



Bible Point

# God helps us make the right choices.

## Bible Verse

“Right behind you a voice will say, ‘This is the way you should go’” (Isaiah 30:21).

## Growing Closer to Jesus

- Students will
- check the health of their spiritual lives,
  - learn how Daniel honored God,
  - discuss ways to keep their bodies and spirits healthy, and
  - commit to making wise choices during the coming week.

## Teacher Enrichment

### Bible Basis

#### ■ Daniel refuses to eat tainted food.



**Daniel**  
**1:3-17**

The young men taken from Judah to Babylon were not treated shabbily. In the king’s court, they had access to the best of everything in the kingdom of Babylon, including food and drink.

The most likely problem with the king’s food and drink was that a portion of it had been offered to idols. This made the food unclean and unfit for a devout follower of God to eat.

Remarkably, the young man Daniel, in the court of the king of a powerful foreign country, was willing to stand up for his beliefs and to ask for different food. Not surprisingly, God honored the stand that Daniel and his friends took for him and honored them with better health than those eating all the best meat from the king’s table.

In three years, they were able to learn the new language, culture, and system of government, and they mastered it so well that the king respected their opinions more than those of all others in his kingdom who were thought to be wise!







### Prayer

- Read Psalm 17:1-4.
- Consider David’s honest cry to the Lord. When do you have this same heart attitude?
- Pray: God, help me to have the courage to make the right choice in... Please inspire the kids in my class to stand up for the right choices in whatever situations they might be facing. I lift up each child to you, starting with...

## Before the Lesson

- Collect the necessary items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed on the chart.
- Make photocopies of the “Hands-On Fun at Home” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your students.
- Pray for your students and for God’s direction as you teach the lesson.

## This Lesson at a Glance

|   | What Students Will Do  | Classroom Supplies  | Learning Lab Supplies   |
|---|--|---|---|
| <b>Attention Grabber</b>  | <b>The Choice Is Right</b> —Make choices in a fun, game-show activity.   | Newsprint, tape, markers  |    |
| <b>Bible Exploration &amp; Application</b>  | <b>Reacting to Choices</b> —Choose which powder will make a chemical reaction, and explore Daniel 1:3-17.                            | Bibles, vinegar, ¼-teaspoon measuring spoon, baking soda, baking powder, powdered sugar, two plastic buckets, water, paper towels |    |
|   | <b>God-Honoring Choices</b> —Read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 and Isaiah 30:21 before choosing right and wrong situations for their lives. | Bibles, marker, pen, paper  |   |
|   | <b>What Will You Do?</b> —Create skits to show the right choices in hard situations.   |   |  |
| <b>Closing</b><br> | <b>Spiritual-Health Checkup</b> —Evaluate their spiritual health, and read and discuss Philippians 4:4-9.                            | Bibles, “Spiritual-Health Checkup” handout (p. 122), newsprint, marker, masking tape, yardstick, red markers, pencils             |  |

## Welcome



As kids arrive, engage them in conversation about how last week’s lesson affected their lives. Ask questions such as, “What’s one way God brought good out of a bad situation recently?” or “What prayer did God answer for you last week?”

Tell kids that whenever you shake the *noisemaker*, they are to stop talking, raise their hands, and focus on you. Explain that it’s important to respond to this signal quickly so the class can do as many fun activities as possible. Practice the signal two or three times.

# Attention Grabber

## ■ *The Choice Is Right*

**SUPPLIES:** newsprint, tape, markers



Before class, tape a sheet of newsprint to a wall where kids can easily reach it. Place two markers near the newsprint. Draw two columns on the newsprint, and label the columns “Group A” and “Group B.”

