



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 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.

TODAY'S BIBLE STORY

Don't Stop
Renew Your Mind
Romans 12:2

TODAY'S KEY QUESTION

How are you wiser than you used to be?

TODAY'S BOTTOM LINE

Never stop growing in wisdom.

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

2. WORSHIP

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Worship Leader(s)

3. COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT (STORY)

WHAT YOU NEED:

- Communicator
- Bible
- Prop box
 - Baby or toddler shoes
 - Onesie or toddler shirt
 - Baby doll / American girl doll / etc.
 - Kids toy representing technology (phone/video game/leap pad/etc.)
- Phone (can be in Communicator's pocket) or video game (Switch, etc.)
- Three Verse boxes (see What You Do)

DIVE DEEP



There's Always More to Explore

WEEK
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LARGE GROUP
PRETEEN

PRELUDE

SOCIAL

STORY

WORSHIP

GROUPS

HOME

25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

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Wisdom—Finding out what you
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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: "Hey, friends! It's hard to believe we're at the end of this month! But have no fear, we still have lots of fun exploring to do! So let's dive deep and get started with a game called 'What's in the Deep?'"

SLIDE: "WHAT'S IN THE DEEP?" TITLE SLIDE

"For this one, we test the depths of your knowledge about the depths of the ocean . . . and more! The goal? Answer enough questions correctly so you're standing on your feet by the end of the game. (beat) I see that some of you might have some questions . . . Let me try to help.

NOTE: Kids will need to be sitting on the floor for the five moves to work. If you happen to have kids seated in chairs, have them sit on the floor as they start the game.

NOTE: For a version with less movement, replace the five actions below with the following ones: (1) raise one hand in the air, (2) raise the other hand in the air, (3) bring both hands together in the air, (4) place both hands on your head, (5) jazz hands! (Shake both hands in the air). If using this version, adjust the wording about standing as needed.



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

25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

Demonstrate the movements as you share the following paragraph.

“Right now, you’re all sitting on the floor: It takes FIVE moves to get to standing.

“We all start seated in a crisscross position. If you get a question right, you move to both knees.

“Get another question right? Prop up on one knee.

“Get another question right? Squat with hands on knees.

“Another question right? Hands off knees and bent over.

“Fifth question right?! STAND UP STRAIGHT because that’s five questions!

“Now, at any time if you get a wrong answer, you go BACK a position. Kneeling on one knee and you get a question wrong? Now you’re back to both knees on the floor. Everyone understand? Okay, everyone in their seats, people!

SLIDE: WHAT’S IN THE DEEP GAME SLIDE 1A

“Question 1: 70% of the Earth is covered by water. True or False? Hold up one hand if you think it is true. Keep your hand down if false.

SLIDE: WHAT’S IN THE DEEP GAME SLIDE 1B

“The answer is . . . TRUE. If you got it right, MOVE to your knees. If you got it wrong, stay where you are.

Continue to play the game, giving directions to change positions after each answer. Here are a number of questions to use until you have a winner.

SLIDE: WHAT’S IN THE DEEP GAME SLIDE 2A

“Question 2: There are more than a quarter million known species of fish in the ocean. True or false?

SLIDE: WHAT’S IN THE DEEP GAME SLIDE 2B

“The answer is... TRUE (228,450).

SLIDE: WHAT’S IN THE DEEP GAME SLIDE 3A

“True or false? There are more historical artifacts still under the sea compared to those kept in museums.

SLIDE: WHAT’S IN THE DEEP GAME SLIDE 3B

“Answer: TRUE (there are hundreds of thousands of shipwrecks all over the world still underwater!)

SLIDE: WHAT’S IN THE DEEP GAME SLIDE 4A

“Question 4: The humpback whale is the largest living mammal—true or false?



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SLIDE: WHAT'S IN THE DEEP GAME SLIDE 4B

"FALSE (The Blue Whale)

SLIDE: WHAT'S IN THE DEEP GAME SLIDE 5A

"Question 5: Jellyfish have brains—true or false?

SLIDE: WHAT'S IN THE DEEP GAME SLIDE 5B

"Answer: FALSE (Jellyfish do not have brains.)

SLIDE: WHAT'S IN THE DEEP GAME SLIDE 6A

"Question 6: The Pacific Ocean is the largest ocean on Earth—true or false?

SLIDE: WHAT'S IN THE DEEP GAME SLIDE 6B

"Answer: TRUE

SLIDE: WHAT'S IN THE DEEP GAME SLIDE 7A

"Question 7: Coral reefs are made of sand and small pebbles—true or false?

SLIDE: WHAT'S IN THE DEEP GAME SLIDE 7B

"FALSE (Coral reefs are made up of tiny animals called coral polyps.)

SLIDE: WHAT'S IN THE DEEP GAME SLIDE 8A

"Question 8: Octopi have three hearts—true or false?

SLIDE: WHAT'S IN THE DEEP GAME SLIDE 8B

"Answer: TRUE

SLIDE: WHAT'S IN THE DEEP GAME SLIDE 9A

"Question 9: Crabs walk sideways for protection—true or false?

