



ELEMENTARY

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.

**WEEK
TWO**

BIBLE STORY

Speck and Plank
Matthew 7:1-5

BOTTOM LINE

When you see yourself clearly, you can make the wise choice.



TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

WEEK 2

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.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

See Yourself
Speck and Plank
Matthew 7:1-5

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

**When you see yourself clearly,
you can make the wise choice.**

MONTHLY MEMORY VERSE

**If any of you needs wisdom,
you should ask God for it. He will
give it to you. God gives freely to
everyone and doesn't find fault.**
James 1:5, NIV

MONTHLY VIRTUE

**Wisdom—Finding out what you
should do and doing it**

BASIC TRUTH

I need to make the wise choice.

Host

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Host
- Ten kid volunteers
- Two plastic blue tablecloths
- Plastic sea creatures (from week 1, or a new set—you only need a few)
- Two 2" x 4" boards that are 6 or 8 feet long
- Two tri-fold presentation boards, with the center made to look like a shark's face, with the mouth cut out (see "What You Do")
- Two laundry baskets
- Two buckets full of plastic ball pit balls

2. WORSHIP

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Worship Leader(s)

3. BIBLE STORY

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Storyteller
- Host
- Worship Leader (see "What You Do")
- Bible
- Two printed scripts
- Prop box containing:
 - Toy gavel
 - Piece of lumber (a 2" x 4" that's about four feet long would be fine)
 - Banana
 - Large piece of cake, on a paper plate, with a plastic fork (covered with plastic wrap until the Host is ready to eat it)
 - Book that a kid would read
 - Inflatable boombox
- Host's phone

LARGE GROUP VISUALS:

- Theme Background Slide
- Bottom Line Slide
- Theme Slide
- Virtue Slide



WEEK
TWO
AUGUST 2024

LARGE GROUP
K-3

PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

See Yourself
Speck and Plank
Matthew 7:1-5

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

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MONTHLY VIRTUE

Wisdom—Finding out what you
should do and doing it

BASIC TRUTH

I need to make the wise choice.

LARGE GROUP

ENGAGE KIDS' HEARTS THROUGH A DYNAMIC AND INTERACTIVE BIBLE STORY,
WORSHIP, AND PRAYER EXPERIENCE IN A LARGE GROUP SETTING.

AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS KIDS ENTER.

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP

Host enters.

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): COUNTDOWN

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME INTRO

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP

OPENER

HOST: "Hi, friends! It's so great to see all of you! We're 'diving deep' this month and finding out how God can help us grow in wisdom.

"We have so much fun planned for today, and I am ready to get started! Are you? If you are, give someone a high-five like this! (*Demonstrate.*) All right—let's get started with a game. This game is called 'Feed the Sharks.'

"I'll need five of you to represent this side of the room (*reference one side*), and five of you to play for this side (*reference the other side*). Raise your hand if you want to play.

Choose five kids from each side of the room who have their hands raised. Have each team line up behind one of the blue tablecloths with a board across it.

Each tablecloth/plank should have a bucket of ball pit balls on one end (where the kids are standing), and a shark-mouth presentation display board set up at the far side.

"This game will be a relay between our two teams. When I say 'go,' the first person from each team will pick up a piece of shark food (*pick up one of the ball pit balls*) . . . walk across the water on this plank (*demonstrate*) . . . and then, while you stand on the end of the plank, try to toss the ball into the shark's mouth!

Reference the two shark-mouth presentation displays. Try to toss the ball into the shark's mouth to demonstrate.

"The water is full of these sea creatures (*hold up one of the toy sea creatures*), so you'll need to be careful not to step off the plank!



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PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

"After the first person has had a turn, they can go to the back of the line while the next person has a turn. You'll keep taking turns and trying to feed your shark some yummy food. When the music stops, we'll count how much food each team got into their shark's mouth.

"Everyone cheer for our contestants. Let's get started. Three, two, one, go!

AUDIO: FUN MUSIC

Comment on the action while the kids play the game. Stop the music after the kids have used up all the ball pit balls.

Look at the laundry baskets behind the shark mouths. Count how much "food" each team successfully got into their shark's mouth. Congratulate the winning team, but celebrate both teams!

Get the kids to help you collect the ball pit balls in the laundry baskets.

"That was great! Nice teamwork, everyone. I'm not sure how wise it would be to feed a shark in real life . . . but I DO know something wise that's also super-fun that we get to do right now. Let's all stand up and get ready to sing and worship God!"



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K-3

PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY **WORSHIP** GROUPS HOME

10 MINUTES

WORSHIP

Worship Leaders enter as Host exits.

WORSHIP LEADER: "Hi, everyone! Go ahead and get on your feet and get ready to sing. We can always turn to God and find wisdom. That's what this song is about. It's called 'I Run to You.' Let's sing it!"

