

FOOTPRINTS

Leader's Guide for LESSON 6

For Kids

Honor God with Your Choices

Welcome (7 Minutes)

As the parents/mentors and children arrive, give each a warm welcome. Encourage a young person to help you greet others as they arrive. Begin your group time together by inviting the participants to share by asking, "Where have you seen God at work in your life this past week?" (Acknowledge all responses.)

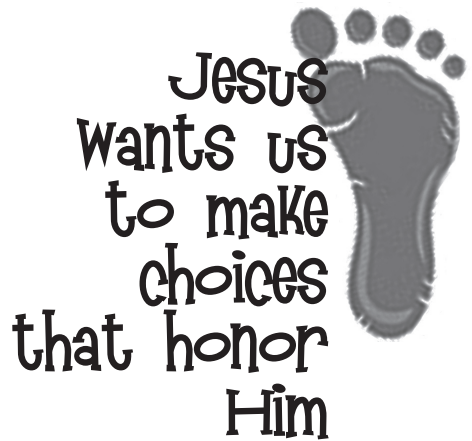
Say: Last week we learned that all we have belongs to Jesus. Find someone who is not in your family to share with, and briefly tell what you did this past week to use your time, talents or treasure for God.

Use the "M.M." ball or the "T.A.G." ball (see Curriculum introduction for instructions) to ask the families about their use of *Mentoring Moments* for family worship at home **OR** to ask the participants to share something they have studied or learned during their T.A.G. time.

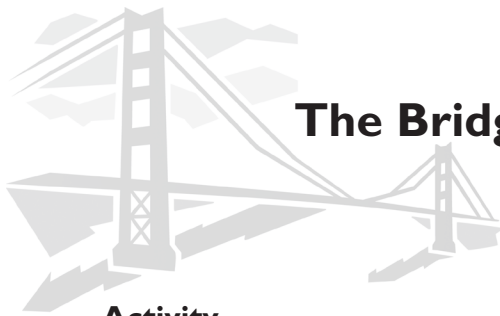
Goals for this lesson

By the end of this lesson, participants will:

- **Know** how to make choices that honor God
- **Feel** convicted to honor God in all their choices
- **Respond** by inviting Jesus to give them wisdom and strength to make wise choices



*A disciple of Jesus is someone who lives every day
to love Jesus and bring others to Him.*



The Bridge (10 Minutes)

Activity

You need

- Small sheets of paper for scoring
- Pens/pencils

Instruct the participants to form pairs to play a game of “Rock, Paper, Scissors.*” Distribute one small sheet of paper and one pen/pencil to each person.

Say: You will have 1 minute to play with your first partner. Keep track of how many times you win. When I call “Time,” write your score on your sheet of paper then find another partner.

Tell them to “Begin” then say “Time” when 1 minute is up. Allow time to write their scores and find a new partner then say “Begin” for the next round. Play 5 rounds of 1 minute each.

* Game instructions: The two players each make a fist with one hand and hold the other open, palm upward. Simultaneously, the two players tap their fists in their open palms once, twice, and on the third time form one of three choices: a **rock** (by keeping the hand in a fist), a sheet of **paper** (by holding the hand flat, palm down), or a pair of **scissors** (by extending the first two fingers and holding them apart).

The winner of each round depends on the choices made. If the players each make the same item, it’s a tie. If they make a rock and scissors, the rock wins, because a rock can smash scissors. If they make scissors and paper, the scissors win, because scissors can cut paper. If they make paper and a rock, the paper wins, because a sheet of paper can cover a rock.

Debrief

Ask: How many times did you win? (Acknowledge responses – have participants celebrate their wins.) What difference did your choices make in this game? (Determined how many wins they had.) How is making choices in this game similar to making choices each day? (Sometimes we have to make a choice quickly without time to think; our choices can help us win or lose.) How is making choices in this game different from making choices each day? (We had only 3 options, etc.)

Say: The choices in this game were not important in the scheme of life, yet some choices we make each day are important.

Prayer: Pray or invite a volunteer to pray for the Holy Spirit to direct this meeting.



Into the Word (25 Minutes)

Write this lesson's *Footprint* on the board:
Jesus wants us to make choices that honor Him.

