendships, or in finding a job. He would be content with his life. His family would be blessed to have such a son.

WEEK 3 - CRAFTS

✂ Prayer Card

MATERIALS: 4¼ x 5½ sheet of white paper per child, crayons or marking pens, strips of magnets, white glue

- Explain that they are going to make prayer cards, which the staff and volunteers are going to give to Prayer Friends. The Prayer Friends are wise people who know the power of prayer. The Prayer Friends will place the Prayer Cards on their refrigerators as a reminder to pray for the child.
- Give each child a sheet of paper and crayons or marking pens.
- Help the children think through what they might want their Prayer Friend to know about them. Perhaps draw pictures of their families; write in the subjects they need help with in school; what do they like to do; what would they like to become; etc.
- Have a sample of your own, to show the children. (See sample below)
- You might want to take a picture of the student, to attach to the prayer card. You can either do this in advance, or on the day of the craft.
- Don't forget to glue the magnet to the back of the sheet of paper. Even if there is adhesive on the magnet strip, still, glue it on.

Tayron Perez

- Dad
- I want to work on computers when I grow up
- I love to run track!
- Reading

GUIDED CONVERSATION

- As the children work on their Prayer Cards, talk about the wisdom of the people that they are asking to pray for them.
- Explain that the staff is going to seek these people out, because they are wise. They are people who make right choices.
- Why is it a good choice to ask others to pray for us?

FOLLOW-UP

- The staff in charge of each age group, should keep a record of which Prayer Friend takes which child.
- The child could periodically write a prayer update to his/her Prayer Friend.
- Never give out anyone's address, neither the child's, nor the Prayer Friend's. Everything should be handled through the S.A.Y. Yes!® Center.

WEEK 3 - RECREATION

DAY ONE: Team Building

MATERIALS: Butcher paper, marking pens

SETUP:

- Today you are going to create two permanent teams. These teams will play together everyday during recreation time. Change the teams around every month or two.
- You will want to make sure the teams are evenly matched, age-wise.
- Sit down as a Staff team and decide who will be on what teams.

TO DO:

- Have each team come up with a team name.
- Have each team create a team cheer.
- Remember that during recreation time, winning isn't as important as participation and spirit.
- Make posters, which you will post up and keep the scores.
- The poster needs to be placed where the kids can see it.

THE WISE ONES		THE WISDOM SEEKERS	
COMPETITION	SPIRIT POINTS	COMPETITION	SPIRIT POINTS
1,000	20,000	2,000	10,000
500	10,000	1,000	30,000
500	40,000	2,000	10,000

- Explain that competition points will be given out in one thousand increments, and Spirit Points in ten thousand increments.
- At the end of each week, you can give out S.A.Y. Yes!® dollars in accordance with the points. Every 1,000-competition points may be worth 1 dollar, and every 10,000 spirit points may be worth 1 dollar.
- The coordinator of recreation assigns the points.
- Have the two teams do their cheers. Begin the scoring with this activity.
- How many of the kids participated? How did they encourage each other? How creative was the cheer? Did it include physical activity? (Making a pyramid, doing hand gestures, etc.)

DEBRIEF

Who do you think the true winners will be? *(Those who receive the most spirit points)*

How do you earn Spirit Points? *(By making the right choices. Participate in everything, cheer on teammates, don't cheat, don't complain, don't tease or call names, etc.)*

If time is left, have a game ready from the past weeks to play.

DAY TWO: Team Sardines

MATERIALS: None

OBJECT: To be the first team to have all its players find the opponents' "Sardine"

SETUP:

- The children play in their two large teams.
- The play area can be a large outdoor area or even a cramped inside area. The key is: are there spaces where the kids can hide?

TO PLAY

- Each team selects a person to be their "Sardine."
- The "Sardine" goes out and finds a place to hide. It must be large enough so that all the children from the other team can squeeze into the hiding place.
- When both "Sardines" have found their hiding places, the other children go out to find them.
- When the opposing "Sardine" is found, the player gets into the hiding place with the "Sardine." The player must remain very quiet, so that it continues to be difficult for others to find them.
- The first team to have all its players hidden away with the opposing "Sardine", is the winning team.

OBSERVE

RECREATION COORDINATOR: Watch the play carefully. If children cheat by making noise or telling others where a "Sardine" is, points must be taken away from that team.

DEBRIEF

- 1) When you were hidden away with the opposing team's sardine, what did you feel like doing?
- 2) What did you choose to do? Why did you make the choice you made?
- 3) What was the consequence of your choice?
- 4) If you were choosing the players for your team, what qualities would you want your teammates to have?

You may win the game by cheating, but winning the game is not what is most important. What is most important is knowing in the end that you've done your best, that you've accomplished things in the correct way. Knowing that Jesus is watching and saying, "Well done, my good and faithful servant," is the best reward one can receive.

- If time allows, play again and see if the kids play any differently.
- Don't forget to give Spirit Points.

DAY THREE: Capture The Flag

(Another game is given below, if your facilities do not accommodate Capture the Flag)

MATERIALS: Two flags of any kind (can be old rags)

OBJECT: Steal the opponent's flag, then return to your territory without being captured.

