

WISDOM not Foolishness

Introducing the Series: This unit of 2 lessons consists of two Bible stories showing a positive character trait--one story from the Old Testament, and one story showing that trait in the person and life of Jesus Christ. Two Bible verses will be learned as a class during this unit of 2 lessons (these verses in bold face). The teacher may choose to give awards for those who choose to learn additional verses at home. The character traits are presented as desirable qualities in our lives, and Jesus Christ as the only one who ever fulfilled them perfectly. In the beginning of the series, refer to the word CHARACTER and give the following definition: CHARACTER is what a person is really like on the inside, and this influences every choice the person makes, even when no one is looking. Ask these thought questions: What are YOU really like? What is JESUS really like? We will be thinking a lot about both these questions during this series.

WISDOM

Learning about the word WISDOM, WISE:

Definition: Wisdom: 1. being wise, knowledge and good judgment. 2. Wise conduct, wise words.

Wise: Having or showing knowledge and good judgment

Opposite: Foolishness, foolish, unwise, stupid, ignorant

Bible Memory Verses:

Proverbs 9:10 "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."

Adaptation for preschool & kindergarten: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

Colossians 2:3 "Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

Adaptation for preschool & kindergarten: "Christ...all the treasures of wisdom"

James 1:5 "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally, and without reproach, and it will be given to him."

Adaptation Grades 1-2 "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God."

Bible Stories:

Solomon chooses wisdom as his one request from God
I Kings 3:3-15

Jesus shows that he has the wisdom of God in the way he asks and answers questions.
Luke 2:40-51

More Bible lessons & other useful materials available at: www.teachingforafrica.com

Unit Lesson Aim: At the conclusion of these lessons, the student will KNOW that God is the only One who has adequate understanding to be truly wise, for God knows and understands everything. As a result, he will begin to seek God's wisdom by reading the Bible and praying for God's guidance in his life.

Lesson 1 on Wisdom

THE WISEST MAN WHO EVER LIVED

Beginning the Lesson:

Suppose you could have one wish fulfilled--whatever you wanted. What would you ask for? Would you ask for lots of money? Maybe for nice clothing or a beautiful home? Would you ask for school fees, or to be able to go to college someday? What would YOU ask for? (Let the children respond briefly.)

Transition to the Lesson--Not many of us ever get a wish like that. But there is one man who did. His name was Solomon, and his story is in the Bible...

Solomon chooses wisdom as his one request from God

I Kings 3:3-15 (This is the lesson text to study in your preparation. Read to the students only the selected verses given later on in the lesson.)

1 Kings 3:3-15(NKJV)

3 And Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of his father David, except that he sacrificed and burned incense at the high places.

4 Now the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that *was* the great high place: Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings on that altar.

5 At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask! What shall I give you?"

6 And Solomon said: "You have shown great mercy to Your servant David my father, because he walked before You in truth, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with You; You have continued this great kindness for him, and You have given him a son to sit on his throne, as *it is* this day.

7 Now, O Lord my God, You have made Your servant king instead of my father David, but I *am* a little child; I do not know *how* to go out or come in.

8 And Your servant *is* in the midst of Your people whom You have chosen, a great people, too numerous to be numbered or counted.

9 Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"

10 The speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing.

11 Then God said to him: "Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked long life for yourself, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice,

12 behold, I have done according to your words; see, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you.

13 And I have also given you what you have not asked: both riches and honor, so that there shall not be anyone like you among the kings all your days.

14 So if you walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as your father David walked, then I will

lengthen your days.”

15 Then Solomon awoke; and indeed it had been a dream. . .

Main Ideas to Emphasize & Suggestions for Active Student Participation:

1. God told Solomon He would grant him one wish. I Kings 3:3-5

Read: 3a And Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of his father David
5 At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said,
“Ask! What shall I give you?”

Ask questions like these:

- Who loved the Lord? (Solomon. He was the king of Israel.)
- Who was Solomon’s father? (King David)
- His father was a good king who loved God. Did Solomon follow in his father’s ways? (Yes, he did.)
- How did God come to Solomon? (In a dream by night)
- What offer did God make him? (To ask anything he wanted)

Rhythmic Repetition:

After each main idea is presented, the children repeat with a rhythmic cadence:

Wis-dom is the most im-por-tant. Ask for Wisdom. Ask for Wisdom.

