

Teacher Introduction

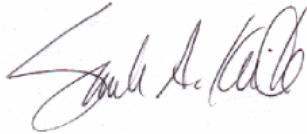
There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one. Romans 3:11-12

No one apart from Jesus Christ can love God or choose God's way for their lives. Only when we belong to Jesus do we have the freedom to choose God's path for our lives. He provides the supernatural power to ultimately choose good over evil or righteous living over selfish living. The fact of the matter is our choices reveal our hearts, our character and whom we serve.

This series is intended to teach the children in your ministry the importance of being "in Christ", so they will choose God's path for their lives and not their own. And in choosing God's path, they will be able to say with confidence, "As for me, I will serve God", thereby avoiding many of sin's pitfalls and eventual judgment of living lives apart from Jesus Christ.

Each lesson in this series is accompanied with a craft, game, memory verse and song-time suggestions (below). If you use both the craft and game for each session, it will take six, two hour sessions to complete this series. However, if you split each lesson into two sessions (recommended), whereby you present the lesson, memory verse, craft and songs in the first session and the game with lesson review, memory recitation and songs in the next session, it will take twelve, one hour sessions to complete this series. At the back of the book you will find the patterns to accompany the lessons.

God bless you in your ministry to children!



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SundaySchoolNetwork.com

Choose This Day Whom You Will Serve

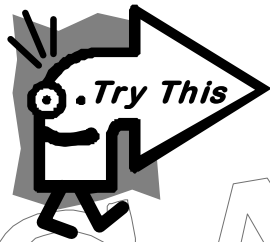
Song Time Suggestions

Hymns: "Take My Life and Let It Be", "Living For Jesus A Life That Is True", "Come All Christians Be Committed" and "Let the Words of My Mouth".

Contemporary Songs: "You've Got to Choose", "Make A Choice", "Me and My House", "Change My Heart", "The Old Nature", "Be Born Again", and "Kind Like You".

Bonus Offer: You can order any of the contemporary songs at a 50% off discount by going to...

Class Introduction



Enrichment Idea

Ask a few volunteers to come forward. Hide a piece of candy in one hand. Have one of the volunteers attempt to choose which hand has the treat. Make a big display of the choice and if the child chose well or not. If he or she misses, go to the next volunteer, but hide your hands and switch or pretend to switch hands first. Continue allowing kids to choose for a few more tries.

Everyday we are faced with many choices. (Have the children think about and discuss the choices they made throughout their day. You might prompt them by asking: What did you choose to eat? To wear? Did you choose to obey your teachers and parents today or not? Did you choose to be kind or not to someone?)

Many of our choices have little to no eternal consequences. (Discuss the meaning of consequences. Consequence means the outcome, effect or result of our actions on us or towards others.)

What we chose to eat or wear today will have no consequence for eternity, but there are choices that we make everyday that do matter for eternity. In fact, many times we might not even be aware of how important some of our choices can be.

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Our choices reveal the kind of person we are. For example, people who always want the biggest slice of pizza. What might that say about them? (Maybe they're greedy – or just hungry all the time.) What if people always want to be first in line? What might that say about them? (They're not considerate of others.) What does it say about people who want to share what they have? (They're generous, kind.) You see, the choices we make *are* important! They reveal what kind of people we are. They show whom we follow: God or ourselves.

Over the next several weeks we will learn about some of the people in the Bible who made good and bad choices. And hopefully we will learn how to make the best choices for our lives so we can better serve our Heavenly Father.

Series Memory Verse

“...choose...this day whom you will serve...” Joshua 24:15.

(Hand out Memory Verse Tracker Name Tags and explain them.)

(At the back of the book, you will find the Memory Verse patterns and a take home paper for the parents.)

Memorization Tip: Make up hand motions for some of the words or use traditional sign language. There are two sign language resources for your use listed in the links section at: SundaySchoolNetwork.com.

Choose This Day Whom You Will Serve



Lesson 1 - The Choice: Jesus

Song Time (Select a few songs from the Class Introduction or one of your own choosing.)