SETUP:

- The game is played in two large teams. Make sure there is a mix of ages on both teams.
- This is best played outside, in a large area where there can be many hiding places. If you have no outside area in which to play, it can be fun inside, too. It can be played in a parking lot, by placing cars in strategic spots for the kids to hide behind.
- Divide the playing area in half . You may want to use your entire property.
- Draw an imaginary line designating the teams' territory.

TO PLAY:

- Each team is given a flag (any rag will do).
- Each team hides it's flag in a spot as far away from the opposing team's territory as possible.
- The flags must be placed where they can be seen.
- When the adult leader calls out, "Let the game begin," all players begin their way into the opposing team's territory.
- If caught in the opposing side's territory and tagged, the captured player is placed in "prison".

- The only way out of prison is if one of the teammates makes it over and tags his captured teammate. Both teammates can then return to their own side, by getting a “free walk” back.
- Each team designates a certain spot as their “Prison.”
- All captured players must remain in the prison until they are tagged by a free teammate.
- Prisoners may hold hands to make a chain out of the prison, and everyone on the chain can be released when the first person is tagged.
- Encourage the kids to get together in their teams and create a strategy before the game begins, by asking the following questions:
 - Who will go after the flag? Who will stay in their own territory and capture prisoners? Who will be prison guards?
 - Who will be decoys? Who will guard the flag? Who will go to rescue prisoners?
- Guards must stand at least 6 feet away from the flag.
- No one has a greater advantage than anyone else. (Sometimes the smaller and younger kids can get away with things easier than the older ones).

OBSERVE

- As the children play, watch for the different kinds of qualities displayed by the choices the children make. This will tell you a lot about the children’s hearts.
- You will want to help the children relate their choices to the qualities displayed, and then to what is happening in their hearts.

DEBRIEF

What qualities would you choose in the players on your team? *Honesty, encourager, determined, positive, someone who is aware of their own imperfections - not always blaming others, etc.*

As you played, what qualities did you choose to display? Why would someone want you on their team? *Help them to see that they choose who they are, when they decide to act a certain way. Even the slowest runner can be an encourager to others. The least athletic, may be the best strategist.*

ALTERNATIVE GAME: Prisoners Base

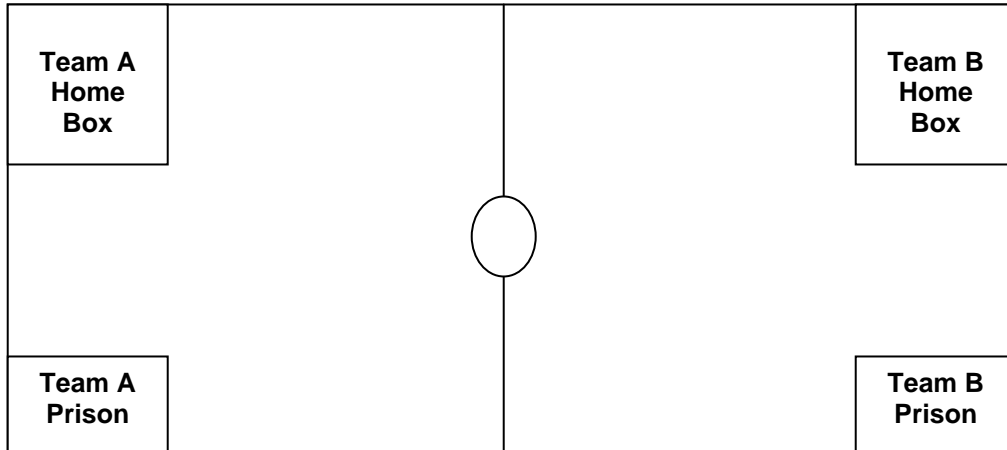
MATERIALS: Masking tape

OBJECT: To be the team with the most players returned to the “Home Box” safely at end.

SETUP:

- Divide the group into teams of 10. If you have four teams, two teams observe and cheer on the two teams playing.
- Lay out a large playing area with masking tape. Twelve by twelve feet size tape would be great.

- Use the masking tape to make a Team A Home Box and a Team B Home Box.
- Again, use the masking tape to make a Team A and Team B Prison.
- Designate which team is Team A, and which is Team B.



TO PLAY

- Team A gathers in its home box, and Team B gathers in its home box.
- A Captain is chosen for each team, perhaps the adult.
- The Captain for team A picks his fastest runner to run to the circle and yell, "My City."
- At the yell of, "My City", Team B's Captain sends out his fastest runner to tag Team A's runner.
- As soon as Team B's runner is sent out, Team A's captain can send out his #2 runner who tries to tag Team B's #1 runner.
- At that time, Team B's captain sends out his #2 runner who tries to tag Team A's #2 runner.
- A runner can only tag the person he has been sent out to tag. If he accidentally tags someone else, he must go to prison.
- If a player is tagged, she must go to prison.
- Players remain in prison until tagged by one of their own players.
- If a player gets back to her "Home Box" after tagging the person they were sent out to tag, she is safe.
- If a player does not attempt to get his opponent, he goes to Prison. (Director makes the call.)
- The winning team, is the team to have the most players return to "Home Box" safely.

OBSERVE

- As the children play, watch for the different kinds of qualities displayed by the choices the children make. This will tell you a lot about the children's hearts.
- You will want to help the children relate their choices to the qualities displayed, and then to what is happening in their hearts.

