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Age Group: Upper Elementary

[SMALL GROUP LEADER'S GUIDE]

Peer Pressure/Choosing Wisely

Upper Elementary

[BIBLE SOURCE ICON] Luke 22:54-62

[GOD AT WORK ICON] We love God by making right choices

[KEY VERSE ICON] "You are my friends if you do what I command." – John
15:14

[OPENING BOX] Allow 5 minutes

- Welcome each child, and ask kids how they did with last week's Daily Challenges.

- Ask what kids remember about today's large-group lesson.
- Let kids share important news or prayer requests, and pray with them.
- Partner Up

Say: **Peter was one of Jesus' closest friends and followers, and yet today's story doesn't show that very well. Talk with a partner about what you remember from the story today.** Give kids a few minutes to talk.

[END OPENING BOX]

[MAIN ACTIVITY BOX] Allow 10 minutes

CHOOSE YOUR CORNER!

YOU'LL NEED • Two signs (or balloons) to indicate the blue corner and the red corner • The list of choices to read aloud

1. INTRODUCE GAME

Say: [GOD AT WORK ICON] **We love God by making right choices.**

Let's play a game to help us understand the importance of choices we make.

You're going to listen to the following pairs of actions. You must choose one of the two options and begin acting them out as you quickly move toward its designated corner.

2. DIRECTIONS

Place the blue sign or balloon in one corner of the room. Place the red sign or balloon in the other side. Have the kids all stand together in a huddle between the two.

Read a pair of options and the children will choose by acting out (physically and verbally) their choice and moving to the corner that goes with their choice. You may need to be repeating which corner goes with which choice as they are acting. Then have them reassemble in the center to prepare for the next choice. [HINT: Allow them to verbally try exert a little peer pressure if they feel strongly about their choice!] Here is the suggested list:

- Eat ice cream OR eat pizza?
- Listen to music OR watch TV?

- Walk the dog in the rain OR take out the trash in the rain?
- Do your homework OR practice a musical instrument?
- Talk to friends on the phone OR play video games?
- It's cold and windy. Would you choose to rake leaves OR vacuum the

house?

- Tell a lie to get out of trouble OR tell the truth and get in trouble?

• Stay and listen to rude jokes your friends are telling OR walk away, knowing they will make fun of you?

• Keep the unmarked envelope you find in the bank parking lot with \$100 in it and not tell anyone OR take it to the cashier and ask if anyone has reported losing an envelope with money and leaving your phone number to be contacted?

[ART: ILLUSTRATE A CHILD CONFUSED CHOOSING WHETHER TO GO LEFT OR RIGHT.]

3. DISCUSS

- **What did you learn about others by watching their choices?**
- **What effect did other people have on your decision-making?**
- **Why do some decisions seem more important than others?**
- **What are some choices we make that tell others what we think**

about God?

[MAKE THE CONNECTION]

Say: **Peter loved Jesus, he followed him, believed him, and he even trusted him enough to walk on water (for a little while...). But on the night Jesus was betrayed, Peter was more afraid about what others thought of**

him than about showing his love for Jesus. We need to make choices that reflect our love for God. [GOD AT WORK ICON] We love God by making right choices.

[END MAKE THE CONNECTION BOX]

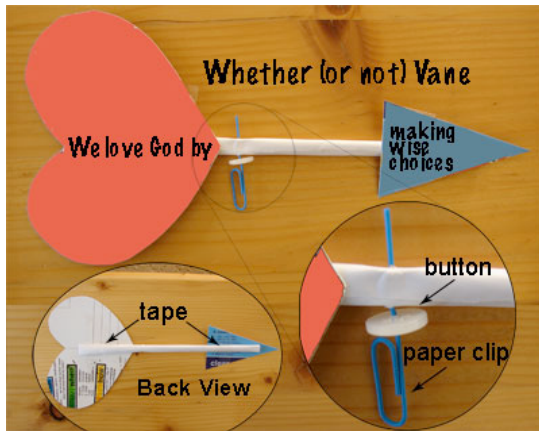
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[MEMORY MAKER BOX]

Memory Maker: THE “WHETHER” VANE

Allow 10 minutes

[ART: PLEASE ILLUSTRATE THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE WHETHER VANE AS SHOWN IN THIS PHOTO MONTAGE BELOW with “Making Right Choices” not “wise” choices as written in the photo.]



YOU'LL NEED • Drinking straws • index cards • scissors • markers • tape • buttons • paperclips • a darning needle

1. DESCRIPTION

Give each child a Bible Memory Maker Cube. We're going to help the children create a sort of wind vane that points us toward the right direction, guided by love for God, mounted on the Memory Maker.

2. DIRECTIONS

1. Cut out the heart shape from an index card and write "We love God by" on one side.
2. Cut out an arrowhead shape to be about the size of a business card and write "making right choices" on one side.

3. Turn the written sides down and attach the two shapes to a drinking straw with tape to form an arrow.
4. Have the leader help poke a hole all the way through the straw near to where the heart is attached. (HINT: A darning needle is perfect for the job.)
5. Then carefully unfold part of the paperclip to stick up, forming a sort of "spike".
6. Place the paperclip through the button and then through the poked holes in the straw.
7. Clip the larger part of the paperclip in the Memory Maker to act as the base for the "Whether" Vane.

