

Small Group Leader Guide

THIS MONTH



Today's Suggested Schedule

Greeting & Prayer (3 minutes)

The leader greets the children and asks how they are doing. After a brief time of sharing, the group participates in a short prayer activity to prepare their hearts for the lesson.

Small Group Activity (20 minutes)

Groups: Creating a safe place to connect

Activity 1: Courage Stick

Activity 2: Verse in Motion

Pray & Dismiss (2 minutes)

After small group time, the leader closes in prayer. Then the children are dismissed.

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 NIRV

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.



Greeting & Prayer



What You Need

- ☐ A Spinning Wheel
- ☐ Prayer Chart

①

What You Do

Pray for your group before they arrive -> Pray for kids who will visit your group for the first time. Recall a time when God gave you the courage to do something you didn't think you were ready for. Thank God for sending the Holy Spirit to live inside of you and help you take the next step! Ask God to help the kids trust Him when they feel nervous or unsure. Whether it's a big change or something small, pray that kids would know God is with them even when they don't feel ready.

- Choose a child to spin the wheel.
- Each color matches a prayer prompt on the chart.
- After spinning, the child finds the matching prompt, reads it, and prays.
- Let a few more children take turns spinning the wheel and praying.

②

What You Say

"Prayer is how we talk with God, our loving Father. The Bible tells us to pray without ceasing—talking to Him anytime, anywhere. Whatever you do, begin with prayer. When you do, you can trust that God is in control and working in every situation."

Transition -> Lead your group to the small group activity

ACTIVITY ONE

More Than Meets the Eye

Bible Story Review

MADE TO
↓
Play

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. ->

ACTIVITY ONE

More Than Meets the Eye

MADE TO
↓
Play

Faith Skills

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Inclusive Pro Tips

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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!

ACTIVITY TWO

Filter Your Choices

Application Review

MADE TO
↓
Explore

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.

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 FOLLOW 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!"

Pray and Dismiss



Hear from God

Pray to God

Talk about God

Live for God

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.