DEBRIEF

What qualities would you choose in the players on your team? *Honesty, encourager, determined, positive, someone who is aware of their own imperfections - not always blaming others, etc.*

As you played, what qualities did you choose to display? Why would someone want you on their team? *Help them to see that they choose who they are, when they decide to act a certain way. Even the slowest runner can be an encourager to others. The least athletic may be the best strategist.*

DAY FOUR: Free Play

MATERIALS: Balls, jump ropes, chalk, Frisbees, hula hoops, etc.

SETUP:

- Let the children choose what they would like to play today.
- It must be a group choice.

TO PLAY

- Have the children work out the rules.
- Adults, stay in the background, but do participate as a "kid". This is not a time to rest.
- Let them work out any disagreements by themselves, as much as possible. Step in only if there is possible physical or emotional torment.

OBSERVE

- Everyone won't get his/her way, will they still participate and be good sports? What choices do they make?
- Who stepped out as the leaders of the group?

DEBRIEF

What were the most difficult choices you had to make today, as you prepared to play together? *You have observed them, so you will be able to point out some of the difficult decisions. You may even ask key questions, such as, "Johnny, what choice did you make when you yelled at Elena? Was it because she didn't want to play the game you wanted to play?"*

How have you applied what you've learned about choices this month, to your recreation?

STANDING FIRM: WEEK 4

WEEK 4 – BIBLE CLUB

LESSON AIM: To help the child understand it takes trust in God, perseverance, and self-control, to make the right choices.

SCRIPTURE: Genesis 37-50

MEMORY VERSE: “If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.” James 1:5

Joseph was a teenager who had everything. He was the favored son of a wealthy father. But he made a foolish choice, which would take him from everything he had known. Joseph had a dream, in which he saw that he would one day, rule over his ten older brothers. Foolishly, Joseph tells his brothers his dream.

The brothers already hated Joseph, because of their father’s favoritism toward him. Telling them the dream, was like adding fuel to the fire. In their hatred, they made the decision to kill Joseph, but Reuben convinces them to sell him into slavery instead.

Sold to Potiphar, Joseph chooses to be a faithful servant. He works hard and is honest in all his dealings. The Lord blessed the house of Potiphar, because of Joseph. When Potiphar’s wife tries to lure him to herself, he resists.

Angered, she lies to her husband about Joseph and Joseph is placed in prison.

What feelings must Joseph have had to fight? Feelings of anger, bitterness, revenge— perhaps even self-destruction?

While in prison, Joseph again is placed in an administrative position, supervisor of the prison. He correctly interprets the dreams of two court officials. When Pharaoh has a dream which no one can interpret, the chief butler remembers Joseph. Joseph interprets Pharaoh’s dream, and is placed second-in-command in the kingdom.

Thus, Joseph is in a position to get revenge on his brothers, when they come to Egypt, seeking food. Joseph makes the righteous decision to forgive his brothers.

Joseph stood firm through one difficult situation after another. He chose to be honest, work hard, and use self-control when his feelings must have been overwhelming. He persisted in choosing to do what was right in spite of all that happened to him. He kept his eyes focused on God.

Discipleship Tips: Ask the child, “When do you find it the hardest to do what is right?” *Share* with him when it is hardest for you. Perhaps there is a person you can’t say, “no” to, or there’s an activity that has a strong pull on you.

Plan together how you will hold one another accountable in those areas.

JOSEPH CHOSE TO STAND FIRM.

HOOK

MATERIALS: A blindfold per child, and objects for the obstacle course

BEFORE BIBLE CLUB:

- Lay out an obstacle course. It can be as simple as just a lot of bottles that they have to walk around, in the room.
- Make it long enough, so they might get tired and want to give up.
- Make it simple, so that they can move through the course all at the same time.

DURING BIBLE CLUB:

- Give each child 10 S.A.Y. Yes![®] dollars.
- Tell the children that you will take a dollar from them, each time they touch one of the obstacles.
- Give each child a blindfold and have them put it on.
- Tell the children when they are to start across.
- As the children start across, one or two of the adults should move things or add things to the course.
- Adults should encourage the children. If a child decides to give up or gets angry, how does he/she respond to the encouragement of the adults?

DEBRIEF

- 1) What did you think, when you saw the obstacle course and then realized you had to do it blindfolded?
- 2) What made you decide to keep going?
- 3) If you quit, why did you quit?
- 4) As you did the course did you feel that you were able to do it? Was it too hard? Were you frustrated at knocking things down?
- 5) Did anything seem unfair to you?

Bible Story

MATERIALS: flannelgraph pieces. You can purchase flannelgraph materials at a Christian book store, or make your own flannelgraph using figures from a coloring book or other book. Glue a small piece of sandpaper on the back of figures, to attach to flannel. Glue flannel onto a piece of cardboard 35"x21".

“Joseph Makes Wise Choices”

Once upon a time, there was a man who loved God and followed his commands— whatever they might be. One day, Joseph got thrown into prison for doing the right thing. This is the story of what happened to him in prison.

In prison, Joseph chose to be faithful, to persist in doing what was right. He knew that God was in control of everything. He chose to trust God.