Have kids form two groups, A and B. Set the *balancing bird* on a table where kids can see it. In your best TV-game-show-announcer voice, say: **Welcome to *The Choice Is Right*—the game show where everybody gets to make a choice. This *balancing bird* is the timer. I’ll ask a question that includes two choices, and then I’ll spin the *balancing bird*. As the bird spins, quickly decide whether your group’s answer will be answer 1 or answer 2. Then choose a representative to go to the newsprint and record your answer in your group’s column. Try to choose a different representative each time. See if your representative can get back to your group before the bird stops spinning. Ready? Let the game begin!**

Read aloud each of the following questions. After you read each question, gently spin the *balancing bird*, and let groups decide and record their choices.

- **Would you rather go (1) bungee jumping or (2) on an African safari?**
- **Would you rather have (1) \$10 a week for 10 years or (2) \$1,000 right now?**
- **Would you rather be (1) a genius or (2) rich?**
- **Would you rather eat (1) pizza or (2) hamburgers for dinner?**
- **Would you rather be (1) an astronaut or (2) a deep-sea diver?**
- **Would you rather have as a pet (1) a rabbit or (2) an iguana?**
- **Would you rather (1) climb a mountain or (2) surf the sea?**
- **Would you rather be (1) a model or (2) an actor?**

After you’ve read all of the questions, have kids sit together in a big circle.

Ask: • **Can anyone guess why the game is called *The Choice Is Right*?** (It is called that because all the choices were right; it sounds like *The Price Is Right*.)

Say: **In this game, there were no right or wrong choices. It didn’t really matter what your group chose.**

Ask: • **Do your choices in real life really matter? Why?** (No, because I don’t get to make many choices; yes, because I can choose wrong things and get in trouble.)

• **How did your group make choices in this game?** (We voted; we discussed and figured out what was best.)

• **What helps you make choices in real life?** (My friends; what I’ve learned in the Bible.)

Say: **The choices we looked at were just a matter of opinion and didn’t really affect anything. But many of the choices we make in life really matter. Our choices determine if we do something hurtful or helpful, influence our friends, and even affect where we spend eternity. ► *God helps us make the right choices.* In today’s Bible story, we’ll meet some people who had difficult choices to make. Let’s find out how God helped them.**

Return the *balancing bird* to the Learning Lab.



Practice gently spinning the *balancing bird* beforehand. If you spin it too hard, it will spin for a very long time.



# Bible Exploration & Application

## ■ *Reacting to Choices*

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles, vinegar, ¼-teaspoon measuring spoon, baking soda, baking powder, powdered sugar, two plastic buckets, water, paper towels



Before class, fill one bucket with water. Leave the other bucket empty. Put a little more than a teaspoon each of baking soda, baking powder, and powdered sugar in separate piles on a clean, flat surface. Fill the *baby soda bottle* about half full of vinegar.

Gather kids around the ingredients. Say: **These three powders look alike, but one of them will cause a big reaction when added to vinegar.**

Ask students to form groups of three to discuss which powder they think is most likely to cause a reaction when added to vinegar. They may touch and even taste the powders. (Depending on your group size, you might want to have more than a teaspoon on hand for students to touch and taste.) Ask each group to come to a quick decision. Then ask groups to cast their votes. Have groups that voted for the same substance sit together, and ask:

• **What went through your mind when I first showed you these powders?**

(I thought they were the same; they look the same, but I know they're not; I wanted to eat the sugar!)

• **How did you decide which powder to choose?** (We guessed; we talked about it and tried to eliminate whatever seemed to be the wrong answers.)

• **How secure do you feel about your choice?** (I feel completely secure; we have no way of knowing.)

Start with the powder that received the least votes, and ask a volunteer who voted for that powder to add a quarter teaspoon of the powder to the vinegar and wait to see if there is a reaction. The baking soda will react immediately. After the test, dump the contents into the empty bucket, rinse the baby soda bottle and dry it completely, and refill it with vinegar. Repeat the test for the other two types of powder.

Ask: • **How do you feel now about the choice you made?** (Great because we were right; I wish we had chosen something else.)

• **What kinds of choices do people your age have to make?** (Whether to obey our parents; which friends to have; what sports to play.)