AUDIO: "I RUN TO YOU" / TRACK 6 FROM MAKE A MOVE

OPTIONAL VIDEO: "I RUN TO YOU" LIVE LYRICS OR DANCE MOVES MUSIC VIDEO

"It's so good to know that God is there to help us [**Basic Truth**] **make the wise choice**. Before we continue in worship, watch this.

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): LIVE LOUD VIDEO FROM GET REEL

"Last week we taught you a new song called 'Further Faster.' It's a good reminder that each of us needs God's wisdom in our life. As we read in Proverbs 4:7: '*To start being wise you must first get wisdom. No matter what it costs, get understanding.*' (NIRV) I'm so thankful that God is full of wisdom. In fact, God is the source of ALL wisdom. Let's sing and ask God to help us grow wiser and stronger."

AUDIO: "FURTHER FASTER" / TRACK 6 FROM THIS LITTLE LIGHT

OPTIONAL VIDEO: "FURTHER FASTER" LIVE LYRICS VIDEO, OR DANCE MOVES MUSIC VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE)



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PRELUDE

SOCIAL

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25 MINUTES

BIBLE STORY

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

Storyteller enters as Worship Leaders exit.

SETTING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: "Hi, everybody! I'm excited to tell you something Jesus said that's a really important part of wisdom. We can find this idea right here in the book of Matthew, in the Bible. (*Hold up Bible.*)

"The book of Matthew is one of the four books that are called the Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. If you want to find out more about Jesus for yourself, these books are a great place to start! They show us how Jesus lived, and the things He did and said. Matthew, the man who wrote the book of Matthew, was a tax collector until his life was completely turned around by his friendship with Jesus.

"When Jesus was about 30 years old, He began to travel from town to town, teaching and healing people. Everywhere Jesus went, big crowds gathered, because people wanted to be close to Jesus and hear what He had to say. Jesus healed people who were sick, but He also cared about people's hearts and minds. In everything Jesus did, He showed people what it looks like to love God and love others.

DO NOT JUDGE

STORYTELLER: "One day, when Jesus was just getting started teaching and traveling, He went up on a mountainside to teach His followers. It didn't take long for a huge crowd of people to gather. The amazing truths Jesus taught that day have come to be known as the Sermon on the Mount.

"Listen to this idea that Jesus shared:

Open the Bible to Matthew 7:1-2 (NirV) and read.

"Do not judge other people. Then you will not be judged. You will be judged in the same way you judge others. You will be measured in the same way you measure others." (NirV)

"Okay. Now, when you hear the word 'judge,' you might think of a judge in a courtroom.

Hold up the toy gavel.

(Pretend to bang the gavel.) "Order in the court!"

Set down the gavel.

"But that's not what Jesus was talking about here. When Jesus said not to judge people, He meant that we shouldn't look at other people and think, (*disgusted tone*) 'UGH. Why would they do that?' We shouldn't look down on other people and think we're better than them. Because the truth is, we don't know the whole story. Maybe we don't fully understand why that person thinks or acts the way they do. And, if we're honest, we don't want other people to judge US either.



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25 MINUTES

SAWDUST AND WOOD

STORYTELLER: "Jesus went on to share a word picture to help people understand what He meant when He said, 'Do not judge! Listen to this.

Open the Bible to Matthew 7:3-5 (NirV) and read.

"You look at the bit of sawdust in your friend's eye.

With your other hand that's not holding the Bible, pretend that you're holding a tiny speck between your thumb and forefinger.

"But you pay no attention to the piece of wood in your own eye.

With your other hand that's not holding the Bible, hold up the piece of wood.

"How can you say to your friend, 'Let me take the bit of sawdust out of your eye'? How can you say this while there is a piece of wood in your own eye? You pretender! First take the piece of wood out of your own eye. Then you will be able to see clearly to take the bit of sawdust out of your friend's eye." (NirV)

Set down the piece of wood.

"Jesus was using something called exaggeration to help us understand an important idea. People don't usually go around with specks of sawdust or wood in their eyes. But that was Jesus' way of saying that sometimes we don't see clearly . . . and that's why we shouldn't judge other people.

"It's easy to point out where we think someone else is wrong or needs to change. But while we're making a big deal of the problem we think THEY have, usually we're ignoring our OWN problem—which could be even bigger than we realize. Until we take an honest look at ourselves, we can't really help someone else.

SEEING YOURSELF CLEARLY

STORYTELLER: "I've asked a couple of friends to show us some examples of what it might look like when we DON'T see ourselves clearly. (*Calling backstage*) Come on out, [names]!"

Worship Leader and Host enter.

Note: Provide printed scripts for the Worship Leader and Host for reference. Adjust the "he/she" references as needed depending on your actual actors.

"[Worship Leader's name] and [Host's name] will be playing two siblings, and [Host's name] is the older brother. Let's see our first scene. Ready? Action!"

Worship Leader holds up the banana.

WORSHIP LEADER: "Hey, big brother! I'm really hungry! Do you think it would be okay if I have this banana?"



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25 MINUTES

Host holds up the big slice of cake and takes a bite.