There were two government officials in prison with Joseph. They each had a dream, which they asked Joseph to interpret for them. Joseph interpreted the baker’s dream, which revealed that he would be executed by Pharaoh. The other official was the cupbearer to the king. The cupbearer is the king’s most trusted servant, because the cupbearer tastes everything that the king drinks or eats before the king does. He is protecting the king from being poisoned or tricked into eating or drinking something dangerous. Joseph interpreted the cupbearer’s dream, which revealed that he would return to serve in Pharaoh’s court. Joseph knew that if the cupbearer could again find favor in the sight of the king, he would have the power to get Joseph out of prison. So Joseph asked the cupbearer to remember him when he returned to the king’s court. What Joseph revealed, happened to the men just as he Joseph had said.

When the cupbearer got back to the king’s court, he completely forgot Joseph and all that he had done. The cupbearer returned to Pharaoh’s court and had been there for two years, when Pharaoh had a dream. No one could interpret the dream. Pharaoh brought the wisest men in the kingdom, to the court to try and interpret the dream – not one of them could interpret it.

Then, the cupbearer remembered Joseph. It had been over two years since Joseph had successfully interpreted the his dream. The cupbearer told Pharaoh about Joseph and so Joseph was brought to the palace.

Pharaoh asked Joseph if he could interpret the dreams. Joseph told Pharaoh, “I cannot do it, but God will give Pharaoh the answer he desires.” Joseph chose to give God the credit.

So, Pharaoh told Joseph his dream. He saw himself standing on the bank of the Nile and seven fat cows came up out of the Nile and grazed in the grass. Then Pharaoh saw seven more cows come out of the Nile, but these were thin and ugly. He told Joseph, “I had never seen such ugly cows. The ugly cows ate up the first seven fat cows, but eating the fat cows did not make the ugly cows look any better.”

In another part of Pharaoh’s dream, he saw seven ears of corn come up on one stalk. They were all healthy and full. After them, came seven more ears of corn on a single stalk, but they were withered and scorched. The seven withered ears of corn ate up the seven full ears of corn.

Joseph told Pharaoh that both dreams said the same thing. Egypt was going to have seven years of great abundance, followed by seven years of famine. Joseph suggested to Pharaoh, that he find a wise man to put in charge of the land. There would be commissioners who would collect a fifth of the harvest, during the seven good years. The food would be kept in a warehouse and stored until the years of famine.

Pharaoh said that since Joseph was the one who had interpreted the dreams, he must be the wisest man in the kingdom. Therefore, he was the one who should administer the land. Thus, Joseph became the second most powerful man in Egypt.

Things happened just as God had shown Joseph, they would. There were seven years of abundance, and then famine came to the land. The famine spread throughout the whole world, so people came from all the countries to buy food from Egypt.

Joseph choose to continue to stand firm in Christ, and though it wasn't quick, it wasn't too late. Joseph was blessed for the commitment he made to God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Who were the people in our story today? *(Joseph, Pharaoh, the baker, the cupbearer)*

Who did Joseph help in prison? *(The baker and the cupbearer)*

What was the thing that Joseph asked of the cupbearer when he interpreted his dream? *(He asked the cupbearer to remember him before the king)*

How do you think you would have felt, if you had been thrown into prison for doing the right thing?

What are some bad choices that Joseph could have made? Why do you think he chose to do the right thing? *(He loved and trusted God. He knew that in the end, God would make everything good.)*

If you had been Joseph, what would you have chosen to do? We have been talking about the importance of our choices, for four weeks.

What have you learned about making choices?

How have you changed the way that you make choices?

Who are you most like, Samson or Joseph? Why?

We cannot make right choices on our own—we are dependent on God to give us the wisdom and strength to make the right choices. We will often have difficult circumstances happen to us. People may try to convince us to make the wrong choice.

But we must stand firm, just as Joseph did.

Look up Proverbs 1:10. *(Have the children look up and read the passage.)*

What do you think this verse means? *(The friends we choose will either help us to make wise choices, or they will push us to make foolish choices.)*

When a friend asks you to do something you know you shouldn't do, how do you feel? *(Help the children to get in touch with the struggle they will sometimes have, in going against what they are feeling when they make a right choice.)*

What are some things we can do to make it easier for us to “stand firm”, when someone tries to get us to make a wrong choice? *(Learn as much as we can about the Bible, so that we know what is right and wrong. Choose friends who love Jesus and want to do His will. Ask friends and adults who love Jesus to hold you accountable.)*

Have a time of prayer.

WEEK 4 - SKITS

Skit #1

CHARACTERS: Reuben, Bobby, a friend of the boys (have a sixth-grader play the friend), LaTasha and Maria

SCENE: #1: The boys are walking down the street. #2: Maria and Reuben are in their back yard when LaTasha comes searching for them.

INSIGHT FOR STAFF: This skit is on gangs. It illustrates that being in a gang is a choice. Sometimes kids don't really have a choice whether or not they are in a gang. Please adapt this skit to your community. Be sure and discuss how they feel about the choices they have or their lack of choices. Also, all of the of underlined words should be changed to fit your community.

Reuben and Bobby walk into the room, as though they are walking down the street with a third friend. They are shoving each other back and forth.

Reuben: (*Shoves the friend*) You are such a dope! I can't believe you would even think of listening to those freaks.

Friend: You just don't understand. (*Gives Reuben a shove*) And keep your hands to yourself.

Bobby: We don't understand? What do you mean we don't understand? We know when a good friend is about to get himself in trouble.