2. Solomon asked for wisdom to rule his people wisely. I Kings 3:6-9

Read:

6a And Solomon said: “You have shown great mercy to Your servant David my father. . .
7 Now, O Lord my God, You have made Your servant king instead of my father David,
but I *am* a little child; I do not know *how* to go out or come in.
8 And Your servant *is* in the midst of Your people whom You have chosen, a great
people, too numerous to be numbered or counted.
9 Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may
discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?”

Ask questions like these:

- Solomon said he was a little child. Do you think this means he was under the age of 18, or does it mean he feels like a little child compared to God and compared to the huge task of being king? (He feels like a little child when He thinks of the great job & the great responsibility God has given him.)
- What does Solomon ask God for ? (An understanding heart, to be able to discern between good and evil.)
- Solomon does not look at the people as being his people, his subjects, but as being whose? (God’s people)

Rhythmic Repetition:

The children will repeat with a rhythmic cadence:

Wis-dom is the most im-por-tant. Ask for Wisdom. Ask for Wisdom.

- 3. God was pleased with his request, so God granted him that and much else besides. God gave Solomon such wisdom that he was the wisest man who ever lived.**

Read:

10 The speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing.

11 Then God said to him: "Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked long life for yourself, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice,

12 behold, I have done according to your words; see, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you.

13 And I have also given you what you have not asked: both riches and honor, so that there shall not be anyone like you among the kings all your days.

14 So if you walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days."

Ask questions like these:

- How did God feel about Solomon's request? (It pleased the Lord.)
- What kind of things was God pleased that Solomon had not ask for? (Things for himself and his own glory like long life, riches, or the lives of his enemies.)
- In what measure did God give Solomon wisdom? (God made him so wise that he was the wisest man who ever lived.)
- What did God also give him, even though he did not ask for it? (Riches and honor more than any other king.)
- God also promised Solomon long life on one condition. What was that condition? (That He walk in God's ways and keep God's rules as his father David did.)

Rhythmic Repetition:

The children will repeat with a rhythmic cadence:

Wis-dom is the most im-por-tant. Ask for Wisdom. Ask for Wisdom.

- 4. God is the only one who can give wisdom like that. He can give wisdom because He knows and understands everything. Proverbs 9:10**

Read: Proverbs 9:10

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."

Ask questions like these:

- What is the beginning of wisdom? (The fear of the Lord)

- Can someone be really wise without fearing God? Why? (No, because the fear of the Lord is the beginning [the first thing] of wisdom.)
- When do we have understanding? (When we know the Holy One.)
- Who is the only Holy One? (God, because God is good.)

Rhythmic Repetition:

The children will repeat with a rhythmic cadence:

Wis-dom is the **most im-por-tant**. Ask for **Wis-dom**. Ask for **Wis-dom**.

5. God wants His people to look to Him, and not to other sources, for wisdom. James 1:5

Read: James 1:5

"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally, and without reproach, and it will be given to him."

Ask questions like these:

- If any of God's people needs wisdom, who are we to ask? (Let him ask of God.)
- When we ask for wisdom, will God give us a little wisdom or a lot? (A lot. He will give liberally.)
- When we ask for wisdom, will God ever reproach (scold) us? Will He say "What a silly request. You should know that"? (No, He will give without reproach.)
- If we ask for wisdom, how can we be sure we will get it? (God promises that if we ask of Him, it will be given to us.)
- What are some other sources where people seek wisdom here where you live? (Fortune tellers, magicians, priests, the dead, Mary & other saints, etc.)
- What is wrong with seeking wisdom from these sources? (God wants us to ask Him to give us wisdom.)

Rhythmic Repetition:

The children will repeat with a rhythmic cadence:

Wis-dom is the **most im-por-tant**. Ask for **Wis-dom**. Ask for **Wis-dom**.
Ask from **God!** Ask for **Wis-dom**.

Skit:

Ask for two volunteers to act out the story. One will play the part of Solomon; the other will be God's voice. The other children will bring riches and show honor to Solomon after he chooses wisdom.