• **What helps you make good choices?** (Talking to my parents; praying; asking God for help.)

Have kids return to their trios. Distribute a Bible to each trio, and say: **Take turns reading the verses in Daniel 1:3-17. Each time Daniel talks about doing the right thing, clap your hands to show that Daniel and his friends made a good choice.**

When students finish reading, ask:

• **I heard a lot of applause for Daniel and his friends' decisions. What hard choices did they have to make?** (They chose not to eat the king's food; Daniel's friends chose to follow his advice.)

• **What risks were involved with the choices they made?** (They might have been hungry; they might look worse than the others; the chief official could have died.)

• **Do you think you would have made the same choices that Daniel and his friends did? Why or why not?** (No, I like meat; I don't see why it mattered what they ate; yes, I would want to please God most of all.)



See page 5.

### teacher tips

Like Daniel, third- and fourth-graders face choices about how to live healthy lives—both spiritually and physically. Today's most popular foods—burgers, french fries, and candy bars—are often the least nutritious. Homework is not as much fun as video games, and morning cartoons often seem more attractive than church. Use this lesson to encourage kids to honor God through wise choices and faithful living.

### teacher tips

The powdered sugar will have no reaction at all; it might clump and sink to the bottom. The baking powder might bubble slightly and make a fizzing sound. The baking soda will bubble over, so be sure to hold the *baby soda bottle* over a container to avoid a mess when your volunteer adds it to the vinegar.

• **How did God honor their good choices?** (They looked healthier than the others; God helped them learn; Daniel could interpret dreams.)

Say: **Daniel and his friends chose to honor God with the things they did. By obeying God’s rules even though they were far from home, they honored God. By studying hard, they honored God with their minds. By not eating foods that had been offered to idols, they honored God with their bodies and their spirits. ►*God helps us make the right choices*, and he honors us when we make the right choices. Let’s talk more about making right choices.**



## ■ God-Honoring Choices

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles, marker, pen, paper



Before class, think of 10 choices, both good and bad, your kids might face. When indicated in this activity, state the choices in the form of a question beginning with, Should I...? Examples might include going to bed at midnight on school nights, eating pizza three times a day, smoking cigarettes, reading the Bible daily, inviting a friend to church, praying, cheating on a test, helping others, lying, or being nice to a new student. Make the list as meaningful to your particular group as possible. Choices should deal with either spiritual or physical health. Jot your ideas down to use later in the activity.

Say: **Daniel and his friends honored God with the choices they made. They obeyed God’s laws about their food, they studied hard to honor God with their minds, and they respected the king. Let’s look in the Bible to explore some ways we can do the same.**

Help kids form trios. Have each trio pick a Reader, a Reporter, and an Encourager. Then say: **The Readers will find and read the passages. The Encouragers will encourage everyone in their trios to help answer the questions I ask. The Reporters will report their trio’s answers to the whole group.**

Have trios read **1 Corinthians 6:14-20**. Read the following questions one at a time, and pause for trios to discuss the questions and report their answers.

- **What do you think these verses mean?** (That God gave me my body and he lives in me; God wants me to treat my body right.)
- **How can you treat your body as God’s holy temple?** (Not putting bad stuff like junk food in my body; not letting bad stuff get in my mind by watching the wrong movies and TV.)

Next have trios read **Isaiah 30:21**: ►**“Right behind you a voice will say, ‘This is the way you should go.’ ”** Then ask:

- **Whose voice is this verse talking about?** (God; the Holy Spirit.)
- **How do you think God shows us which way we should go?** (God tells us in the Bible what is right; he gives us parents and teachers to help us know what is right.)

Say: ►***God helps us make the right choices* about how we use our minds and bodies. One way he does that is by giving us the Bible to read.**

Ask: • **What are some other ways God helps us make right choices?** (God answers our prayers; God makes us smart to be able to think about what is right.)