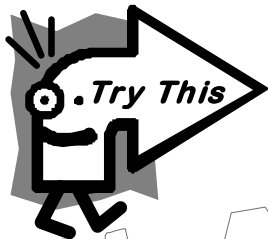
Overview

- Jesus chose to come to earth to seek and to save those who are lost.
- There are two pathways in life, the narrow, less traveled way that leads to life. And the wide pathway that leads to death.
- Choose the Narrow Way. Choose Jesus.

The most wonderful choice I can tell you about is that God chose to come to earth, as a human being. He came for one purpose: to seek and to save those who are lost (Luke 19:10).

Have you ever been lost? (You might tell of a personal experience or allow a few children to share a story of their own.) What do you think it means when the Bible says that Jesus came to seek and save the lost?

Jesus once told a story of a sheep that was lost. Read Luke 15:3-7 from a child-friendly Bible or act out the following skit.



Enrichment Idea: The Lost Sheep Skit

Choose one child to be the shepherd. Tell the rest of the children they are the sheep (and later in the skit, the friends). Have the shepherd close his or her eyes and then you choose another child in the group to be the lost sheep. As you narrate the story you will give instruction (*italicized parenthesis*) to the shepherd. When it's time to find the lost sheep, the shepherd must guess who you've chosen

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as the lost sheep. Once the shepherd “finds” the lost sheep, you continue with the story. You might dress the shepherd in a vest and have him or her hold a staff.

Narrator: “Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Does he not leave the ninety-nine in the pasture and go after the lost sheep until he finds it?”

(Shepherd, go find your lost sheep.)

And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home.

(Take your sheep with you, Shepherd, and go home.)

Then he would call his friends and neighbors and say, “Come celebrate with me; I have found my lost sheep.”

(Shepherd, go tell your friends that you’ve found your lost sheep!)

I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.”

The End.

(Shepherd and Cast take a bow.)

What do you think Jesus wants us to understand from this story of the lost sheep? (Receive answers.) People who do not know Jesus are like lost sheep that need to be found by Jesus. Jesus loves and cares for every single person. He is looking for his children and wants them to come to him.

What do you think it means to repent? (To repent means to turn from your sin and turn to God. Jesus wants us to understand that when a lost person repents, turns from his or her sin and turns to God, that there is celebrating in heaven as a result of his or her choice!)

Sadly, not all people will choose to repent and turn to God. In fact, Jesus tells us that living lives apart from God is like traveling along a big, wide road that leads to death. Many lost people travel this road and will stay lost for all eternity, but the road to living with God is a less traveled or narrow road as Jesus calls it, and only a few people will find it (Matthew 7:14).

How do you suppose you can find that narrow, less traveled road?

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Jesus chose to come to earth to save those who are lost. The fact of the matter is, everyone is lost apart from Jesus. But the Bible says, "...everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life..." John 6:40

Discuss what it means to look to the Son. (Believe and trust in, depend on, rely upon.)

Jesus chose to come to earth to find his "lost sheep", his lost children. God wants you to choose to follow Jesus. What choice will you make? Will you follow people who don't love Jesus or will you follow Jesus? Will you choose the less traveled, narrow road that leads to life with God or the wide road that most people travel that leads to death? The Bible says, *choose this day whom you will serve!*

If you think Jesus is calling you to go the less traveled road, the narrow road, then you can choose to obey him by repenting from your sin (turning from your sin) and asking him to save you. Don't put it off. The Bible says that today is the day of salvation. We don't know what tomorrow has in store.

Memory Verse: "...small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it." Matthew 7:14

Make It N' Take It Home:

Cut apart Memory Verse Bracelets (theme verse and lesson one). Secure to wrist using a sticker or tape.

Pray: "Dear Jesus, Thank you for choosing to come to earth to find me. Help me to travel along the narrow road that leads to you. Help me to choose your ways and to look to you today, tomorrow and for the rest of my life. Amen."

Craft: Narrow Way Marble Play

(Pattern with directions is listed at the back of the book in the patterns section.)
You can copy pattern onto colored card stock or white card stock for kids to color.

Craft: Obey Today Daily Spinner

(Pattern with directions to make it are listed at the back of the book.)

Children use the spinner at home by turning the arrow to the appropriate day and reading the task for that day. This craft idea is intended to get kids thinking about ways to choose to obey God on a daily basis.