

Small Group Leader Guide



THIS MONTH



Today's Suggested Schedule

Prelude: Setting the tone for the experience

See the Getting Ready pages at the end of this document for a detailed description of what you'll need for today. In the Prelude folder of your curriculum, you'll find a variety of other resources to help you prepare.

Small Group (15 minutes)

Social: Providing time for fun interaction

1. Opening Activity

Large Group (35 minutes)

Worship: Inviting people to respond to God

Story: Communicating God's truth in engaging ways

- Opener
- Worship
- Bible Story (sections about God's Big Story are listed as optional)
- Prayer

Small Group (25 minutes)

Groups: Creating a safe place to connect

1. More Than Meets the Eye
2. Filter Your Choices
3. The Great Gift of Wisdom!
4. Pray and Dismiss

Home: Prompting action beyond the experience

- Devotionals for Kids
- Parent Cue Card (print or email)
- [Parent Cue App](#) and [ParentCue.org](#)

✦ Need activities for a K-5th group? Check out the 2nd-3rd grade guide.

Today's Bible Story

Samuel Anoints David

1 Samuel 16:1-13

Bottom Line

God can help you make the wise choice.

Memory Verse

"It is much better to get wisdom than gold. It is much better to choose understanding than silver."

Proverbs 16:16 NIV



Inclusive Pro Tips

This leader guide is designed to be inclusive of children with a disability who attend a group with their peers. See highlighted sections below for additional inclusive pro-tips. Check out the Special Needs Resource Kit for more ideas for adapting each segment.

SOCIAL

Opening Activity



What You Need

- ☐ Offering container
- ☐ Pencils
- ☐ Piece of plain paper
- ☐ Magnetic tiles or wooden blocks



Inclusive Pro Tips

If the group is really enjoying building, it's okay to keep that going longer and skip the fun facts, or do it briefly.

① What You Do

Pray for your group before they arrive → Pray for kids who will visit your group for the first time. Thank God for choosing David to be king and for wanting to be close friends with each kid who walks into your room today. Ask God to help them know that He sees them, loves them, and is ready to help them make wise choices. Ask God to help them hear His voice. Ask God to help them trust Him, even when they don't feel big or strong or ready!

1. Welcome kids by name as they arrive with a high five, fist bump, or a wave.
2. Encourage any kids who brought an offering to place it in the offering container.
3. As kids arrive, invite them to share a fun fact about themselves with you.
4. Write the fun fact down on a plain piece of paper.

Play Together

1. Invite the kids to build a roller coaster using magnetic tiles or blocks.
2. Encourage teamwork as they build and ask guiding questions about why they chose to build in that way.
3. Once everyone's had a chance to build and you've got your fun facts ready, gather the kids in a circle.

Talk Together

1. Read each fun fact out loud and let kids guess whose it is.

② What You Say

"Wow! You all made some incredible roller coasters and learned some fun things about each other! Trying to figure out how to build your coaster, and who the fun fact was about took some curiosity.

"Today in our true story from the Bible, we're going to discover someone who made a wise choice that might surprise you. Samuel was looking for the next king, and God helped him see something special that means a lot to God. Let's go find out how God helped Samuel make the wise choice!"

Transition → Lead your group to the Large Group area.

GROUPS 1/4

More Than Meets the Eye



Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- Ten prepared gift bags with cards from the "Story Gifts" Activity Page inside



Inclusive Pro Tips

Allow the kids to open the gift bags or boxes in pairs to reduce pressure.

① What You Do

1. Divide the kids into two teams.
→ NOTE: You can play as one big group if your group is smaller.
2. Set the gift bags in front of you.

Imagine Together:

1. Say, "These gift bags all look different. But guess what? Just like in our true story from the Bible today, what's outside doesn't always show what's inside! Inside one of these bags is a card with a king's crown on it. Choosing David to be king was the wise choice that God led Samuel to. The card with the crown on it is the 'Wise Choice' card! The rest of the cards have questions from today's Bible Story. If your team finds the card with the king's crown on it—the Wise Choice card—your team wins!"
2. Let the teams take turns picking one bag to open.
3. If their bag has a Bible story question inside, instruct them to answer it together.
4. The team that finds the "Wise Choice" card wins!
5. Even if a team finds the "Wise Choice" card early, let the kids open the rest of the bags so everyone gets to answer questions and review the story.
6. Use the numbers on the cards to review answers to the Bible Story.