Friend: I have to do this. Everyone in my family is part of a gang. If I don't join, they'll give me a hard time. I mean, a really hard time.

Reuben: Listen Travon, we understand how hard it is. But there has to be some way you can get out of this. You have never hung around with those kinds of guys.

Bobby: Yeah, think of all the fun we've had these last two years. If you join the gang, Reuben and I won't be able to hang around with you. What happens to us?

Friend: I know, I've thought about that. I'm sorry. It's just I have to do what my big brother says.

Bobby: What does your mother say?

Friend: My mother, ha! She doesn't care what I do, as long as I stay out of her way. You know what it's like, Bobby. My mom is drunk most of the time.

Reuben: Travon, my mom said you could come live with us.

Friend: Wow Reuben, I wish I could. But my brothers say we are family and we have to stick together.

The boys walk out.

Someone walks across in front of the audience with a sign reading: "TWO MONTHS LATER"

LaTasha comes running into the room all panic stricken. She is calling for Maria.

Latasha: Maria, Maria, Maria, where are you? It figures, when I have to find her, she isn't anywhere. Maybe she's in her backyard. (*Yells louder*) Maria!

Maria: *(Maria comes from the backyard, Reuben is with her.)* What’s happening? What’s wrong? Are you okay?

Latasha: I just came from my aunt’s, who lives next door to Travon. Didn’t you guys hear all the sirens?

Reuben: Oh no, what happened?! Is it someone you know?! Tell us, LaTasha!

Latasha: There was a shooting. Rival gangs. Travon was shot—I don’t know if he’s dead or not. They were taking him in an ambulance. I ran here as fast as I could.

Reuben: No!!!!!! Why?! Why wouldn’t he come live with us? He could have been out of there. They all walk out crying, holding each other.

DEBRIEF

What was the hardest decision Travon had to make? *(To follow the advice of his brothers, or the advice of his friends.)*

Whose advice should Travon have followed? Why? *(He should have looked at what the possible consequences of the advice was. He should have considered what advice the Bible would have given him.)*

Have the kids look up and read, or have this verse written on a large piece of poster board, or paper: Proverbs 1:10.

How does this verse apply to our skit today? *(Travon did not make the right choices to get away from the dangers of the gangs. He was more concerned with what his brothers wanted him to do, than with what he knew was right. Travon chose to take the unwise advice of his brothers, rather than the wise advice of his friends, Reuben and Bobby. It takes courage to make the right choice.)*

Skit #2

CHARACTERS: LaTasha, Maria, Reuben, Bobby

SCENE: Maria and LaTasha are in Maria’s bedroom. Reuben and Bobby join them there.

Maria and LaTasha come in, and sit down right in the middle of the kids. They pretend to be playing with their dolls.

Latasha: I’m sure glad your mom said I could come spend the afternoon with you. I was scared to be at my aunt’s today.

Maria: I don’t blame you—with Travon’s funeral today, and everybody over at his house. I sure hope they find the person who shot him.

Latasha: I don’t like all the shooting and everything that happens. It really scares me.

MARIA: Me too! I was scared because Reuben and Bobby were going to the funeral. What if something happens at the funeral?

Reuben and Bobby come in.

Reuben: Hey Maria, where’s Mom?

Maria: I think she's hanging clothes up in the backyard. What was the funeral like? Were there lots of gang guys there?

Bobby: It was kind of scary. I wanted to go up and kick Travon's brother. If he had let Travon come and live with you guys, Travon would still be here.

Latasha: Do you think they will ever find who did it?

Reuben: They already got him. The guy who did it was bragging about it down at *McDonald's*, and an under-cover cop was there, and arrested him on the spot.

Bobby: He thought he was so cool, and now he's in jail.

Reuben: We better get home. I don't want to be out after dark.

BAD CHOICES ALWAYS LEAD TO BAD CONSEQUENCES

DEBRIEF

What happened to the kid who shot Travon? *(He thought he had gotten away with the murder. He was bragging and a police officer heard him and arrested him.)*

Have the children look up and read Proverbs 5:22, or have it written on a large sheet of poster board or paper.

What does this verse say to you?

Do you think you can ever do anything evil and get away with no bad consequences? *(Wicked men often think they have gotten away with their evil. However, even if it appears they have gotten away with it now, God knows what they have done and he will judge them. We can be free of our sin only when we have repented and confessed to Jesus.)*

Skit #3

CHARACTERS: LaTasha, Maria, Reuben,

SCENE: LaTasha and Maria are walking home from school, when Reuben surprises them.

LaTasha and Maria are walking down the street (the street is out amongst the children).

Latasha: You'd think those gangsters would learn their lesson.

Maria: Yeah, they act so stupid. They keep getting in trouble and then they have to go to jail.

Reuben sneaks up behind them and scares them.

Reuben: *(screams at them)*

Both girls scream and then turn to see it is Reuben.

Maria: *(Angry)* Reuben, that was mean! How could you do that to us?

Latasha: And when we were just talking about Travon, and the gangsters who killed him.

Reuben: What about the gangsters?

Latasha: That the gangsters seem to be so stupid. They keep doing dumb things and then they get in trouble and end up in jail, or worse they get killed.

Maria: They really are making stupid choices! Seems like they would get a clue after a while, and start trying to do good things.