SLIDE: WHAT'S IN THE DEEP GAME SLIDE 9B

"FALSE (due to the structure of their legs)

SLIDE: WHAT'S IN THE DEEP GAME SLIDE 10A

"Question 10: The deepest part of the ocean is called the Macarena Trench—true or false?

SLIDE: WHAT'S IN THE DEEP GAME SLIDE 10B

"Answer: False (The Mariana Trench!)



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PRELUDE	SOCIAL	STORY	WORSHIP	GROUPS	HOME
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25 MINUTES

10 MINUTES

If you do not have a winner, declare those who have gotten the closest to standing the winners.
(After game) "Great job, everyone. That was fun. Now, if you're not already, let's stand up nice and straight and worship our amazing God together!"



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

25 MINUTES

WORSHIP

Worship Leaders enter as Host exits.

WORSHIP LEADER: "I'm excited to worship God with all of you. Get on your feet and get ready! This first song says, 'God, I run to You.' When we're not sure what to do, we know we can always turn to God and find wisdom. Let's sing this together.

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

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

"I love it! It's so good to know that we can always find true wisdom from God. Before we continue in worship, check this out.

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

"I love how God helps us grow in wisdom. Sometimes things in life can be difficult or confusing . . . but God can help us find out what we should do and do it. Every day, we can choose to follow God and learn to **[Basic Truth] make the wise choice**. Let's sing and tell God that we want to go 'Further Faster.'

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

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

"Proverbs 2:6 reminds us where wisdom comes from: 'The LORD gives wisdom. Knowledge and understanding come from his mouth.' (NIRV) When we give everything in our life to God, we find true wisdom. This song says, 'In everything I'm saying. In everything I do. I want to live my life for You.' Come on and sing this with me."

AUDIO: "MY LIFE FOR YOU" / TRACK 9 FROM MY LIFE FOR YOU

OPTIONAL VIDEO: "MY LIFE FOR YOU" LIVE LYRICS OR DANCE MOVES MUSIC VIDEO



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

25 MINUTES

COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT (STORY)

SLIDE: THEME BACKGROUND

Worship Leaders exit as Communicator enters carrying a prop box.

INTRODUCTION

COMMUNICATOR: "Hey, friends! I can't believe August is coming to an end! It went so fast. But we still have today, so let's make it fun!

Communicator grabs the prop box.

"I have a few things to show you.

Communicator takes out baby shoes/toddler shoes.

"Can you believe these? *(Pointing to a kid)* Can I have one of your shoes for a minute?

Volunteer throws a shoe on stage. Communicator holds them next to each other.

"Can you believe you used to wear this size . . . but now you wear THIS size? Wild, right? Wow, you've grown!

Return shoe. Take onesie out of box.

"Or how about this?!

Communicator has a volunteer stand up and holds onesie up to them, showing it clearly wouldn't fit.

"Look at the shirt you have on now! You went from this *(onesie)* to THIS! Wow how you've grown!

Communicator takes doll out of the box.

"Do you remember being this tall? Probably not. That was quite a while ago. Check this out . . .

Communicator has a volunteer stand up and stands the doll up next to the volunteer.

"You're a giant! Look how you've grown!

Communicator takes toy (phone/game) from box.

"One more. Check this out. Back in the day, this was the best. But let's be honest . . . THIS *(toy)* has turned into THIS!

Communicator takes out their own phone or a video game system (Switch, etc.)

"We've grown a little bit in our tastes for technology too, right?"



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PRELUDE SOCIAL **STORY** WORSHIP GROUPS HOME

25 MINUTES

TENSION

COMMUNICATOR: "We grow up. We can't help it. It's literally what humans, animals, and plants do. They grow! We all grow in ways we can see . . . and those are pretty obvious at times.

"Plants go from seeds to sprouts to stems and leaves and flowers, fruits, or vegetables.

"Animals go from kittens, puppies, and joeys, to cats, dogs, and kangaroos.

"And, of course, people grow from babies to toddlers to kids to teens to adults. (*Hold up the baby shoes and the onesie.*)

"But what about growing in the areas you can't see? Not like molecules and atoms. Other things like understanding? Or patience? Empathy or compassion? Or, like we've been talking about all month . . . can you GROW in wisdom? And you might be wondering, even if you *can* grow in wisdom, how does a person do that?

"Good question! And good questions deserve good answers. And often the best place to start when it comes to finding answers like that is the Bible. God inspired all sorts of wise people to write down what they learned about God so people like us could learn from those experiences, too. Let's head to the Bible now."

TRUTH

COMMUNICATOR: "Today we head to the New Testament to discover more about something written in the book of Romans. Actually, the book of Romans is more like a letter than a book. Does anyone know who wrote Romans? (*wait for responses*) Yes! Paul.

"Paul was a follower of Jesus, but he also was a traveling missionary who started many churches. He wasn't always able to be at those churches, so he would often write letters to them, encouraging them, challenging them, and even correcting them. Paul had not yet been to Rome, but he wanted to go, and he knew there was a church there and wanted to encourage the Jesus-followers there. So, he wrote them a letter, just like he often did to churches he had started.

"Paul taught a lot in the letters he wrote. He had learned the Jewish law from a highly skilled teacher named Gamaliel. He also learned about Jesus from other church leaders who had also taught him soon after he became a follower of Jesus. These letters were chock full of wisdom.

"And the letter to the Romans was no different. The letter or book of Romans was written to Christians who were living in Rome . . . Romans. Get it? Check this out.

Open the Bible to Romans 12:2 (NirV) and read.

Don't live the way this world lives. Let your way of thinking be completely changed. Then you will be able to test what God wants for you. And you will agree that what he wants is right. His plan is good and pleasing and perfect.

"Alright, let's break this down a bit and see what's happening here.

Communicator takes out box #1, displaying the partial verse and the roots of the tree.

(*Reading the box*) "'Don't live the way this world lives.' The world we live in has a lot of messages every day about what life is about or what is truly important. We can watch shows, listen to music, hang out on YouTube, or even just try and



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25 MINUTES

get past the zillion commercials we see every day . . . it's a constant stream of messages about life. Some of them are good and totally fine. Some are . . . kind of neutral. And honestly some can be pretty harmful. Like I said . . . we hear LOTS of messages throughout the day!

"But God has messages, too. You are deeply loved, no matter what. You were created on purpose and for a purpose. You were made to love God and love others. You will never find lasting joy chasing after temporary stuff. Those are the messages we need in our lives.

"So . . . (Pointing to the box) 'Don't live the way the world lives.'

Communicator takes out box #2, stacks it on top of box #1, displaying the verse and adding to the tree image.

"Say this with me . . . (reading) 'Let your way of thinking be completely changed.'

"You know, in this part of the verse, we have to acknowledge something. We need God's help because we don't always think the right and wise way. We may always think we get it right, but the truth is we don't. We need God's help through the Holy Spirit to have a mind like God's.

"God can help you completely change the way you think. I don't mean that you no longer have to study for a math test or anything. What I mean is eventually you start to think more like Jesus.

"A great place to start is simply asking God to help you focus on what God would want you to focus on . . . to help you think about what is good, what is true, and what is wise. You can memorize verses from the Bible, which is a source of true wisdom in this world. When we memorize verses from the Bible, the crazy thing is that God can start to bring these verses and stories to mind when we need them most. God's Holy Spirit lives inside of us, and He loves to do just that!

"You can also focus on the right things. Like we said before, there are a LOT of messages. There are a lot of stories and distractions competing for our minds. Choose stories, shows, music, and activities that point you to what is wise and beautiful in this world. Celebrate things that are true when you see them!

"You can also talk to trusted people like family members, as well as other grownups like Small Group Leaders, teachers, and coaches, or friends who follow Jesus. They can help you face what you're going through with wisdom and see how it fits into the story God is telling with your life.

(Repeats) "'Let your way of thinking be completely changed.' Alright friends, let's look at the last part of the verse.

Communicator takes out box #3, stacks it on top of box #2, displaying the verse and completing the tree image.

"Say this last part with me . . . (Reading) 'Then you will be able to test what God wants for you. And you will agree that what he wants is right. His plan is good and pleasing and perfect.'

"The more we practice asking God for wisdom and letting God's Holy Spirit change and shape our minds, the more we'll be able to see what it is that God has planned for us . . . and we will actually agree that this plan is the right plan! Why? Because our minds are changing! God's plan is (reading) 'good and pleasing and perfect!'



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

25 MINUTES

"I think Paul knew that as soon as your mind changes, everything else starts to change too. When you go through tough situations and there are all sorts of competing messages, you'll have a mind that can make wise choices or know the right place to look. And when you see God's plan, it will begin to look more and more good and pleasing and perfect."

APPLICATION

COMMUNICATOR: "Now, notice as this verse grew, what else grew?"

Allow for responses.

"That's right! If you think about a tree and the way it starts, it begins as a seed. But over time, that seed grows roots, pushes through the earth, and develops branches, leaves, maybe flower buds . . . it completely transforms!

"So it is with our mind. Jesus wants to completely transform our minds! When you have a thought, ask yourself if it is true. Ask if it is good and right. Spend time feeding your brain with good things so that it can also transform your thinking. Memorize verses from the Bible . . . listen to good and beautiful stories and shows and music. When your thinking becomes anxious or overwhelmed, don't ignore that! Transform it by asking God for wisdom. Or go to a wise and trusted adult who can point you to what's true. Over time, your thinking will be like this tree (*pointing to boxes*) . . . completely transformed!"

LANDING

COMMUNICATOR: "As you go to small groups today, think about this:

SLIDE: KEY QUESTION

"How are you wiser than you used to be? How has your thinking grown? Can you see yourself growing in wisdom? Before you go to groups, let's pray and ask God to help us continue to transform our thinking, like this tree has grown and transformed into something beautiful."

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