3. DISCUSS

- Blow on the "Whether" Vane and it should point at you. How does the arrow know how to point in the right direction?
- What helps you make right choices?

4. COLLECT

Keep the Memory Maker and "Whether" Vanes for next week.

[MAKE THE CONNECTION]

Say: **When we love God, we learn to trust his commands even when others don't. And just like the wind gives power for the "Whether" Vane to point in the right direction, our relationship with God helps us make right choices. The Key Verse on our Memory Maker is from John 15:14. Let's practice saying this verse together: [KEY VERSE ICON] "You are my friends if you do what I command." – John 15:14**

[END MAKE THE CONNECTION BOX]

[END MEMORY MAKER BOX]

[INSIDE OUT EVERY DAY BOX]

Inside Out Every Day!

1. DISTRIBUTE

Pass out a copy of today's "Inside Out Every Day" handout to each child.

Say: This paper has some ideas for how you can live inside out this week.

Let's choose our Daily Challenges.

2. DAILY CHALLENGES

Ask volunteers to read the Daily Challenges aloud. Have them circle the ones they will do this week.

3. MAKE THE CONNECTION

Say: This week we can trust God to guide us in making choices that reflect our love for him. During this week, remember that [GOD AT WORK ICON] We love God by making right choices.

4. PRAY

Say: **We want to show you our love and gratitude, dear God, by making right choices that honor you. Work in our hearts, Lord Jesus. Amen.**

[PLEASE INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING AT THE BOTTOM OF EACH PAGE]

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[INSIDE OUT EVERY DAY! HANDOUT]

Inside Out Every Day!

[BIBLE SOURCE ICON] Luke 22:54-62

[GOD AT WORK ICON] We love God by making right choices

[KEY VERSE ICON] "You are my friends if you do what I command." – John
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The Inside Truth

Peter's experience of denying friendship with Jesus reminds us just how important it is for us to love God by making right choices.

Do You Remember?

- Why do you think Peter denied he was a friend of Jesus?
- How does loving God help us remember to make right choices?
- What choices do you need to make to show your love for God?

[DAILY CHALLENGE BOX]

Choose a Challenge!

Challenge 1

Think of a chore around the house that usually falls to someone else (like gathering the laundry, unloading the dishwasher, etc.). Choose to do it secretly before the others find out. Jesus says that when we're serving others, we're serving him, too. Read Matthew 25:34-40.

[ART: CHILD CARRYING THE LAUNDRY BASKET]

Challenge 2

Are there poor choices you make at school that might keep someone from knowing you are a friend of God? Talk about it with someone you trust, and ask them to pray for you to choose to do the right thing all week long. Read Psalm 139:23-24.

[ART: CHILD PRAYING]

Challenge 3

Make God a "gift" card. On the outside put "Just for you, God!", and on the inside write down a decision you need to make that will reflect your love for him. Decorate it and put it on the fridge.

[ART: FRIDGE WITH "JUST FOR YOU, GOD!" CARD ON IT]

[END DAILY CHALLENGE BOX]

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[BEGIN PAGE 2]

Living Inside Out at Home

ACTIVITY 1- Delicious Detective Work

You'll need

- Numbered clues on sticky notes
- chocolates or cookies to share

1. DIRECTIONS: Write clues on sticky notes beginning with clue number one on the inside of the front door. As the family goes hunting the clues in sequence, they will go around the house until they end up finding the goodies and share them together. Here is the list.

1) I could find this clue in my sleep. (On your bed pillow)

2) Someone who looks just like you has the next clue. (Bathroom mirror)

3) You can see the world from where the next clue is hiding. (On the television screen.)

4) A newsworthy clue is hard to miss. (On the pile of newspapers and magazines)

5) This has to be the coolest clue of all. (On the refrigerator door)

6) This next clue is tied to a leg without a foot.

7) Turn up your brainwaves to cook up this very last clue. (The treasure is hidden inside the microwave.)

2. CELEBRATE: Enjoy the goodies as a group while sharing favorite "clues" (Bible verses or principles) that help you make right choices.

[ART: THE LIST WITH CLUES AT THE TOP]

ACTIVITY 2-KING OF HEARTS

You'll need

- A basic deck of 52 playing cards

1. DIRECTIONS: Here are the rules of the game:

1) Every person around the table gets five cards. The rest of the deck is turned face down to make a pile in the middle of the table.

2) A player starts his/her turn by saying the God at Work phrase— "We love God by making right choices".

3) Then, looking at the five cards in his/her hand, look for a heart card. If the player has a heart card, he/she must share an example no one else has shared of a right (wise) decision made by someone at the table. Then the player can "bank" the heart (lay it face up on the table beside him/her) for one point. (The example can be as small a choice as taking care of our bodies by remembering to brush our teeth!) Only one card can be banked per turn.

4) At the end of each turn, any banked cards must be replaced by drawing a new card from the pile so that each player always has 5 cards. Once this is done, the next person plays.

5) If the turn comes to someone without any hearts, all cards must be discarded five new cards must be drawn. If this happens, the player must wait until their next turn comes to lay down any eventual hearts drawn.

6) Play ends when all the hearts are played or all the cards in the deck have been drawn. The one with the most hearts laid down becomes the King or Queen of Hearts.

2. DISCUSS: Ask if there are choices coming up that need prayer. End by praying for wise decisions that reflect our love for God.

[ART: THE KING OF HEARTS PLAYING CARD.]

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