

Why Not Ask the Spirits?

By Lorella Rouster

A lesson to warn Christian children about the Occult.

This lesson will help your class know:

- *God forbids witchcraft, horoscopes, and seances.
- *God wants to give us all the wisdom we need.
- *Sin keeps us from receiving God's wisdom.

Teachers Focus

Teaching Objectives

That the child realizes God forbids asking wisdom from any Occult source.

Main Truth

God wants you to ask him for wisdom.

Memory Verse

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God... and it shall be given to him"
(James 1:5)

Scripture Study (NKJV)

1 Samuel 28:31; Deuteronomy 18:9-14; Leviticus 19:26, 31; 20:6-7; Isaiah 2:6;
47:13-14. Other scriptures are in the text.

Suggested Songs

Salvation songs favorites "I have decided to follow Jesus" no. 9 (verses 1 & 2);

Lesson

Introduction to the Lesson

Do you ever wonder *what should I do? Should I try out for the football team? Is this TV program one that I should be watching? My best friends' parents are getting a divorce, how can I help him?* Questions! Questions! Questions! What should I do?

The source of wisdom

Some people go to psychics for advice. Some ask Quija boards what they should do. Others look at their horoscopes. *(Let children define each of these.)* If you have received Jesus as your savior from sin, you should not look in these places for wisdom. God says, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God... and it shall be given to him." Because God knows all things you can ask Him anything. Nothing is too hard for him! Because God loves you and cares for you, you can depend on him to give you a true and wise answer - the best answer. I'd like to tell you about a time when Michelle needed wisdom.

Story--The Séance

Michelle was excited when Beth asked her to stay overnight at her house. There was to be a party with several friends from school. Michelle looked forward to it. She thought the time would never come! The party was fun! The girls ate pizza, popped corn, played games and told jokes. But then they did something Michelle had never seen before. They gathered around a flat board called a Quija (*pronounced wee jee*) board. On the board were some printed letters, and numbers, and the words yes, and no. The girls all placed their hands on a little shuttle, which seemed to move around as if by magic. They asked the board questions. The shuttle moved around to spell out the answers. It was spooky! Michelle felt sure someone must be moving the shuttle around, but she couldn't be sure. She began to feel more and more uncomfortable.

Michelle remembers God is with her

The next thing Michelle knew the lights were turned out, Beth said, "Now we're going to have a séance!" The girls sat in a circle and held their hands out. Some of the girls asked to speak with relatives who had died. Michelle was frightened, this all seemed so wrong!

Michelle had trusted the Lord Jesus as her savior from sin just a year ago. What does that mean? (*Let children share what it means to have Jesus as their Savior. Use prompting questions if needed: "Who is Jesus?" "Why did he have to die?" "What do you have to believe so be saved from your sin?"*) Michelle believed Jesus; God's perfect son had died to take the punishment for her sin. She also believes that his Body had been buried in a tomb for three days and that God had raised him from the dead. Jesus lived in her heart by his Holy Spirit. She remembered his promise, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee" (Heb. 13:5). How thankful she was that she could ask Jesus to save her right then. *Help me Lord Jesus, I'm scared,* Michelle prayed quietly in her heart, *I want more than anything to please you, but I don't know what to do.* Just then she thought of something she had learned in Sunday school. Her class had looked up a verse in the bible together. Michelle tried to remember what it had said. It was something about not trying to get answers from people who have familiar spirits, like those who have died (Isa. 18:9). The teacher had helped them find verses, which said that seeking guidance in any way except from God was called an abomination - a thing God hates! "God wants you to ask him for wisdom," the teacher had said. (*Have children read James 1:5 together.*)

I really need wisdom, Lord Jesus, Michelle prayed, You said that I should ask. Suddenly she knew what she must do.

God gives Michelle wisdom

"Stop!" Michelle shouted to the girls as she turned the lights back on. "This is wrong. The bible says so. Satan can work in a séance and fool us. The bible tells us God hates what we've been doing." "Don't be silly," the other girls said. "We're just playing." But Michelle was firm, she tried to remember more of what she'd learned from the Bible about talking with spirits. "God says we should have no part in that," she said again. "Beth why don't we all play your new musical game?"

Do you think Michelle was right in what she did? What would you have done if you were Michelle? How could you know the right thing to do? Today we want to find some right answers.

Transition to the Bible Lesson:

What about you? Do you ever wonder what is going to happen tomorrow? Or the next week? Or the next year? Or when you grow up? Will the future bring good or evil? Sickness or health? Joy or sadness?