Activity

Invite volunteers to dress in simple costumes and act out the story as the script is read. Invite one parent to read the narration. Invite parents/mentors to supply sound effects for the storm.

Based on the book of Jonah.

Narrator

The word of the Lord came to Jonah saying, "Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it because its wickedness has come up before me."

But Jonah did not obey the Lord. He ran away and found a ship sailing in the opposite direction to the city of Tarshish.

The Lord sent a great wind on the sea. A violent storm arose and the ship was tossed about. All the sailors were afraid. They each cried out to their different gods to help them. They threw the cargo into the sea to lighten the ship, but it didn't help.

Jonah had gone below deck and was sound asleep when the captain found him. He asked Jonah, "How can you sleep? Get up and call on your god! Maybe he will take notice of us and save us."

Jonah answered, "I am a Hebrew and I worship the Lord, the God who made the heavens, the earth, and the sea." This terrified them all. Then Jonah told the sailors that he had run away from his God.

The sea was getting rougher and rougher. So the sailors asked Jonah, "What should we do to you to make the sea calm down for us?"

You need

- White board and markers
- Bibles
- Pens/pencils
- 1 copy of the script
- Simple costumes and props
- Spools of thread and scissors

Ahead

Copy the script. Assign a participant to read the narration. Write the Bible Discovery Scripture references on separate slips of paper for distribution to the families. Be sure to include the number reference on each one.

“Pick me up and throw me into the sea,” Jonah said, “and it will become calm. I know it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you.”

So they took hold of Jonah and threw him overboard. The raging sea immediately grew calm.

God provided a great fish to swallow Jonah. Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights. From inside the fish Jonah prayed to God. Then the Lord commanded the fish and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.

Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time: “Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim the message I gave you.”

This time Jonah obeyed. He preached to the people in Nineveh and they listened to him. They believed God and repented of their wickedness. When God saw what the people of Nineveh did and how they turned from their evil ways, He had compassion on them and saved them.

Debrief

Say: Jonah had a choice. He could choose to obey God and go to Nineveh or he could choose to not obey God and run away.

Ask: What happened when Jonah didn’t make a wise choice? (He put himself and others in danger.) How do we know that God still loved Jonah even when he ran away? (God still was with him and prepared a fish to rescue him.)

Say: Choosing God’s way over our own way is not always easy. Like Jonah, we might not know what the consequences of our choice will be. No matter what, God does not abandon us even when we make the wrong choice.

Bible Discovery

Distribute the Scripture texts to the families and instruct them to look up their verse and be prepared to read it to the class. Encourage family groups to assign a student to read the verse to the whole group when called.

Write on the board: Three guides for making choices:

- 1. Read Joshua 24:15.** What is the first and most important choice that we need to make?

Write on the board: Honor God

Read Philippians 4:8. How can we honor God with our choices according to this verse? (By focusing on those things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, praise worthy.)

- 2 Read 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20.** What does this passage tell us to honor and why? (Honor our bodies because they are a temple for the Holy Spirit.)

Write on the board: Honor our bodies

What are some choices that would honor our bodies? (Not using harmful substances, taking care of our bodies with good food, rest, exercise, etc.)

- 3 Read Matthew 7:12.** If we put this verse into practice who will we be honoring? (Other people.)

Write on the board: Honor others

Write on the board: How to make choices that honor God

- 4 Read James 1:5.** What do you need to do when you are faced with a choice? (Ask God to help you know what to do.)

Write on the board: Ask God for wisdom

Activity

Give each family group a spool of thread and a pair of scissors. Instruct the parents/mentors to tie their child's hands together with a single strand of thread. Then ask the child to see if he/she can break the thread. Instruct the parent/mentor to wind another length of the thread around many times until it becomes impossible for the child to break. Ask the child if he/she can break the thread now. Instruct the parents/mentors to leave the students' hands tied until question 5.

Ask: What does this activity tell you about habits? (They are hard to break) Habits are like ropes that tie our own hands. If we consistently make good choices, we form good habits. But if we keep choosing our own way, it becomes a bad habit that we are unable to break – maybe even an addiction. Getting over bad habits and addictions can seem impossible. But there is help.

