



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.

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.



TODAY'S SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

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.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Growin' Up
Jesus Grows in Wisdom
Luke 2:41-52

TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

What does it mean to be wise?

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Wisdom is worth searching for.

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 can trust God no matter what.

Host

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Host
- Treasure buckets or kiddie pool (see What You Do)
- "Treasure" (See What You Do)
- Cups or bowls for each team/kid to collect their treasure
- Tarp

2. WORSHIP

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Worship Leader(s)

3. COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT (STORY)

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Communicator
- Bible

LARGE GROUP VISUALS:

- Theme Background Slide
- Knowledge Word Slide
- Wisdom Word Slide
- "Knowledge or Wisdom?" Slides 1-4
- Graphic Novel Story Slides 1-11
- Virtue Slide
- Key Question Slide
- Theme Slide

DIVE DEEP



There's Always More to Explore

WEEK
ONE

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LARGE GROUP
PRETEEN

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Growin' Up
Jesus Grows in Wisdom
Luke 2:41-52

TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

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MONTHLY VIRTUE

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

BASIC TRUTH

I can trust God no matter what.

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 STUDENTS ENTER.

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP

Host enters . . .

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): COUNTDOWN

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP

WELCOME

Host has lots of energy as he or she welcomes everyone to [Name of Environment]. Host is relatable and inviting. Host can talk about something that happened culturally throughout the week like a big sports game, movie opening, a viral video on YouTube, etc. Host tells them how excited he or she is that they're there and briefly runs through what they can expect. This is especially helpful for first-time guests to make them feel like they know what's happening.

OPENER

HOST: "Friends! It's SO great to see you today! I am so excited to start another amazing month with you here at [Name of Environment]. As you might be able to tell by looking around, we're diving deep into the sea to discover what lies beneath. So, let's get started with a game that will (*poorly trying to talk like a pirate*) get ye scallywags digging for me pieces of treasure, ya 'ear? (*Break*) Sorry about that—couldn't help myself—let's try this again. I need a few volunteers who can dig for some buried treasure. In a game we call: 'Dive Deep Dig!' Who wants in?"

SLIDE: "DIVE DEEP DIG"

Host chooses a few volunteers to participate.

"Alright, mateys . . . I mean, friends, when I say go, you need to dig around in the pool and try to find buried treasure. If you happen to find some treasure, set it to the side and keep digging! When the timer's up, the person who has discovered the most treasure wins! But the one with the least? (*Like a pirate*) Well, ye be walkin' the plank! (*back to normal*) Or you just won't win. Everyone got it? Good. On your mark, get set, go!"



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PRELUDE	SOCIAL	STORY	WORSHIP	GROUPS	HOME
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25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

AUDIO: UPBEAT GAME MUSIC

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): 60-SECOND COUNTDOWN

Host has volunteers dig for a set amount of time before yelling STOP! Have a leader help compare the piles of treasure found and declare a winner. Play again if there is still time and treasure.

Note: The Host could also set a 60-second timer on their phone instead of the countdown video.

(After the game, as a pirate.) "Well, well, well! I can't believe the number of doubloons ye found, me hearties. I t'ought ye a bunch of landlubbers at first glance, but 'ere I was mistaken!

(Snapping out of it) "Whew . . . sorry! I don't know what keeps happening. Great job, everyone. Let's stand together and get ready to worship our amazing God!"



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LARGE GROUP
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PRELUDE **SOCIAL** **STORY** **WORSHIP** **GROUPS** **HOME**

10 MINUTES

WORSHIP

Worship Leaders enter as Host exits.



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PRELUDE SOCIAL **STORY** WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

25 MINUTES

COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT (STORY)

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

Communicator enters as Worship Leaders exit.

INTRODUCTION

COMMUNICATOR: "Hey, friends! How is everyone today? I hope you are all having a fantastic day so far! As we get started, I have a question for you: What's the difference between knowledge and wisdom? Now, you might be wondering, *IS* there a difference? Or maybe you're asking: How would we even know the difference? Take a moment and chat about it with the person next to you!

Give kids a minute or two to discuss. As you have time, have some kids share what they said or make note of some of the conversations you possibly overheard.

"Great thoughts! And it's true, you and I KNOW a lot of things . . . let's call that *knowledge*.

SLIDE: KNOWLEDGE WORD SLIDE

"You learn things all the time, right? Almost everywhere you go or anything you do, you get a chance to learn something new—like school or home, browsing the internet, or reading books. I don't think we could ever discover all there is to know out in the world.

"But then, there is also wisdom.