Application--Step of Growth for the Saved Child:

Who is the only One who knows everything? Yes, God is the only one who knows and understands everything. Whom should we go to when we need wisdom? Yes, we should go to God. One way to do this is to pray and ask God for wisdom. Then He can guide us and help us to make the right choices. Are you facing something hard this week? Let's pray and ask God for

wisdom right now. (Take time to pray for wisdom for each child.) Every time this week that you don't know what to do, what can you do? Yes, pray and ask God for wisdom. You can count on Him to help you.

Invitation--Giving the Unsaved Child an Opportunity to Receive Christ:

The wisest decision you could ever make is to receive Jesus as your Savior. Then He will be right there with you to help you in every decision of life. The Bible tells us in Colossians 2:3 that in Christ are hidden ALL the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. If you have never received Jesus as your Savior, but today you would like to do so, pray this prayer in your heart right now. (Teacher, lead in the sinner's prayer, found in the appendix to this series of lessons. Then ask those who prayed to raise their hands briefly. You pray for God's blessing on them.)

Lesson 2 on Wisdom

AN EVEN WISER MAN

Review for Older Students:

- What did God say to Solomon in a dream?
- Why did Solomon ask for wisdom?
- What else might he have asked for instead of wisdom?
- How did God feel about Solomon's request?
- How did God show Solomon He was pleased?
- How do we know Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived?
- How can we get wisdom today?

For Younger Students:

- Who was the wisest man who ever lived?
- How did he get to be wise?
- Who is the only One who can make us wise?

Beginning the Lesson:

Review--The last time we were together, we learned about a very wise man--the wisest man who ever lived. Do you remember his name? (Let the children answer.) Do you remember how King Solomon got so wise? (Let a child answer briefly.) Yes, Solomon was wise because he asked God for wisdom. Only God is truly wise, because only He knows everything. So, when we ask God for wisdom, He shares His wisdom with us. Then we become wise, too.

Transition to the Bible Lesson--

Now here is something strange. The Bible says Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived (I Kings 3:12). Yet it also says that one person was even wiser than Solomon! How could that be? Yes, the Bible says, "a greater than Solomon is here" (Luke 11:31). Who could it be talking about? If Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived, someone wiser than him would have to be more than a man. He would have to be---well, he'd have to be a lot more than just a man. Who was this one that the Bible says is greater than Solomon? Yes, it is Jesus. He was wiser than Solomon because He was more than a man. He was God's own Son from heaven. Let's see today how wise Jesus was.

**Jesus showed that he had the wisdom of God in the way he asked and answered questions.
Luke 2:40-52**

Luke 2:40-52(NKJV) [Talking about the child Jesus]--

(Teacher, this passage is given for your own study in preparation for teaching. Read to the children only the verses given later in the lesson.)

40 And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

41 His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover.

42 And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast.

43 When they had finished the days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know *it*;
44 but supposing Him to have been in the company, they went a day's journey, and sought Him among *their* relatives and acquaintances.
45 So when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him.
46 Now so it was *that* after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions.
47 And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers.
48 So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously."
49 And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"
50 But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them.
51 Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart.
52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

Main Ideas to Emphasize, with Suggestions for Active Student Participation:

1. Even when Jesus was 12 years old, He was very wise. Luke 2:40-42

Read: Luke 2:40 & 42

40 And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

42 And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast.

Ask questions like these:

- As the child Jesus grew, how is His spirit described? (Strong in spirit)
- How much wisdom did He have? (He was filled with wisdom)
- Where did He go with Mary and Joseph when He was 12 years old? (To Jerusalem for a feast)

Act it out:

All the students together pretend they are walking to Jerusalem. They are talking amongst themselves, very excited because they are going to a feast.