- 5 Read Philippians 4:13.** Jesus has promised us that there is nothing that we cannot do with His strength and power working for us. Do you have the strength to break free of bad habits? No, but God does. (Instruct the adults to cut the threads.) God will give you the strength you need to cut free from bad choices and make choices that honor Him.

Write on the board: Rely on God's strength

- 6 Say:** Sometimes we mess up and make choices that don't honor God. What do we do then?
Read 1 John 1:9. (Confess.)

Say: It is important for us to acknowledge when we have made a wrong choice. If our choice hurt someone else, like Jonah, we need to acknowledge it to others.

Write on the board: Confess our wrong choices

- 7 Read Romans 8:38, 39.** How does God relate to us when we make the wrong choice that does not honor Him? (He continues to love us – not even our bad choices can separate us from His love.)

Write on the board: Remember that God loves you no matter what

Review/Quiz

Steps to follow:

1. Review the summary points written on the board.
2. Cover or turn the board around and quiz the class by asking, "What are the three guidelines for making choices?" After they complete these three ask, "How can we make choices that honor God?" (Two things.) After they complete these two ask, "What do we need to remember when we make a bad choice?"
3. Encourage parents to allow students to answer the questions and assist only if needed.



My Choice (5-8 Minutes)

Leader Share briefly a time when you made a difficult choice that resulted in blessing you or bringing honor to God.

Distribute one *My Choice* handout to each family group.

You need

- One copy of *My Choice* handout for each family
- Pens/pencils

Say: Parents and mentors, move your chairs into a family circle and follow the instructions on *My Choice* with your child. When you are finished with *My Choice* turn the paper over and continue with *My World*.



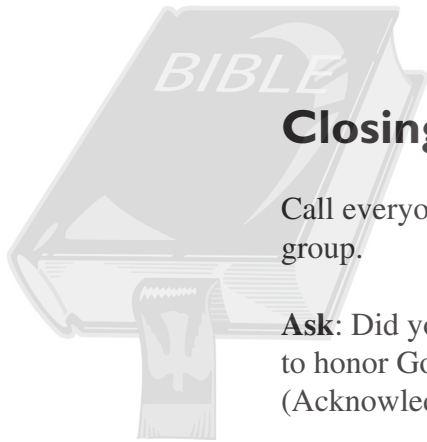
My World (5-8 Minutes)

Leaders: While the families are working together, the leader and co-leader pray for each of the parents/mentors and children.

If some families finish early, as leader you can: 1) engage those families by asking them about their family circle time or 2) give a time “warning” to the other families such as, “Please finish in three more minutes.” Let them know they can finish their *My World* time together at home.

You need

- One copy of *My World* handout for each family
- Pens/pencils



Closing (2 Minutes)

Call everyone back together as a large group.

Ask: Did you think of an area to work on to honor God by the choices you make? (Acknowledge responses)

You need

- One *Mentoring Moments* handout for each family

Grace Point — Say: Next week I will invite you to share one way you honored God with your choices.

Say: Let's say the lesson *Footprint* together — **Jesus wants us to make choices that honor Him.**

Close with a prayer or invite a volunteer to pray:

- asking God to give each one strength to make choices that honor Him

Distribute *Mentoring Moments* and instruct the families to use these at home to build on the concepts developed in this lesson.

My Choice

1. Say the *Footprint* together: **Jesus wants us to make choices that honor Him.**
2. Parents/mentors: **Review** with your child the points made in this lesson by going over the summary points one at a time and asking, “Do you understand what this means?” or “Do you have any questions about this one?” Clarify any points as needed.

Three guidelines for making choices:

1. Honor God Joshua 24:15, Philippians 4:8
2. Honor my body 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20
3. Honor others Matthew 7:12

How to honor God, myself and others:

1. Ask God for wisdom James 1:5
2. Rely on Jesus’ strength..... Philippians 4:13
3. Confess wrong choices..... 1 John 1:9
4. Remember Jesus loves me no matter what..... Romans 8:38, 29

3. Parents/mentors: **Share** briefly a choice you made that honored God or your body or others.
4. **THE CHOICE** — **Ask:** Do you want to make choices that honor God? If your child says “Yes,” affirm his/her decision. If your child is not sure or says “No” or “Not now,” **Say:** It’s all right if you need time to think about this or want to wait. **Ask:** Can you tell me why? Is it okay if we talk about this next week?
5. **Pray:** Form a family prayer circle and ask Jesus to help you make choices that honor Him.