HOST: "Ummm . . . no! Of course not! Why would you even ask? We're having dinner soon. You know Mom won't want you to spoil your dinner!"

STORYTELLER: "And . . . cut. Nice job, you two. *(To audience)* Do you think it was a little silly for [Host's name] to be upset about his little sister eating a banana before dinner? Why? *(Pause for response.)* Right—because he was eating that huge piece of cake!

"Time for our next scene. *(To Worship Leader and Host)* Are you ready? Action!

Worship Leader picks up the book. She walks slowly while reading and softly whistling (or humming).

(Watching) "It looks like [Worship Leader's name] is really into that book."

Host picks up the inflatable boombox and puts it up on his shoulder.

AUDIO: INSTRUMENTAL ROCK MUSIC (SUGGESTION: SOMETHING LIKE "SHREDDING PARADISE" BY HEAVY METAL BACKING TRACKS)

HOST: *(Shouting over the music)* "Whoa! What is that racket? Is that you [whistling/humming], [Leader's name]? You should really keep it down. Mom's trying to take a nap!"

AUDIO: FADE OUT MUSIC

STORYTELLER: "Oh boy. [Host's name] sure was quick to judge his little sister for [whistling/humming]! But what was HE doing? *(Pause for response.)* Yep. It's like he didn't even notice how loud his music was.

"Okay. One more scene. Ready, [Worship Leader and Host's names]? Action!"

WORSHIP LEADER: *(Calling toward backstage)* "Grandma? Can I use your iPad?"

Host picks up his phone and has his eyes fixed on it.

HOST: *(Continuing to stare at his phone)* "UGH. [Worship Leader's name], why do you always want to use her iPad? You really shouldn't be using screens so much. It's not good for you."

STORYTELLER: *(Shaking your head)* "Oh, [Host's name]. Always judging what little sis does, but never really seeing those same things in himself!"

(To Host) "I know that's not how you'd really act as a big brother, [Host's name]. *(To audience)* But seriously—that was some amazing acting by our friends here. Can we give them a big hand?"

Worship Leader and Host wave. Worship Leader exits while Host stays on stage.



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PRELUDE SOCIAL **STORY** WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

25 MINUTES

WRAPPING UP THE STORY

STORYTELLER: *(To audience)* "That was pretty funny! But think about it. Did any of those situations look kind of familiar to you? It can be really frustrating when you feel like someone is judging you for something they don't even seem to realize THEY'RE doing too.

"If we're not careful, we'll tend to judge the people around us. But Jesus said that we should choose NOT to judge. Instead, we should ask God to help us see ourselves clearly . . . so we can work on fixing what needs to be fixed in ourselves. God will begin to change us from the inside out. And that will lead us to wisdom.

"That doesn't mean we should never help others grow. But Jesus made it clear that our FIRST priority is to ask God to help us look at ourselves . . . and see where we can change.

SLIDE: BOTTOM LINE

"When you see yourself clearly, you can make the wise choice. Say that with me."

STORYTELLER, HOST, AND KIDS: **"When you see yourself clearly, you can make the wise choice."**

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP

WHAT'S OUR PART IN THE STORY?

HOST: "We were having some fun with those examples earlier, but I think all of us can work on seeing what's true about ourselves. That will help us to know **[Basic Truth] how to make the wise choice.**"

STORYTELLER: "And it'll help us to know how to treat other people."

HOST: "Jesus' example of the speck and the wood shows us a great way that we can live with wisdom.

SLIDE: VIRTUE

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME TRANSITION TO VIRTUE

"Remember, wisdom is about **finding out what you should do and doing it.**"

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): VIRTUE TRANSITION TO THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP

STORYTELLER: "When we focus on the mistakes other people make, it's easy to judge them and find things that we think should be better. But it takes effort and practice to look at ourselves first.

"You can always talk to God and ask God to give you that kind of wisdom. God loves you so much! God made you and wants to help you with whatever you struggle with. When you put your faith in Jesus, you have God's Holy Spirit living inside you. And God's Spirit can help you grow to be more and more like Jesus.



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LARGE GROUP
K-3

PRELUDE **SOCIAL** **STORY** **WORSHIP** **GROUPS** **HOME**

25 MINUTES

HOST: "This week, let's ask God to help us treat others with kindness instead of judging them. And if something about someone else is really bugging you, stop and ask God to show you what's going on inside of you. You can also ask a parent or other adult who knows you really well to help you see what's going on more clearly.

"Let's pray and ask God to give us wisdom."

PRAYER

STORYTELLER OR HOST: "Dear God, thank You for this reminder that we need to see ourselves clearly so we can **[Basic Truth] make the wise choice.** It can be easy for us to judge other people and see the things we think THEY need to change. But it's not so easy for us to do that for ourselves. Help us to see ourselves clearly and act with wisdom in our relationships with other people. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."

Dismiss kids to their small groups.

AUDIO: PLAY HIGH-ENERGY MUSIC AS THE KIDS EXIT.

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP