



PRETEEN

AUGUST 2024

FOR LEADERS ONLY

GOD VIEW: THE CONNECTION BETWEEN WISDOM AND GOD'S CHARACTER, AS SHOWN THROUGH GOD'S BIG STORY

Sometimes it's easy to know what the wise choice would be. Let's say you're choosing between having expired milk with your cereal or eating some fruit and a sandwich. You probably aren't reaching for the milk! What about choosing to stay up all night when you have a road trip the next day, or getting some sleep because you're driving first? Every decision you make starts out with a choice. As we "dive deep" into the Bible this month, we'll discover that God is always there to help us make wise choices. God has given us people who can help us make those wise choices too.

CORE INSIGHT: The theological foundation for WISDOM

Truth according to God's Message

What Jesus said and did impacts how I should respond to God's Word in my everyday life.

When Jesus was a boy, He grew in wisdom. God wants us to discover wisdom too. When we make the wise choice, we reflect the character of Jesus to people around us.

WISDOM is about finding out what you should do and doing it.



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HEADS UP: IDEAS TO KEEP IN MIND AS YOU TALK ABOUT WISDOM WITH KIDS

As you talk about wisdom this month, keep in mind that some kids approach decisions logically and anticipate what might happen, while others tend to make decisions based on experiences. Don't negate either approach to learning how to make the wise choice. Encourage them to start small by making wise choices where they can. Also, keep in mind that not every decision is one that a kid can make. Kids are heavily influenced by their surroundings, which they may not be able to control. As you have conversations, refrain from playing the blame game. Instead, remind kids of the decisions they DO have the power to make. If your environment is the first point of contact for a kid who addresses being in an unsafe situation—due to unwise caregiver decisions or decisions of any other kind—be sure to have a plan to connect that child to the help they need to ensure their safety.

Large Group Change:

We are introducing a new segment in the K3, K5Starter, and K5Plus Large Group scripts! After the Bible story, we're introducing a segment called What's Our Part in the Story? This will take the place of the Closer and will more clearly align with the StoryLab video while providing a simpler, more linear path to set up great conversations for the kids in your Small Groups. The Storyteller will end the story with the Bottom Line as usual, but then they will stay on stage while the Host enters. The Storyteller and Host will then discuss the application of the story together, mirroring what happens in our StoryLab video. We believe this will help kids transition from hearing the story to hearing what to DO with the story in a more straightforward way. This is also where we'll talk about the virtue of the month, as an expression of the way our relationship with God changes the way we live each day. At the end of this section, either the Host or Storyteller will lead the kids in a prayer to ask God to help us live out what we've just heard. Then, after the prayer, we'll dismiss the kids to Small Groups.

Family Experience (FX) Change:

A Family Experience (FX) is an engaging live event where parents and kids experience music, laughter, and fun teaching about the character of God. FX always aligns with and reinforces the 252 Kids curriculum. Users are provided with scripts to hold an FX weekly, monthly, quarterly, or seasonally. Starting this month, we have restructured the scripts to make them more simplified and easier to pull off with as little or as many volunteers as you may need. Please note the following changes:

- We have streamlined the FX script structure to allow you to produce an FX with one Lead host and one additional Segment Host -- or to divide up the segments of the script between a Lead Host and a larger number of Segment Hosts who only need to run one game or activity.
- Weekly FX scripts no longer feature interaction between a Credible Host and a Comic Host. Instead, the Lead Host will introduce the month's God View and theme, and share hosting duties for the rest of the FX with one or more Segment Hosts. NOTE: For those of you who love Credible Host and Comic Host, rest assured, they will still make regular appearances in the Jam events! Word characters like Kelvin and Sam Shovel will also still make occasional appearances in Weekly FX scripts.
- The Virtue Reveal now takes place after the Word segment and cues up the Family Question.

We hope these changes will make it possible for an even greater number of churches to engage kids and parents with the love of God through a Family Experience!



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WEEK 1

Key Question: What does it mean to be wise? Just because something is the *wise* choice to make doesn't always mean it's the most *obvious* choice to make. Sometimes we have to dive a little deeper to figure out what true wisdom looks like. As preteens think about this question, our hope is that it helps give them a starting point for making the best decision they can when they don't know what to do.

We start the month in **Luke 2:41-52**. Mary, Joseph, and Jesus had just traveled to Jerusalem for the Passover Feast and were headed home. Except . . . Jesus was no longer with them. Instead, He was at the temple, listening and asking questions. Jesus knew how important it was to gain wisdom. When we ask God for wisdom, we will find it too.

Bottom Line: Wisdom is worth searching for. Think back to when you were a kid, playing pretend as you went off in search of hidden treasures. Remember the joy and excitement you got as you dug deeper and deeper into the clues—and maybe even the earth? Searching for wisdom, in a way, is like finding that hidden treasure. When we find God's wisdom, its riches are infinitely more valuable.

WEEK 2

Key Question: What are you learning about yourself? Preteens are living through a time of change. Maybe they've just picked up a new skill and they really love it, but they still have some improving to do. Or maybe they've noticed that their taste in foods has started to shift. Everyone is always learning something at some point in their life. We hope this question allows kids to begin to see how they can offer grace to others as they learn and grow with one another.

In week 2, we head to **Matthew 7:1-5**, which is part of one of Jesus' most famous recorded messages, the Sermon on the Mount. Throughout this sermon, Jesus touched on many important lessons. One of these truths was that we shouldn't judge other people. When we judge others without first looking at ourselves, we miss out on the work God is doing in us to shape us and help us grow.

Bottom Line: When you see yourself clearly, you can make the wise choice. It's easy to see something that others have done to wrong you. But when we wrong someone else? That's not always easy to see. It's important that we take the time to examine ourselves so we can love others the way God wants us to . . . and so we can continue growing in wisdom.



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WEEK 3

Key Question: Who are some wise people in your life? Who's someone you know who gives good advice? What made you think of that person? Is it because they teach you new things or help you make hard decisions? Or maybe it's because you trust them and they offer a great outside perspective. Whatever the reasoning, we hope this question begins to help preteens identify the wise people in their lives . . . and think about how they can learn from those people over time.

For week 3, we head to **2 Chronicles 10**. King Solomon's son, Rehoboam, was now king, and the people came to ask him to lighten their workload. However, when presented with the opportunity to gain the people's trust, King Rehoboam sought out wise counsel . . . and *unwise* counsel. Unfortunately, Rehoboam chose to listen to his unwise friends, which led to catastrophic consequences for him and for God's people.

Bottom Line: Hang out with wise people. There's a famous saying: "Show me your friends and I'll show you your future." The people we allow into our lives have the power to influence us, both positively and negatively. That doesn't mean we should cast people off and ignore them, but it does mean that we need to be aware of who we let speak into our lives and our situation. If we spend time with wise people, then we know it'll be worth it in the end.

WEEK 4

Key Question: How are you wiser than you used to be? Think back to the first time you learned something new, like tying your shoes or learning how to read. It wasn't enough just to see someone do it. You had to practice it for yourself too. This question allows preteens to begin exploring all the different ways they've grown . . . and to consider what steps they can take to continue learning and growing as they gain wisdom.

We wrap up the month in **Romans 12:2**. Paul was writing a letter to the Romans in which he encouraged them to "let [their] way of thinking be completely changed." Paul wanted to remind the believers that God could continually change the way they thought, which would allow them to focus on God's plan. When we spend time talking to God, learning from Scripture, and listening to others who follow God, we'll be able to figure out what God wants to do in our lives.

Bottom Line: Never stop growing in wisdom. Wisdom isn't something that we find one time and then we're done. It's a continuous learning process that we'll encounter for the rest of our lives. As we gain knowledge, we should *want* to gain God's wisdom too. It's not enough just to *know* something. We have to *do* something with what we know in order for it to make a difference.