*A disciple of Jesus is someone who lives every day
to love Jesus and bring others to Him.*

My World

1. **Brainstorm** for ways you can make choices that honor God, your bodies and other people.

| | |
|--|--|
| Honor God (Examples: Choose to do T.A.G.; choose TV programs/ DVD's that are true, pure, honest) | |
| Honor my body (Examples: Choose to eat healthy food; exercise) | |
| Honor others (Examples: Choose to speak with kind words; include others in your activities; let others go first) | |

2. Parents/mentors: **Share** one thing that Jesus is calling you to work on individually.

3. **Ask:** What area do you think Jesus would like to work on individually? Can you think of a Bible promise to help you?

4. **Say:** Remember that God will always love you, even if you make a wrong choice. This is what to do if you make choices that do not honor God.

- Believe that Jesus loves you and is happy to help you
- Confess your bad choice to Jesus
- Get rid of anything that tempts you to make wrong choices
- Ask a prayer partner to pray for you and invite that person to regularly ask you if you are being true to Jesus
- If you continue making wrong choices, get help from a pastor or counselor or someone else you trust

Ask: Are there any things on this list that seem easy for you to do? Are there any that you think will be difficult?

Grace Point — Next week you will be invited to share one way you honored God with your choices.

Next Week Parents/mentors, you will be asked to share a time when the reading of the Bible was especially meaningful to you and why you know that you can trust the Bible.

Honor God with Your Choices

Mentoring Moments for Lesson 6

Mentoring Moments are meant to extend the lesson you studied with your small group. Each *Mentoring Moment* choice contains a Scripture, an activity, discussion questions, and a prayer point grouped around a particular topic. They are perfect for use in family worship. If time does not permit the completion of the activity, using just the Scripture and discussion questions can provide a Mentoring Moment anywhere, even in the car.

Choice One

Scripture: Philippians 4:8

Activity: Buy a TV guide or find one on the internet and review the options with your child. Circle the programs that would pass the Philippians 4:8 test.

For Discussion: How much of what is on TV brings honor and glory to God? How do you choose the programs you watch? Are there any shows you watch that you might want to reconsider?

Prayer Point: Ask God to help you choose to watch and read things that will build your relationship with Him.

Choice Two

Scripture: Genesis 1:29, Leviticus 11:1-3, 9; 1 Corinthians 10:31

Activity: Go to a grocery store with your child. Give him or her a few dollars to buy something for a meal for both of you.

For Discussion: What did God originally give man to eat? Did the things you chose to eat and drink bring glory to God? How does a food choice glorify God?

Prayer Point: Thank God for the abundance of foods He has provided for us. Ask Him to help you to make healthy food choices that respect the body He has given you.

Choice Three

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 10:31

Activity: Go window-shopping for clothes together. Discuss what clothes bring honor to God and what honors only the person wearing it.

For Discussion: What clothing choices bring honor to God? What clothing choices honor only the person wearing them?

Prayer Point: Thank God for the clothes available to you. Ask Him to help you make clothing choices that respect and honor Him instead of honoring yourself.

Choice Four

Scripture: Exodus 20:8; Joshua 24:15

Activity: Brainstorm a list of Sabbath activities that show that you choose to serve God.

For discussion: An eighth grader named Emily said, “A friend wanted me to go play Nintendo with her on Saturday. I told her Saturday was the day I keep holy. My friend respected my decision. It made me feel good because I could express my decision to her and she was fine with doing it on another day.” How do you feel when your friends do not respect your choices? What would you do if your friends asked you to do something that bothered your conscience? How would you tell them about your choice?

Prayer Point: Ask God to give you the courage to make choices that honor Him, even if your friends don’t understand or make fun of you.

Choice Five

Scripture: James 1:5

Activity: Ask each person in your family to think of a choice they have made in the past that they might make differently if they could do it over.

For discussion: Did you ask God for wisdom in making that decision? What happened? How could it have turned out differently?

Prayer Point: Thank God for forgiving you for the times you have made choices that don’t honor Him. Ask Him to help you always remember to ask for His wisdom before making decisions.