Answer Key:

1. What kind of person did God's people want as their king instead of trusting God? (*They wanted a king like the other nations—someone tall, strong, and impressive.*)
2. How did what Samuel was looking for in a king change when he went to Jesse's house? (*At first, Samuel looked for someone who looked strong and impressive on the outside, but God reminded him that God sees a person's heart, and that's what matters.*)
3. What did God say to Samuel about how He sees people? (*God said: "People look at the outside of a person, but the LORD looks at what is in the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7 NIV).*)
4. Why was David's heart something that God liked and valued? (*David loved God very much.*)
5. Why was David considered an unlikely choice to be king? (*David was the youngest son and just a shepherd. People didn't think he was important.*)
6. What special sign did Samuel use to show that David was chosen by God? (*Samuel anointed David with oil.*)
7. What challenge did David face after being chosen as king? (*David faced Goliath, an enemy soldier who was a giant.*)
8. How did David show he trusted God when he faced Goliath? (*David turned down using King Saul's armor, he told Goliath that God was stronger than all of Goliath's weapons.*)
9. How did David defeat Goliath? (*David trusted God and that made him brave! He slung one stone from his slingshot and killed Goliath!*)

Continued on the next page. →

GROUPS 1/4

More Than Meets the Eye



Bible Story Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Ten prepared gift bags with cards from the "Story Gifts" Activity Page inside



Inclusive Pro Tips

Allow the kids to open the gift bags or boxes in pairs to reduce pressure.

② What You Say

"You did it! This game reminds me of what God told Samuel. Samuel 'thought' he knew who the next king should be just by looking at all of David's brothers, but God said: 'People look at the outside of a person. But the LORD looks at what's in the heart' (**1 SAMUEL 16:7 NIRV**). God chose David not because he looked like a king, but because of what was in his heart. David loved God and God valued that. And the same is true for us, friends! More than anything, God values that you love Him. God wants to be your close friend!

"Samuel didn't know how to choose the next king, but God spoke right to him and helped him make the right choice! Samuel listened and God helped him make the wise choice. And God loves to help us make the right choice too!

"When you choose to follow Jesus, God sends the Holy Spirit to live with you and help you make wise choices. So, you never have to figure life out on your own! The Holy Spirit is like a helper, a guide, a forever friend. He will guide you to make the wise choice, just like God did with Samuel!

"You might not always have the right answer, BUT you can stop and pray, 'God, what should I do?' The Holy Spirit will help you! And you can always talk to a trusted adult who follows Jesus.

"That's what wisdom is. It's not about being smart. It's about listening to God, knowing what God says is best, and doing it! Remember, God can help you make the wise choice!

GROUPS 2/4

Filter Your Choices



Application Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ "Filter Your Choices" Activity Page
- ☐ Clear, plastic cups
- ☐ Small water bottles
- ☐ Dried black beans
- ☐ Small strainer

Inclusive Pro Tips



Some kids might not enjoy the texture of the beans, and that's okay! Offer to gently drop the beans into the cup for them.

① What You Do

1. Invite the kids to join you in a seated circle.
2. Fill one clear cup about a third of the way with water.
3. Place the other empty cup and the strainer nearby.
4. Stack the scenario cards face down in a pile in the middle of the circle.

Explore Together:

1. One by one, encourage the kids to pick a card from the "Filter Your Choices" Activity Page and read it aloud.
→ NOTE: Don't ask for wise answers to the scenarios just yet!
2. After reading their card, give each kid a black bean, and invite them to drop it into the water cup.
3. As more beans are added, say, "Wow, look how hard it is to see through the water now! When we try to make choices without God, without asking Him and seeking His guidance, things can get confusing and messy."
4. Use the small strainer to pour the water from the cup into the clean cup.
5. Say, "When we filter our choices through God by praying and asking God for help, by reading the Bible, and by listening to the Holy Spirit, God helps us see clearly and make the wise choice!"
6. Encourage each kid to re-read their scenario.
7. Ask: What wise choice do you think God would help you make in this scenario?
8. Help guide the kids' answers as needed.
9. Set the cards aside for Pray and Dismiss.

Continued on the next page. →

GROUPS 2/4

Filter Your Choices



Application Review

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ "Filter Your Choices" Activity Page
- ☐ Clear, plastic cups
- ☐ Small water bottles
- ☐ Dried black beans
- ☐ Small strainer



Inclusive Pro Tips

Some kids might not enjoy the texture of the beans, and that's okay! Offer to gently drop the beans into the cup for them.