Say: **God gives us the Bible, he answers our prayers, and he gives us other Christians to guide us. And those are just some of the ways ►*God helps us make the right choices!* Let’s use these three ways God helps us to practice making choices right now.**



See page 5.



Make your class a “safe zone” for kids with special needs and learning disabilities. Avoid calling on students to read or pray aloud if they find it embarrassing or difficult.





**BIBLE VERSE** ▶

Lay the piece of *fabric* on the floor, and have kids gather around it. Choose one child to place one hand, fingers close together, on the *fabric* so you can trace around it with the marker to form the shape of praying hands. Set the *fabric*, a Bible open to ▶ **Isaiah 30:21**, and the *gotcha grabber* at the front of the room with plenty of room between them.

Say: **Let's have this *fabric* represent God helping us make right choices by answering prayer. This Bible opened to our Bible verse can represent God helping us make right choices with what he tells us in the Bible. And this *gotcha grabber* can represent God using other Christians to help us make right choices. I will read some choices kids face. Decide what might help you make a good decision—prayer, the Bible, or other Christians—and go stand near the object that represents it.**

Present each of the 10 choices you thought of before class to the kids, and allow them to decide where to stand for each choice.

Gather the kids back around you and ask:

• **Did it matter which source of God's help you chose? Explain.** (No, because some people like reading the Bible more and some like prayer more.)

• **Which is easier to make in real life—choices about pleasing God or choices about your physical well-being? Why?** (Neither, because I want to do what I want; I love God, and I want to please him, so that is easier.)

Say: **We face many choices in our lives. We need God's help to make right choices. Remember that our Bible verse for this week tells us that God wants to guide us.** Ask a volunteer to read **Isaiah 30:21**: ▶ **“Right behind you a voice will say, ‘This is the way you should go.’ ”**

**God wants to show us the way he wants us to go. ▶ God helps us make the right choices.**

**teacher tips**

It's important to say the Bible Point just as it's written in each activity. Repeating the Bible Point over and over will help kids remember it and apply it to their lives.

**BIBLE VERSE** ▶**BIBLE POINT** ▶

Say: **Jesus also faced many choices. He was tempted by Satan in the wilderness to do things that weren't part of God's plan. Jesus used Scripture to help him, and he used prayer. He understands how hard it is sometimes to make the right choices. And he understands how important it is to get help from God.**

Ask: • **How does it feel to know Jesus understands how hard it is to make the right choices?** (I'm not the only one; I thought Jesus never had problems like mine.)

• **How can Jesus help you the next time you need to make a good choice?** (Jesus will listen to my prayers; Jesus' teaching is in the Bible, and I can read his words.)

Say: **It is very comforting to know that Jesus understands how you feel. Let's practice making choices now.**

## HANDS-ON BIBLE

Have kids form groups of four or five. Give each group some cut and cleaned vegetables and vegetable dip. Say: **Another great way to get help with making good choices is to prepare beforehand by thinking about what kind of choices you want to make. Open your *Hands-On Bibles* to Daniel 1. With your group, complete the “Tempting Treats” activity.**



When groups finish, ask:

- **What are some of the temptations you discussed in your group?**

(Cheating; treating other kids poorly.)

- **How did you decide to resist those temptations?** (Pray; hang out with friends who really care about me.)

## ■ What Will You Do?

**SUPPLIES:** none



Have the kids form groups of two or three. Depending on the size of your class, give one or two of the situations listed below to each group. Explain that each group is to come up with two different endings to the situations: one that shows a good choice, and one that shows a bad choice. They are then to act out the two endings. Distribute gadgets from the Learning Lab to use as props in their dramas. Allow the groups several minutes to prepare the two different endings.

**Situation 1:** You and your friends have been invited to a birthday party. You are very excited about the party, but you realize they are planning to watch a movie that you aren't allowed to see. What will you do?