Sing & Dance:

Even the child Jesus
Was filled with wisdom. (Repeat)

2. In the temple, He was asking questions that made the teachers really think, and He was answering their questions. Luke 2:43-47

Read: Luke 2:46-47

46 Now so it was *that* after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions.

47 And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers.

Ask questions like these:

- Where did Mary and Joseph find Jesus? (In the temple)
- Jesus was sitting in the midst of whom? (The religious teachers in the temple)
- What two things was Jesus doing? (Listening to them and asking them questions.)
- Why do you think Jesus was asking them questions? (Not to find out information. He knew everything. He asked questions to cause them to think about what they were reading in the Scriptures.)
- What kind of answers was Jesus giving? (Wise answers so that all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding.)

Sing & Dance:

Even the child Jesus
Was filled with wisdom.
He was wiser than the teachers
In the temple.
He was wiser than anyone!

3. Jesus was even wiser than the wisest man who ever lived, because He was God's unique Son. Luke 2:48-52

Read: Luke 2:49

49 And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"

Ask questions like these:

- Jesus was talking to Mary and Joseph, the parents who cared for Him in His childhood. But whom did Jesus claim as His Father? (God. He was there in the temple, about His Father's business.)

4. God is the source of all wisdom, and Jesus is His Son. He is the One we should seek to make us wise. James 1:5 & Colossians 2:3

Read: James 1:5

"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally, and without reproach, and it will be given to him."

Colossians 2:3

"Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

Ask questions like these:

- Who does God want us to seek when we need wisdom? (God Himself. He wants to help us.)

- Think about all the wisdom in the universe—the wisdom that keeps the stars in space, the wisdom that makes our bodies work, the wisdom that sends pictures and words through the air and allows us to capture them again. How is it that all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge can be hidden in Christ? (This is possible only because Jesus Christ is God's Son, the Creator who planned everything, who lived forever in heaven, who came into the world to become our Savior.)

Sing & Dance:

Even the child Jesus
Was filled with wisdom.
He was wiser than the teachers
In the temple.
He was wiser than anyone!
In Him is hidden
All the treasures of wisdom,
He is wiser than anyone!
And He want to help me and you,
Yes, He wants to help me and you.

Acting, Repetition:

Act out places people look for wisdom. After each skit, the children will shake their heads "No", and reach both hands up to heaven, then down to themselves, saying, "Wisdom comes ONLY from God."

Application--Step of Growth for the Saved Child:

Follow up from Lesson 1--How many of you asked God for wisdom or guidance since our last lesson? Who would like to tell how God gave you wisdom? One way to get wisdom is to pray and ask God for it. Another is to read what God has already told us in the Bible. As we follow the Bible's teachings, we will become wise.

Younger children--Suggest that there may be someone in their home or near them they could ask to read Bible stories to them each day. At least, they could come to Sunday school and listen to Bible stories there each week. (Suggest several places in the area where they could hear the Word of God.)

Older children--Ask if there is a Bible in their home. If there is, they could read one paragraph each day from the book of Mark. (Show them how to find Mark and how to tell what a paragraph is. We suggest Mark because it is an easy book divided into many short paragraphs. Of course, they could read from any part of the Bible.)

Invitation--Giving the Unsaved Child an Opportunity to Receive Christ:

Jesus was a wise teacher, but He was much more. He was the Savior who died to pay for our sins and rose again from the dead. Maybe you have questions about Jesus. It would be very wise for you to talk your questions over with a Christian friend. We will be here to talk over any questions you have (tell an agreed upon date and time to meet with any who want to talk with you.) If you have never received Jesus as your Savior, but today you would like to do so, pray this prayer in your heart right now. (Teacher, lead in the sinner's prayer, found in the appendix

to these lessons. Then ask those who prayed to raise their hands briefly. You pray for God's blessing on them.)

APPENDIX

THE SINNER'S PRAYER

(Teacher, please note that this prayer is given as an example, not as a formula. To be saved, a person need not say these precise words. To be saved, a person must turn with all the heart to the Savior.)

Dear Father,

I realize that I am a sinner and that You cannot allow sin into heaven. I am sorry for my sin and I want to leave it behind. I believe that You sent Your Son Jesus to be my Savior. I believe that Jesus died on the cross for my sins and rose again. I want to follow Him.

Please come into my heart right now and save me. Make me a real Christian. Thank you for forgiving my sins and making me Your child.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

(Teacher, be sure to get the child's name and contact information for your records. God bless you as you teach and evangelize the children around you!)