② What You Say

"I love that God showed you all wise ways to respond in these scenarios! Can I tell you something important? We won't always want to make the wise choice. Some days, it might feel easier to say something mean back. Or not apologize when we know we should. Or to hide the truth so we don't get in trouble. But do you think any of those things reflect who God is? **(INVITE RESPONSES.)** Not at all! God is kind, God is loving, God is honest, and God is good.

"That's why we need help—to try to show who God is and what He is like as we go throughout our lives. And that's exactly why God gave us the Holy Spirit. When we choose to follow Jesus, God gives you a forever helper, the Holy Spirit, who goes with you every step of your life, and He helps guide you. He reminds you of what would show God's goodness and love, when your heart feels like doing something else.

"So the next time you feel stuck, frustrated, or unsure: **PAUSE!** Take a deep breath and ask God to help you. How else can we seek godly wisdom? **(INVITE RESPONSES, LIKE: TALK TO A TRUSTED ADULT WHO FOLLOWS JESUS, READ THE BIBLE, WHICH IS GOD'S WORD, ETC.)**

"We need God's help just like Samuel did! Remember, God can help you see clearly and make wise choices. God can help you when you don't know what to do. And God can help you do the right thing when no one else is watching. God can help you make the wise choice!"

GROUPS 3/4

The Great Gift of Wisdom



Memory Verse Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Half-sheets of construction paper
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Floor tape
- ☐ Ten gift bags (from "More Than Meets the Eye" Activity, Bible Story Review Activity)
 - Optional: Timer

Inclusive Pro Tips



Make room for everyone by adjusting to the mobility needs of your group. You can invite teams to work together to put the cards in order while seated.

① What You Do

1. Divide the group into two teams.
2. Give each team two Bibles.
3. Direct each team to find Proverbs 16:16 using the Bible Navigation Tips below.
4. Review any words that might be unfamiliar to the kids.
5. Repeat the verse together several times.

Create Together:

1. Select several kids to help you write and break up the words from the Memory Verse, Proverbs 16:16, on ten half-sheets of paper.
 - For example, for the NIV: It is | much better | to get | wisdom | than gold. | It is much better | to choose | understanding | than silver. | Proverbs 16:16 (NIV)
 - Or for the NIV: How much | better | to get | wisdom | than gold, | to get insight | rather | than | silver | Proverbs 16:16 (NIV)
 - Place one sheet in each gift bag. (Fold the half-piece of paper as needed.)

Move Together:

1. Mark a starting line with floor tape in your group space.
1. Pick a team to go first and encourage them to line up behind the starting line.
1. Set the gift bags on the opposite end of your group space.
1. Say, "One by one, each kid on your team will run, grab one gift bag, bring it back, pull out the piece of paper in the gift bag with part of the verse on it, and start putting the verse together in order!"
1. Place one half-sheet back in each gift bag after the first team has constructed the verse and before you switch teams.
1. After each team finishes, celebrate them for working together!
 - Optional: Use a timer to see which team builds their verse the fastest!

Continued on the next page. →

*Finding verses with 2nd-3rd graders

- ① Guide them to open their Bibles to the front and find the table of contents. **(HOLD UP A BIBLE OPENED TO THE TABLE OF CONTENTS TO SHOW THE KIDS WHAT THE PAGE LOOKS LIKE.)**
- ② When the kids find the table of contents, lead them to find the name of the book in the list.
- ③ When they find the book, lead them to look at the page number beside it. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find that book. Help the kids find the page.
- ④ When they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find the correct chapter.
- ⑤ Then explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find the correct verse in that chapter.

GROUPS 3/4

The Great Gift of Wisdom



Memory Verse Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Half-sheets of construction paper
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Floor tape
- ☐ Ten gift bags (from “More Than Meets the Eye” Activity, Bible Story Review Activity)
 - Optional: Timer

Inclusive Pro Tips



Make room for everyone by adjusting to the mobility needs of your group. You can invite teams to work together to put the cards in order while seated.

② What You Say

“One of my favorite things about going to an amusement park is the souvenir shop. Does anyone else love gifts? **(INVITE RESPONSES.)** Our verse from the Bible, God’s Word, tells us that God gives us a gift that’s even better than the coolest souvenir from a theme park. It’s wisdom—the most precious gift of all! It’s more precious than gold or silver! God is the source of wisdom, and He promises He’ll give it to us when we ask for it!