Reuben: Just think what could be done if all the gangsters decided to unite and clean up our neighborhood.

They walk a few steps as if they're thinking about the possibility.

Reuben: Hey, Maria, Mom said you have to come home now. Come on.

The three exit.

A FOOL WILL BE PUNISHED

DEBRIEF

Not only gangsters make foolish choices, we all do. What are some foolish choices that some of us perhaps make over and over? *(To cheat in games, thus ruining the fun for everyone. Lying, gossiping, stealing little things - like a cookie off of a plate.)*

What were some foolish choices made today? What were the consequences of those foolish choices?

What were some wise choices made today that resulted in positive consequences?

Did anyone stand firm today, against what others were trying to get you to do? What was it?

Adults! Be continually on the lookout for teachable moments!

Skit #4

CHARACTERS: Reuben, Bobby,

SCENE: Reuben and Bobby meet to play in a vacant lot.

Bobby enters really angry. He is kicking at things, hitting at invisible walls, grumbling under his breath.

Reuben: *(Enters from the back)* Bobby, what is wrong? If you aren't careful, you'll break your hand.

Bobby: I am so angry at myself. I did the stupidest thing and now I'm really in trouble.

Reuben: What did you do?

Bobby: My mom was so out of it, that I ended up staying with my Grandma. She went to the grocery store, and told me to clean up my room while she was gone. But I chose to watch cartoons the whole time. I was sitting in front of the T.V. when she got home!

Reuben: What did she say?

Bobby: Grandma was really angry. She screamed at me and told me that I couldn't go to the carnival on Saturday.

Reuben: Oh great, so I get punished too, for your stupid choices?

Bobby: I'm sorry Reuben. But I was even more of a dope.

Reuben: Oh no, I'm afraid to ask.

Bobby: When grandma yelled at me, I yelled back at her. I don't know why. I don't know what got into me.

Reuben: What happened?

Bobby: Grandma took the belt and gave me a whippin'.

Reuben: I think you should have taken your punishment like a man. You would be a lot better off.

Bobby: I know that now. It's just I got so angry and I lost it.

Reuben: Now you have to pay for it with a sore bottom, and not going to the carnival.

Bobby: Yeah, I also have to pay in knowing that I really hurt my grandma. She has been so good to me, and then I go and treat her like that. What if she won't let me come stay with her anymore? I hate myself!

Reuben: We all make mistakes. Why don't you write your grandma a letter and tell her how bad you feel. Tell her how much she means to you, how thankful you are for her.

Bobby: That sounds great. I think I'll do that.

The two boys exit.

MAKING RIGHT CHOICES TAKES SELF-CONTROL

DEBRIEF

Why did Bobby say he hated himself? *(He knew he had acted stupidly. He had hurt his grandma whom he loved. He had to suffer the consequences for his foolish choices.)*

Did Bobby learn from his mistakes? How do you know? *(How bad he felt. Especially how bad he felt about his grandma.)*

What was Bobby going to do to show his repentant heart? *(He was going to tell his grandma that he was sorry for the way he had acted, and ask for her forgiveness.)*

Making right choices takes trust in God, persistence and self-control. We all make mistakes - the question is, do we learn from our mistakes? What does a wise person do when he has made a mistake? *(Admits that he has made a mistake. Is sorry for what he has done. Asks forgiveness from the individual he has wronged. Makes any possible amends. Strives to not repeat the mistake. Through prayer, asks Jesus to give strength and wisdom. Learns to stop and think before acting.)*

WEEK 4 - MEMORY VERSE

SCRIPTURE: “If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.” James 1:5

A Living Verse

MATERIALS: A copy of the verse for each child; the verse written on pieces of paper, one word per piece of paper, (number of sets will depend on the number of children).

SETUP

- Allow the children a few minutes to study the verse.
- Be sure you collect the copies of the verse that you gave each child, or have them put the verses in their pockets.
- Place the children in teams - one child for each word in the verse.

TO PLAY

- Give each child a word of the verse.
- When the leader says, “Go”, the team gets into the proper order.
- The first team to line up according to the words of the verse is the winner.
- Have the team say the verse, each child saying his word; then have the entire team recite the verse together.

WEEK 4 - PRACTICAL LIVING

S.A.Y. Yes!® Standards

MATERIALS: S.A.Y. Yes!® Standards written out on pieces of paper. One standard per sheet of paper

OBJECT: To help the children understand the consequences of choosing to obey or disobey the S.A.Y. Yes!® Standards.

SETUP:

- Before the session, write your S.A.Y. Yes!® Standards out, on small pieces of paper. One standard per sheet of paper.
- Divide the children into small groups of 5 or 6 to a group (the size of the groups will perhaps depend on the ratio of adults to children). Assign an adult to work with each group.

TO DO:

- Give each group of children a standard.
- Each group is to:
 - Create a skit depicting a child disobeying the standard. The skit should also show the consequence of behaving like a fool by not following the standard. Show the consequence not just to the disobedient child, but also show how the entire group is affected (The leader has to discipline the disobedient child by taking away recreation time, etc.). As much as possible, let the children think through the consequences - give suggestions only if needed.
- Each group performs their skit for the large group.

DISCUSSION:

Why is it foolish to disobey the standards?