**Situation 2:** You have been asked to baby-sit your younger twin brothers for the day. They have been crabby and irritable, but you noticed that if you give them candy they stop whining and complaining. Your parents have left soup and salad for dinner, and the boys don't want any part of it. What will you do?

**Situation 3:** Your family has a really busy schedule. Your mom and dad work many hours but have finally found a weeknight that the entire family can get together for family devotions. Your best friends have just built a clubhouse and decided to meet the same night. What will you do?

**Situation 4:** It's been a long, cold winter. Finally, one day is warm and bright. Your friends are headed to the park after school. But tomorrow you have a really big test that you need to study for. What will you do?

**Situation 5:** You and your best friend are on the way home from school when you find a wallet with \$100 in it! Your friend suggests that you just keep quiet about it and split the money. What will you do?

**Situation 6:** You've been invited to go to an amusement park on Sunday with a group of friends. You and your friends have been saving for this trip all summer and waiting for a parent willing to take you. But going to the amusement park means missing church. What will you do?

**Situation 7:** You promised your mom and dad that you'll save time to read the Bible and pray every night before bed. But by the time you're done with homework, soccer practice, and chores, you're exhausted. You just want to fall into a deep sleep. What will you do?

**Situation 8:** Every day you come home from school alone and turn on the TV. Lately, you've gotten hooked on a show that you know your parents wouldn't approve of, but you really like it! When they come home from work and ask you how you've spent your time, what will you do?

After the skits, ask: • **How did you decide what was a good choice or a bad choice in your group?** (We thought about what would please God; we just thought about what would be the most fun.)

• **How are these situations like the ones Daniel and his friends faced?** (They had to do the right things even though it was hard.)

• **What situations have you faced that are similar to the ones in these skits?** (I found a wallet once; I have a hard time reading my Bible at night.)

• **How did God help you in those situations?** (I prayed, and then I felt like I was strong enough to choose the right thing; I read a verse in my Bible that helped me know what was right.)

Say: **We all will have times we have to make tough choices. Some choices will help us be healthier in our bodies, the way the choice made by Daniel and his friends did. Some choices will help us be healthier in our spirits and minds. But whatever the situation, God helps us make the right choices.**



## Closing

### ■ Spiritual-Health Checkup

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles, “Spiritual-Health Checkup” handout (p. 122), newsprint, marker, masking tape, yardstick, red markers, pencils



Before class, make one photocopy of the “Spiritual-Health Checkup” handout for each child. Set up two centers in separate areas of the room. At the first center, write “How Hot?” on a sheet of newsprint, and set out red markers. Put a 5-foot strip of masking tape on the floor. Mark the tape every 12 inches. Kids will hop from one mark to the next as they read the handout directions. Label the second center “How’s Your Heart?” and set out the *stripe sticks*, Bibles, and pencils.

Say: **Just as it’s important to check the health of our bodies, it’s also important to check how we’re doing in our spirits—the part of us that talks with God. That’s called our spiritual life. God cares about our physical and spiritual lives. Let’s see how healthy our spiritual lives are.**

Give each student a photocopy of “Spiritual-Health Checkup.” Have kids form pairs, and assign pairs to each of the two centers.

Say: **In a physical checkup, a doctor may take your temperature, check your heart, and ask how often you exercise. A spiritual-health checkup helps you see how your spirit is doing. With your partner, follow the directions on your handout for each center. When you’re finished with one, go on to the other center.**

After kids have had time to complete both centers, gather them together. Have kids sit in a circle, staying with their partners. Say: **Now let’s look at another passage about spiritual health. Read Philippians 4:4-9. When you’ve finished, I’ll ask some questions for you to discuss with your partner.**





When kids finish reading, ask:

- **What advice in this passage can you follow to improve your spiritual health?** (Don't worry about anything; pray about everything; think about good things.)

- **What have you discovered from your checkup that can help you improve your spiritual life?** (I'm doing good with some things, but I can do a few more things every day.)