“God wants to help us navigate the twists and turns of life! He is just that loving and amazing. Remember, one of the ways we can find wisdom is by learning and knowing God’s Word. Through Scripture, the Bible, **[BOTTOM LINE]** God can help you make the wise choice. So, I want to challenge you to keep reviewing this verse all week long!”

GROUPS 4/4

Pray and Dismiss

Prayer Activity

Faith Skills

Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

What You Need

- ☐ "Filter Your Choices" Activity Page cards from Application Activity
- ☐ Coloring supplies



① What You Do

1. Invite the kids to sit in a circle.
2. Give every kid a card from the "Filter Your Choices" Activity Page.
3. Set the coloring supplies in the center of the circle.
4. Invite the kids to draw a portrait of themselves in the blank square on the back of their card. This is their Wisdomland Fast Pass!

Talk Together:

1. Say, "While you decorate your Wisdomland Fast Pass, I want you to think about this: What's something you need God's wisdom for this week?"
 - *Maybe it's wisdom to speak kindly to your sibling even when they bug you.*
 - *Maybe it's wisdom to tell the truth, even when it's hard.*
 - *Maybe it's wisdom to make the right choice when you're playing outside in your neighborhood.*
2. Remind kids that prayer is a conversation they can have with God anytime, anywhere, about anything.
3. Encourage kids to hang their Wisdomland Fast Pass somewhere at home where they can see it daily as a reminder that God can help you make the wise choice!
4. Close the group in prayer, calling out some of the things kids mentioned they needed wisdom for.

② What You Say

"Dear God, thank You for always being ready to help us. Thank You for giving us the Holy Spirit to guide us. We admit that we don't always want to do the right thing. Sometimes we want to do things our way. But we want to follow You, God. Your way is always better! Remind us this week to pause, pray, and ask for help! You are the source of all wisdom, and we trust that You will help us make wise choices. We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen!"

Transition → As adults arrive to pick up, invite kids to show off their Wisdomland Fast Pass and recite the Memory Verse on it to their grown-up!

Inclusive Pro Tips



As kids think about what they need wisdom for this week, make sure they don't feel the pressure to share! Give them the opportunity to process quietly.

Getting Ready

Social

Welcome the kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Use this time to create space for them to connect with you and with each other by playing age-appropriate games, asking fun questions, and encouraging friendly interactions. This is a great moment to help kids feel seen, known, and ready to experience today's story.

Groups

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

Choose as many of these activities as you like.

Home

- Print on cardstock or email this week's devotionals and Parent Cue cards.
- Tell parents about our additional family resources: **Parent Cue app** and **ParentCue.org**

Social

Opening Activity

- ☐ Offering container
- ☐ Pencil, one for each Small Group
- ☐ Plain paper, one sheet for each Small Group
- ☐ Magnetic tiles or wooden blocks, enough for each Small Group to share

Groups

More Than Meets the Eye

- ☐ Print "Story Gifts" Activity Page on paper and cut apart, one set for each Small Group
- ☐ Different colored small gift bags, ten for each Small Group
- ☐ Tissue paper, ten pieces for each Small Group
- ☐ Before group time:
 - Place one "Story Gifts" Activity Page card into each gift bag.
 - Top the bags off with a piece of tissue paper.

Filter Your Choices

- ☐ Print "Filter Your Choices" Activity Page double-sided on cardstock and cut apart, one for every kid
- ☐ Clear, plastic cups; two for each Small Group
- ☐ Small water bottle, one for each Small Group
- ☐ Dried black beans, one for every kid
- ☐ Small strainer (like this: bit.ly/44Jplq9), one for each Small Group

The Great Gift of Wisdom*

- ☐ Bibles, four for each Small Group
- ☐ Construction paper, five sheets for each Small Group
- ☐ Markers, enough for each Small Group to share
- ☐ Floor tape, one roll for each Small Group
- ☐ Ten gift bags from "More Than Meets the Eye" Activity (Bible Story Review Activity)
 - Optional: Timer
- ☐ Before group time:
 - Cut each piece of construction paper in half to make ten half-sheets

Pray and Dismiss

- ☐ "Filter Your Choices" Activity Page cards from "Filter Your Choices" Activity (Application Activity), one for every kid
- ☐ Coloring supplies, enough for each Small Group to share

*If you don't have time to do all, be sure to do the starred activity.