SLIDE: WISDOM WORD SLIDE

"Wisdom is more than just what you know . . . it's KNOW-ing how to live. So, let's try this. I'll put an idea up on the screen. I want you to decide if it's knowledge or wisdom . . . facts you know or information that impacts the choices you make with how you live. First up!

NOTE: For the following ideas, some of the options may be both knowledge and wisdom. As time allows, give a few kids a chance to share before moving on.

SLIDE: "KNOWLEDGE OR WISDOM?" SLIDE 1

"What do you think? Turn and discuss!"

Give kids a moment to discuss and share.

SLIDE: "KNOWLEDGE OR WISDOM?" SLIDE 2

Give kids a moment to discuss and share.

SLIDE: "KNOWLEDGE OR WISDOM?" SLIDE 3

Give kids a moment to discuss and share.



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PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

25 MINUTES

SLIDE: "KNOWLEDGE OR WISDOM?" SLIDE 4

Give kids a moment to discuss and share.

"Wow. Some of those were tricky. It seems like knowledge and wisdom go hand-in-hand, like you can't get wisdom without knowledge. And knowledge is wasted if you don't somehow find a way to put it into practice. As we just learned, even learning your multiplication facts can help you while you're shopping for groceries or figuring out if you have enough supplies to finish a project you might be working on."

TENSION

COMMUNICATOR: "Now, let's be honest; right now, it might seem like you spend most of your time learning knowledge—and not always knowledge you really even care about all that much. But even if you DO care about it—what should you do with all that knowledge?"

"By the time kids like you get to fifth grade, most of them have collected and KNOW a WHOLE LOT of information. I mean, most people spend a whole lot of childhood learning and gaining information about new things. But that makes me wonder: is it possible to KNOW a lot of things and not be WISE in how you live?"

"This is actually a question people have been asking for thousands of years, even back when people were writing the first books of the Bible. Thankfully, those writers learned all sorts of wisdom while they trusted God and followed Jesus. On top of that, God inspired them to write it all down so we could learn some wisdom today. Let's check it out!"

TRUTH

COMMUNICATOR: "Today, we're heading to the gospel of Luke, which is one of the four collections of stories about Jesus' life that we have in the New Testament of the Bible. Now, these stories share about the birth of Jesus, and they also tell us a lot about what happened when He was older. What we don't have are stories and moments from most of His childhood and teenage years. It's not that Jesus wasn't a kid; it's just that there weren't many stories written down for us to read. But . . . we do have one story from when Jesus was twelve years old. And it's a good one! Let's read it from Luke, chapter two.

Open the Bible to Luke 2:41-43 (NirV) and read.

Every year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the Passover Feast. When Jesus was twelve years old, they went up to the feast as usual. After the feast was over, his parents left to go back home. The boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. But they were not aware of it.

"WHOA! Sounds like we might have some explaining to do here. So, in Jesus' day and for hundreds of years before, the Jewish people would travel to Jerusalem (the capital city of Israel) for three major holiday festivals.

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL STORY SLIDES 1

"This is called a pilgrimage. Now, don't picture a vacation where you climb into a minivan and drive off to Grandma's for the family reunion. That's fun and all, but this was an even bigger deal, like the family reunion of family reunions where the WHOLE family—parents, grandparents, cousins, second cousins, and distant aunts and uncles—would all WALK together, sometimes for days. So, picture this big group of people from Jesus' family traveling to the festival.



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PRELUDE SOCIAL STORY WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

25 MINUTES

“When they arrived, other giant families would be there. The place would be packed! And this particular festival focused on helping God’s people remember how God rescued them from Egypt.

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL STORY SLIDES 2

“Once the festival was over, they would all turn around and travel across all those miles back to their hometowns.

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL STORY SLIDES 3

“This time around, though, there was a bit of a problem. What was it?

Wait for response.

“That’s right! They forgot Jesus! Wait . . . what?! How could this happen?”

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL STORY SLIDES 4

Open the Bible to Luke 2:44-45 (NirV) and read.

They thought he was somewhere in their group. So they traveled on for a day. Then they began to look for him among their relatives and friends. They did not find him. So they went back to Jerusalem to look for him.

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL STORY SLIDES 5

“Okay, I know at this point it would be easy for us to give Mary and Joseph a hard time, but hold on just a moment. Remember, these were LARGE families that were traveling together—walking—and it would have been very easy to think Jesus was just hanging out with other family members at another part of the group. And once they figured it out, though . . . they made a beeline and rushed back to the city! Let’s keep reading.

Open the Bible to Luke 2:46 (NirV) and read.

After three days they found him in the temple courtyard. He was sitting with the teachers. He was listening to them and asking them questions.