We all need guidance in our lives. You can't see the future so you need wisdom to know what choices to make each day. What are some of the decisions you must make at school or at home? (*Should I take band or sports? What clubs should I join? Which friends should I spend the most time with?*) God has not chosen to tell you everything that will happen to you in the future. He wants you to trust him, for he has a plan for your life. When you need wisdom what does God want you to do? God wants you to ask Him for wisdom. God is pleased when his children ask for His help and guidance. We are going to memorize part of James 1:5, but first let us read the whole verse from our bibles. (*If using NKJV add this explanation: Liberally means God is generous in giving. He has promised to give us all the wisdom we need. And he does it gladly! "Without reproach (NKJV) or "upbraideth not" (KJV) means God never scolds us for asking for his wisdom.*) From the time of Adam and Eve, the first people on earth, until today many people have tried to find wisdom from sources other than God. God's enemy, Satan, makes us think that we'd be happier knowing more than God has told us. Ever since Adam and Eve disobeyed God and chose their own way, people have been looking for new ways to find wisdom.

God loves us and wants to protect us from Satan's tricks. So when God first gave his laws to Moses, the leader of the people of Israel, God told him several things he should never do.

God's warnings

God told Moses in his laws that His people should **never use Enchantment** - a magic charm or a spell. This is called *sorcery*, or *witchcraft*. God's enemy Satan can give power to people to do evil things, or cast spells. God warned His people that they must have nothing to do with them (Lev. 19:31) God also told His people they were **not to observe times** (Lev. 19:26). That means they were not to watch the moon or the stars and decide what to do by how the stars are arranged. Many people do this today! They look at star charts called Horoscopes in newspapers and magazines. They find the "sign" for the way the stars were arranged the day they were born and follow the advice given. God does not give his advice through the start or by horoscopes. How does he guide us? Through His word, the Bible, and prayer. God wants you to learn his word and ask Him for wisdom.

God told Moses to write in the law that his people were **never to listen to people who had familiar spirits** (Lev. 19:26, 31.) Those with familiar spirits are those that say they can talk to the spirits of the dead. Satan, the devil, is a deceiver. He can fool people into thinking they can see and talk with the spirits of loved ones that have died. God knew this was very dangerous because Satan, who is our enemy, could trick people. God hated this practice so much that he said anyone who disobeyed and tried to contact spirits, should be severely punished. Why would God punish that person? God loved His people. He knew this practice of trying to talk to the dead could only hurt them, so the promise of punishment was to help them obey. Later when God's people were almost ready to enter the land He had promised, He repeated all the laws so they would not forget them. Can you remember what the laws were? (*Not to use witchcraft, consult horoscopes, or try talking to spirits of those who have died.*)

Abominations

God said these things are abominations to Him. Abominations are very wicked things, which God hates (Deut. 18:10-14). God hates these wicked things because he loves us and does not want our lives to be ruined!

Teacher, see the appendix, "Occult practices that God hates". Write out on a paper or the board the verses that are common problems in your area. Spend some time discussing these verses.

Saul's wrong example

King Saul was Israel's first king. Saul knew God's laws. He knew God hated seances where a person called a medium, tried to contact someone who had died. So King Saul sent every person who practiced witchcraft and every medium out of the land (1 Sam. 28:3)

That was the right thing to do, wasn't it? But there were other times when Saul did not do what God wanted him to. He was not truly sorry for those sins, and he allowed sin to stay in his heart. Listen to what the bible says: "If I regard iniquity in my heart the lord will not hear me" (Ps. 66:18) What does God say will happen if we let iniquities stay in our heart?

Later during a time of war King Saul became afraid. The Philistines were gathered to fight against the people of Israel. There were so many of them that Saul's heart trembled. He prayed to God for wisdom. Was that the right thing to do? Yes! But God did not answer. What do you think was wrong? God did not answer Saul because he had sinned against Him and Saul let that sin stay in his heart instead of truly confessing it. King Saul wanted to keep on doing evil things and thinking evil thoughts. Instead of turning from his sin Saul did something he knew God hated. "Go find me a woman who has a familiar spirit" King Saul ordered his servants. If God wouldn't answer Saul he would do things his own way. He would get his answer at a séance! (1 Samuel 28:7)

Saul's servants answered "Behold that is a woman that has a familiar spirit at Endor." Saul must have been ashamed to go the medium in his kingly robes. After all he had once sent all the mediums out of the land, so Saul disguised himself. The king took two men with him and went to visit the medium at night to ask her to speak to someone who had died. What does God call speaking to spirits of the dead? (An abomination)

This was the third time Saul deliberately disobeyed God. God let Saul know what would happen to him. He would let the Philistines win the battle and the next day Saul and his would be killed in the battle. What a terrible message! And it all came

true. Many years after Saul died special messengers of God continued to warn His people about seances and other things Satan can use to deceive us. (Isa. 8:19; Jer. 27:9-10; Ezek. 13:23; Hos. 4:12; Mic. 3:5-7; Gal. 5:19-21)