Is only the disobedient person affected by his/her behavior? Why not? (*Time is wasted when leaders have to deal with disobedience. Thus, there is less time to play games. Everyone feels uptight, it steals a pleasant feeling, etc.*)

Why don't you want to be around someone who is always making wrong choices?

(*Leaders might think you were part of the trouble; you don't want to lose time that could be spent doing something worthwhile; etc.*)

WEEK 4 - READ-A-LOUD

NEW!

“The Tale of Toad Lee Purrhart, a Toad with a Pure Heart”

O. Willikers in the Hall of Champions, Chapter 6

This week you are talking about standing firm. This little toad has lots of opportunities to make wrong choices even when his parents are doing the wrong thing, but he chooses to stand firm and please God instead of anyone else.

SUMMARY: This is a story about toad who has a pure heart. The problem is his father is a bookie and his mother is a heavy drinker who dates bad people. They are divorced and the toad lives with his dad. His dad has a live in girlfriend, but one that he has been with for a long time. There is no one home when he gets homes, so he has to make decisions about who he hangs out with so he won't fall down the same path as his parents.

Or, you may use the following story . . .

“Little Girls Wiser Than Men”

By Leo Tolstoy; *The Book of Virtues*; pg. 318

SUMMARY: The story is about two little girls who get in a fight and the whole neighborhood gets involved. As their neighbors argue, the two girls resolve their conflict. The neighbors feel foolish when they realize that the girls, for whom they had taken sides, are now friends. Could it be that the girls are wiser than the adults?

PRE-READING QUESTIONS

- 1) From the title, “Little Girls Wiser Than Men,” what do you think the story is about?

As I read listen carefully, for at the end, you will be drawing four pictures which tell the story.

POST-READING QUESTIONS

- 1) Draw four pictures, showing the steps of what happened in the story.
- 2) Have them share their pictures.
- 3) How does this story fit in with our memory verse this month? (*No one sought God for wisdom. Each person responded without thinking through the consequences of their actions. Akoúlya followed after Malásha, even though she was afraid. She did not stand firm. She should have listened to the warning within herself. One-thing led to another, until the whole village was in an uproar. We must be careful not to be misled. The entire crowd was following, not even knowing the truth of what they were upset about.*)
- 4) How did the girls choose to do what was right? (They forgave, and resumed their relationship.)

WEEK 4 - CRAFTS

FLOWER POTS ✂

MATERIALS: Flower seeds, potting soil, containers (tin cans, Styrofoam cups, margarine tubs, or dairy container), yarn, white glue, water.

SETUP

- Be sure that you have made a sample that the kids can see.
- Cover the tables with newspaper or something to catch the extra dirt and water.

TO MAKE

- Give each child a container, some yarn and glue.
- Make a couple of small holes in the bottom of each container.
- Show the children how to put glue on the container, and carefully wrap the yarn around the outside of the container.

They wrap the yarn around until the entire container is covered. They may need to add glue as they go.

- Give each child some potting soil to put in their “Flower Pot”.
- Give each child some seeds to plant.
- Have them pour some water into the pot. (Before you do this, you should make sure that the children have something under their container to catch the extra water.)

GUIDED CONVERSATION

As the children work on their flower pots, show them the picture of the beautiful flowers on the seed packet.

Talk about what kinds of flowers they like most.

What would happen if the seed packet had only a few flower seeds and the rest of the seeds were weeds?

(We don't want weeds mixed in with our flowers because it ruins the beauty of the flowers. We also don't want to hang out with those who would entice us to make bad choices, because they ruin the good things that we attempt to do. Those who insist on making bad choices are like weeds, choking out the beauty around them. It also takes time and perseverance to water the flowers every day and make sure they get sun. Then, as the flowers grow, you can see the result of your perseverance.)

WEEK 4 - RECREATION

In all games this week, emphasize the importance of choosing to follow the rules of the game. It is no fun to play with someone who cheats, complains, or teases.

DAY ONE: Cat And Rat

SETUP:

- Have the children line up. They all face the same direction, holding hands, thus forming pathways. (Below, the players are facing the top point in **first set**, left point in **second set**.)



TO PLAY:

- One player is chosen to be the “Cat” and one player is chosen to be the “Rat”.
- When the leader says “Go,” the “Cat” begins to chase the “Rat” up and down the pathways.
- If the Leader shouts, “Switch”, the players turn (as seen above) changing the pathways from east-to-west to north-to-south, etc.
- If the “Cat” catches the “Rat”, the “Rat” immediately becomes the “Cat” and chases the new “Rat”.
- The leader may also call out, “Rat” chase “Cat”.
- The more switches are made, the more fun the game is.
- If the “Cat” or “Rat” breaks through the player’s hands, or cheats in other ways, have them sit out of the game.

DEBRIEF

What happens when somebody cheats? Who does the cheating affect? *(It affects everyone. If a person cheats and wins, he can never be truly proud of achieving, because he hasn't really achieved anything. Cheating ruins the game for everyone else, because the game isn't played to its fullest.)*

What is most important in playing a game - to win, or to have a good time? *(Help the children think through the importance of having a good time, rather than winning. Everybody can have a good time, not everyone can win. Winning does not make me a better person. Learning to enjoy the process of trying, failing, and trying again, is what will make me a better person.)*

It takes self-control to choose to play according to the rules

DAY TWO: Blob Tag

MATERIALS: None (unless rope is needed to designate playing area)

OBJECT: To be the last two players that are not a part of either blob.