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL STORY SLIDES 6

“Three days. Can you believe that? Three days is a loooong time to be away from your mom and dad! But Jesus seemed to know He was safe, because it turned out that Jesus was hanging out in the Temple, which was the center of the whole city, where people went to pray, offer sacrifices, and learn about living for God from rabbis and teachers. And that’s exactly where Mary and Joseph found Him. Jesus was hanging out with the teachers and asking them questions.”

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL STORY SLIDES 7

“But these weren’t just any sort of questions like you and I might ask today. Most of the time, when we ask questions, it leads straight to a specific, factual answer.



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25 MINUTES

“Like, question: How many Great Lakes are there in the United States? Answer? Five.

“Question and answer. We do it all the time.

“But in Jesus’ day and in the schools where they learned, questions often led to a discussion of answers and more questions. And that, very likely, is what was happening that day.

“Jesus was holding His own with the religious leaders of the day as He spoke with them.

“So, the situation might have looked a little more like this . . .”

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL STORY SLIDES 8

“Since Jesus, a twelve-year-old, was holding His own with the religious leaders of the day, how do you think people might have responded? Let’s find out.

Open the Bible to Luke 2:47, (NirV) and read.

Everyone who heard him was amazed at how much he understood. They also were amazed at his answers.

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL STORY SLIDES 9

“Now, I wish we knew the exact topic that day in the Temple, but I can tell you that the most frequent and the most important conversations they had in Jesus’ day were about the Torah . . . what we call the first five books in the Old Testament in our Bibles. That means more than likely, Jesus would have been discussing topics related to God’s Word with the teachers of God’s Word. And those teachers were amazed at His understanding. Jesus demonstrated that He took God’s Word seriously.

“Once Mary and Joseph found Jesus, they had a bit of a discussion where Jesus helped Mary understand that God wanted Him to be at the Temple. Jesus knew this was part of the plan God had for His life on Earth. But eventually, Mary, Joseph, and Jesus headed back home.”

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL STORY SLIDES 10

“At the end of this passage, Luke includes this cool verse about Jesus growing up. He wrote:

Open the Bible to Luke 2:52 (NirV) and read.

Jesus became wiser and stronger. He also became more and more pleasing to God and to people.

“This is such a cool verse because it gives a glimpse of HOW Jesus grew. It doesn’t say that Jesus grew smarter or gained more knowledge. What word did Luke use instead? WISER. Jesus grew in wisdom. He grew in His relationship with God. And He grew in His relationship with other people.”

SLIDE: GRAPHIC NOVEL STORY SLIDES 11



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PRELUDE SOCIAL **STORY** WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

25 MINUTES

“As Jesus grew as a human, He was willing to search for wisdom . . . to ask and seek answers to the right kind of questions so that He could grow in wisdom.”

APPLICATION

COMMUNICATOR: “The same can be true for us! Earlier, we talked about knowledge and discussed how it relates to wisdom. Knowledge is often about what happens in our head—what we know.

“On the other hand, wisdom involves how we take what we know and live it out. In other words:

SLIDE: VIRTUE

“Wisdom is **finding out what you should do and doing it!** It’s about how we live, and as we learn to trust God and live with wisdom, Jesus gives us a model for how to do that!

“We don’t have to go to the Temple like Jesus did, but one of the cool things we get to do here each week at church is open the Bible together and learn from God and the people who trusted God throughout history. We get to take what we read in the Bible seriously.

“But it’s not just about learning facts from the Bible . . . we want you to treasure the God who the Bible is all about so you can follow God and live out God’s ways . . . so you know you can trust God no matter what!

“And as we grow in wisdom, we’ll find when we face temptations or have something extremely difficult to do but we know it’s the right thing to do, we can make the wise choice!

“And as we grow in wisdom, we’ll start to love other people the way that God loves others . . . even those who can be hard to love at times. We will begin to live out the wisdom of Jesus as we treat others the way we want to be treated!”

LANDING

COMMUNICATOR: “As you go to your groups today, think about this . . .

SLIDE: KEY QUESTION

“**What does it mean to be wise?** Take a moment to think about the difference between knowledge—knowing stuff—and wisdom—following God and living life God’s way. What does it mean to be wise? And how can we follow Jesus’ lead as we search for wisdom in our lives today? If you’re not sure how you’d answer those questions, don’t worry. You’ll have a chance to talk all about that and more with your Small Group. Before you head out, let’s pray and ask God to help us grow in wisdom!”

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard. After prayer, Communicator dismisses kids to Small Group.

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

SLIDE: THEME

OPTIONAL VIDEO (MEDIA PACKAGE): THEME LOOP