Applying the truth

When you need wisdom who should you ask? Yes, God wants you to ask Him for wisdom. It is good to talk things over with your parents, your teachers and your pastor. But most important you need God's help. Never ever use seances, mediums, horoscopes, Quija boards, cards, or psychics to make decisions. Satan wants to fool you and lie to you by using these things. It is an insult to God when you use these things instead of asking him, and trusting him to show you his way through the bible. If you have never asked the Lord Jesus to be your savior, your sin separates you from Him. God cannot guide your life, but He wants you to believe His son died for you and rose again. God wants to forgive your sin and be your Savior, God's word promises "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. 10:13) How can you call? You can talk to God right now. Tell him you know you have sinned that you believe the Lord Jesus, God's perfect son, took your punishment for sin. Then ask the Lord Jesus to come into your heart and be your Savior. He will do it, He promised in his word. *(Give an opportunity for children to respond and provide special counseling. Designate a place for further help.)*

Learning Activity

Sometimes when you need wisdom God has a verse in the Bible that gives you a direct answer. For example suppose someone is unkind to you and then asks for forgiveness. You could ask a Christian parent or teacher "What does God say I should do?" That person can help you find God's answer in Ephesians 4:32 "Be ye kind one to another tenderhearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake forgave you." Maybe you know you should be kind to someone who does not like you but you don't know how to show him or her kindness. Talk to God about this in you Quiet time. Ask Him for wisdom to know what you can do to show kindness. He will help you to think of something. As you read your Bible he may even show you an answer as you read. It is important to read your Bible every day to have God's wisdom.

How to lead a child to Christ.

1. Show him his NEED of salvation that all persons are not going to Heaven. That no one in himself is good enough to go and the result of sin is forever separation from God. (Romans 3:23; Revelation 21:27; John 8:21-24)
2. Show him the WAY of salvation. Salvation is a free gift because the Lord Jesus took our place on the cross, was buried and rose again from the dead. (John 3:16; Ephesians 2:8; 1 Corinthians 15:3,4)
3. Lead him to RECEIVE the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ by trusting him as his personal savior. (John 1:12; Revelation 3:20)
4. From the Work of God, help him find ASSURANCE of his salvation. (John 3:36; Revelation 3:20; Hebrews 13:5)
5. Lead him to CONFESS Christ, (Matthew 10:32) this confession should be made to you, other workers, later to his friends, and as circumstances permit, in a public church service.

Reprinted from Evangelizing Today's Child 1999 Used by permission of author

Appendix

Occult Practices that God Hates, Condemned in the Bible

Occult practices

- Astrology (Isa. 47:13)
- Burning incense to false gods (Jer. 1:16, 11:12-13, 44:3-5,8,17)
- Changing form of matter (rods to snakes)
- Charms, amulets (Ezekiel 13:18-20)
- Conjuring of spells (Deut. 18:11)
- Conjuring of spirits by a spirit medium (Lev. 19:31, Deut. 18:11)
- Cursing (Lev. 20:9)
- Cutting & tattooing (Lev. 19:28, Deut. 14:1-2)
- Divination (Lev. 19:26, Deut. 18:14, Ezekiel 13:6)
- Eating blood (Lev. 19:26)
- Enchantments (Isa. 47:9-10,13)
- False dreams (Deut. 13:1-3)
- False miracles & signs (Deut. 13:1-3)
- False prophecy (Deut. 13:1-3, 18:20, Ezekiel 13:2-3,17)
- False visions (Ezekiel 13:2-8)

Fortune telling or soothsaying (Lev. 19:26, Deut. 18:10)

Idolatry (Lev. 19:4, 26:1, Deut. 5:6-10, 27:15 29:26-27, 30:17-18, 31:18, Jer. 1:16, 2:5, 10&11, 26-28 10:2-5, Ezekiel 14:2-9)

Incantations (Calling on spirits to do one's bidding) (Isaiah 8:19)

Interpretation of omens (Deut. 18:10)

Libation (pour out drink offerings to queen of heaven) (Jer. 44:17)

Magic (Ezekiel 13:18-20, Acts 19:19)

Making children pass through fire (Lev. 18:21, Deut 12:31, 18:10)

Making head veils to curse & kill people (Ezekiel 13:18-20)

Necromancy, calling up the dead (Deut. 18:11, Isa. 8:19)

Prostitution & prostituting daughters (Lev. 19:29, 20:5-6, Jer. 2:20)

Shaving in certain ways (Lev. 19:27, Deut. 14:1-2)

Shrines & high places (Ezekiel 16:30-31)

Sorcery (Deut. 18:10, Isa. 47:9-10, 13))

Spiritism (Lev. 19:31, Deut. 18:11)

Offering cakes as offerings to gods (Isa. 44:19)

Offering children as sacrifices (Lev. 20:2, Ezekiel 16:36)

Trances or altered states of consciousness (Isaiah 8:19)

Witchcraft (1 Sam. 15:23, Isa 8:19)

###