Say: **We've thought of some great ways to honor God with our bodies, minds, and spirits and to make sure we make right choices. ► God helps us make the right choices. Daniel's choices kept his spiritual life and physical life healthy, and he honored God. We, too, can choose actions that honor God and keep our spiritual lives growing and healthy.**

Lead the class in a prayer similar to this one: **Dear God, you've shown us how lots of good choices "stack up" and become a life that honors you. Thank you for teaching us to keep our minds, bodies, and spirits healthy. Help us to be like Daniel and his friends by making choices that honor you. In Jesus' name, amen.**



### **Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.**

Photocopy the "Hands-On Fun at Home" handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with your kids. Encourage kids and parents to use the handout to spark meaningful discussion on this week's topic.

# Spiritual-Health Checkup

## How Hot?

**How healthy is your spirit?**

**Follow the directions to take your spiritual temperature.**

1. Stand at one end of the tape.
2. Hop to the first foot mark, and tell whether you do what's written next to the first mark on the thermometer. Then hop to the next mark. If you don't do what's written next to that mark on the thermometer, stop at that mark.
3. Have your partner fill in the thermometer on your handout to the appropriate mark.
4. Read your temperature.
5. Help your partner take his or her temperature.



I trust God to help me make the right choices.

I tell others about Jesus.

I read my Bible each week.

I pray every day.

I believe in Jesus.

Start here.

## How's Your Heart?

1. Feel your partner's heartbeat by gently putting your finger on the side of his or her neck and feeling the pulse.
2. Beat out your partner's heartbeat rhythm with the stripe sticks.
3. Feel your own heartbeat.
4. Read Psalm 17:3.
5. Put check marks on the hearts below to show how strongly your heart beats for God.

|                                     |                   |   |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|---|
| I think about God sometimes.        | ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ | I think about God often.                |
| I sometimes try to obey God's Word. | ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ | I try hard to obey God's Word.          |
| Sometimes I like to talk to God.    | ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ | I like to talk to God most of the time. |

# Hands-On Fun at Home

LESSON 10



**God helps us make the right choices.**



**Bible Verse:** “Right behind you a voice will say, ‘This is the way you should go’”  
(Isaiah 30:21).

## Fun Facts

“Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—and how well I know it” (Psalm 139:14).

Your body is an amazing creation. Did you know these facts?

- You're born with 330 bones, but some of those bones join together as you grow, so you only have 206 bones when you become an adult.
- You can hear between 350,000 and 400,000 sounds.
- Your lungs use 12,500 quarts of air per day.
- Whether you have straight or curly hair is determined by your hair follicles (the shafts in which your hair grows). People with round follicles have straight hair; those with slit-shaped ones have curly hair.
- Your heart pumps 5,000 to 6,000 quarts of blood through 60,000 miles of blood vessels every day.
- It takes only 17 muscles to smile but 43 to frown. Keep smiling!

## Check It Out

**Read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.**

How have you honored God with your body today?

**Read 1 John 3:2-3.**

What are some ways you can show respect for God by keeping yourself pure?

**Read Proverbs 14:30.**

What can you do to keep your mind peaceful?

## Faith Walk

Take a family fitness walk. Gather items from nature, such as tree bark or flower petals. As you walk, discuss ways to keep your bodies, minds, and spirits healthy. When you finish the walk, make a family scrapbook of “touchstones” by gluing the things you gathered to paper and writing the date underneath each touchstone. Put the papers in a binder. Then plan when you'll take the next family walk.

## Fruit on Fruit

Choose a fruit such as an apple or an orange. Select grapes, raisins, cheese chunks, or other foods to decorate your fruit. Make a funny face by designing eyes, ears, a nose, and a collar with the decorative foods and fastening them on your fruit with toothpicks. Give your creation a funny name—Awesome Apple or Orangutan Orange, for example. Set the fruit on the table as a centerpiece. With your family, talk about how God takes care of your family every day. Before you enjoy your next meal, take time to pray together and thank God for his many blessings.