SETUP:

- A certain space is designated as the playing area.
- The space should be larger if more children are playing.

TO PLAY:

- Two players are designated to be "It."
- Players must work hard to not to get caught by either "Blob."
- Players must work as a team.
- Players cannot leave designated area.
- The "Its" need to be aware that their team can become a whip, be careful that the end player doesn't get hurt.
- When the leader says, "Begin," each "It" begins to chase the other players.
- If a player is tagged by an "It", that player joins hands with that "It."
- The game continues until all players have been tagged and become part of a "Blob."
- Players can run through the middle of the blob and still be free. Only the end people have the power to make people part of their blob.
- The winning team is the one that has the most players at the end.

DEBRIEF

Who were the best players on your team: the fastest, strongest player who does his own thing; or, the player that tries the hardest, and is willing to play as a team? Why? *(To succeed in this game, it requires teamwork. When a player tries to play on his own, everyone loses. People don't want to be around fools.)*

DAY THREE: Catch Me If You Can

MATERIALS: 2 ropes, each team standing behind one. Added ropes may be needed to designate playing areas.

OBJECT: To be the team with the most players in its line by the end of the playing time.

SETUP

- Children are placed in two teams.
- The two teams stand in two lines, facing each other, about 60 ft. apart.



TO PLAY

- The leader tags one player on Team A, to be the first charger.
- All the players on Team B stand behind their line, with their right hands out over the line.
- Team A charger runs across the playing field and tags the hand of a player on Team B.
- The Team B player chases the charger across the field.
- If the charger is tagged, he must go to prison.
- If the charger makes it across his line safely, the entire A Team chases the player from Team B back.
- If Team B player makes it back across her line safely, the Team A charger chooses a player from Team B, to be the next charger.
- If Team B player does not make it back safely, she must go to prison. Prisons hold players from both teams. After the Team B person goes to prison, Team A returns to their line and sends out another charger.
- When an entire team goes, some may divert and let their prisoners out. To be let out of prison, a prisoner must be tagged, and then do 15 jumping jacks.
- The winning team is the team that has the most players on its line at the end.

DEBRIEF

What kind of person is the most fun to play with? *(It is not the best player, but the one who plays right and truly tries his/her best. If there is cheating or arguing, the game must be stopped.)*

When we choose to play according to our own rules, rather than the rules of the game, whom are we trusting?

(We are placing our trust in ourselves. If we truly trust God, we will obey the rules of the game. That does not mean we will win! It does mean that in the end, we will have the most fun. Remind them that winning, is not what is most important.)

What is more important than winning? *(Having fun! Knowing we are doing our best! Trusting God with our entire lives - even the end result of a game. If I can't trust God in the playing of a game, how can I trust with Him with my life?)*

DAY FOUR: Balloon Volleyball

MATERIALS: Balloons; a “net” - rope laid on ground or chairs to divide teams.

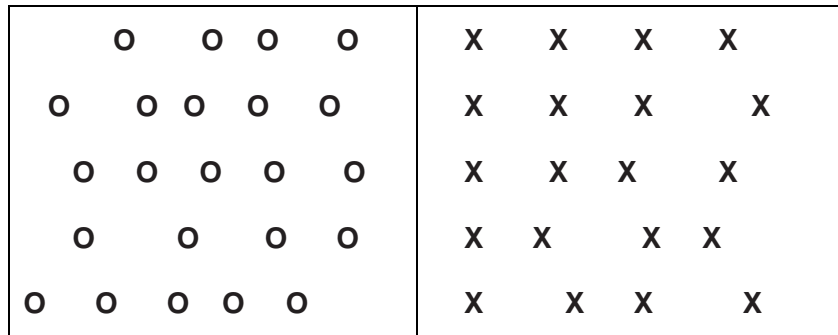
OBJECT: To be the team that scores the most points, by not allowing the balloon to touch the ground on their side.

SETUP

- Divide players into two teams.
- Players sit on the floor facing the “net.”

TO PLAY

- An adult “bats” a balloon with his hand at the centerline.
- The balloon will land on one side or the other.
- The players, on the side where it falls, try to keep it in the air.
- They must bat the balloon over to the opposing side.
- Only 3 touches of the balloon are allowed by a team, before it goes over the “net.”
- Players must keep their bottoms on the floor at all times.
- You might want to allow the little ones to get on their knees instead of their bottom.



POINTS ARE SCORED IF:

- the ball touches the ground on opposing team’s side
- more than 3 players on the opposing team, touch the balloon, before it passes over the “net.”

DEBRIEF

Was it hard to keep your bottom on the floor? If your bottom came up off of the floor, did you have to choose to pretend that it didn’t, or did you tell the adult that you moved?

What did you choose to do and why *(You will have been observing. If a child repeatedly tried to get away with lifting his bottom, ask him if he realized it.)*

As you were playing, what feelings did you have? *(In the midst of play, [as with life], we get excited, driven, involved, and don’t think through the choices we are making. Help them to get in touch with the feelings that sometimes, cause them to make foolish choices. Whenever we make a foolish choice, the bottom cause is our lack of trust in God. It is much easier to trust ourselves, than it is to truly trust God.)*

Would you like to play again, and see if you can make better choices?