

## Lesson 10: “**The Choices I Make**”

### A Facilitator’s Guide for Mid-Elementary to Adult Bible Classes

#### I. Welcome & Prayer (5 mins)

#### II. Ice Breaker (2-3 mins)

- What is a funny foolish decision you have made in the past week (or recently)? Did someone make a wise decision that surprised you this week (or recently)?

#### III. Activity (5-10 minutes)—you could spend the whole class here and that would be time well spent.

- Spend 3-5 minutes as a class searching through the book of Proverbs for your favorite proverb about acting wise or foolish. Have several people in the class share their favorite out loud. Write them on the board based on the topic of the proverb. Which categories are the most important to your class? Which ones are missing? What does this say about what we value most about wisdom and folly today?

#### IV. Discussion & Application (30 mins) – write comments on the board to build momentum & reflection.

- Choose from the categories below the 2-3 topics most relevant for your life-stage class. Customize the questions and passages as you see fit to promote the best conversations that lead to advice sharing and strategies for finding wisdom, avoiding folly, and finding sources of wisdom when new problems arise.
1. **The Secular Worldview (10 mins):** Who is “the wise person” in the world’s eyes today—what do they look like, act like, not act like in movies/tv, books, social media, podcasts, and word of mouth. Who is “the foolish person” in the world’s eyes today—what do they look like, act like, etc.? Does the world value wisdom over folly? Where does the world advise people to go in order to seek and find wisdom?
  2. **The Biblical Worldview (10 mins):** Who is “the wise person” according to Scripture—what do they do, say, not do/say? What does “the foolish person” do, say, not do/say in Scripture? Share passages from the Old Testament and New Testament about wisdom and folly (e.g. 1 Cor 1:27; Proverbs; James; Mt 5-7). How does one grow in wisdom according to Scripture? How does one avoid folly according to Scripture? How does one discern the difference between wisdom and folly in the first place?
  3. **How Have You Grown in Wisdom (5 mins):** What are some proverbs or wise sayings from your parents, teachers, friends, and other mentors that have guided you in your life? What are some experiences that have taught you wisdom? What are some resources that you have depended on to help you make and repeat good decisions, make good priorities, and keep your commitments?
  4. **Recovering From Folly (5 mins):** What are some ways you have overcome folly or at least one or two foolish decisions in your life or your family’s life? How have you helped someone else overcome folly? How do you keep from repeating your mistakes? How do you help others not repeat their mistakes?

#### V. Application (2 mins to explain this homework for the week):

**Believe:** In one sentence, how would you define wisdom? How would you define folly?

**Act:** Determine whether you are a wise person who occasionally makes foolish decisions or a foolish person who occasionally makes wise decisions. Which decisions or habits are leading you toward wisdom or folly?

**Teach:** Share with someone else where you are right now in your journey toward wisdom. Let them share their journey with you. Tell us how it's going on [College Church Chat](#), or in person next week in Bible class or congregational worship.

### **Lesson Outline for Bible Class (Birth to Mid-Elementary)**

**Believe:** Share your favorite Proverb(s) about wisdom and folly. Explain what the proverb means, how it can be kept, and illustrate it through songs, pictures, videos, or acting it out. See if the students can remember it.

**Act:** Perform a few different skits with different situations showing how different pieces of advice in Proverbs can guide a person toward good decision making. What would the wise choice lead to? What would the foolish choice lead to? What would Wiley Wise do vs. Freddy Fool do? Show them how repeating a wise decision or repeating a foolish decision makes a long-term difference.

**Teach:** See if each child can remember your favorite proverb(s) from the beginning of class time, or what Wiley Wise or Freddy Fool would do in a given situation. If they come back the following week and remember the lesson and even put it into practice by being wise that week you might reward them with a Wiley Wise sticker.

### **Lesson Outline for Small Groups & Families**

**Believe:** Have everyone (all ages) take 3 minutes to read through a chapter or two of Proverbs, James, or the Sermon on the Mount. Find 1-2 characteristics of a wise person and 1-2 characteristics of a fool.

**Act:** Have everyone share their characteristic, writing them all on a board or sheet of paper. Which characteristics did multiple people find? What are the unique characteristics that only one or two people put on their list? What might this say about what we value the most in our own lives about wisdom or folly? What is 1 characteristic you could all practice as a group this week to become more wise or avoid folly?

**Teach:** After practicing that 1 trait of wisdom, see if anyone notices a change in you this week. Ask someone at the end of the week if they noticed a difference in you. Then, tell them that you are trying to become more wise and less foolish and explain to them why pursuing wisdom is a rewarding goal.

### **Lesson Outline for Individual Study**

**Believe:** Spend 5 minutes reflecting on whether you are a wise person who makes the occasional foolish decision or a foolish person who occasionally makes a wise decision.

**Act:** Study 3-4 passages in Proverbs, James, the Sermon on the Mount, or elsewhere that could help you decide how to start or continue down the path of wisdom or turn away/around from the path of folly. Commit to taking 1 step this week (and another next week) toward the ultimate goal of becoming wise.

**Teach:** Share your favorite Proverb (one you want to guide your life) with someone this week and tell them why it is your favorite for living a wise life. Ask them to find their favorite Proverb and share it with you.

**Additional Scriptures & Discussion Questions for Weeks 2-4**  
**(Bible Class, Small Groups, Families, or Individual Study)**

General Prompts

1. What is the world teaching us to believe or not believe about the choices we make and their relationship to wisdom and folly? How is the world teaching us this? What difference does it make if we believe or do not believe the world?
  
2. What makes the biblical message about how to make wise decisions different from the world's advice on how to make wise decisions—whether in movies, tv, books, social media, or by other religious groups?
3. What *resources & people* have helped you come to better know, live, & share good decision-making?
4. What *strategies* have helped you to help others (kids, co-workers, friends, etc.) make good decisions?

**Week 2: What Would Jesus Do? — Read 3 stories in the Gospels where Jesus, his disciples, or non-disciples of Jesus had to make a decision.**

What were the options? Was one of the options clearly bad or good or were there multiple good and multiple bad options? How do you make a good decision in these cases? What decision did each of them make in these scenarios? How did they make their decision (what was guiding their choice, if we can know)? Was it the right decision for the situation? What were the consequences, whether good or bad?

What kind of decisions are facing our world today? What decisions are facing our group here tonight? What individual decisions do we have to make this week? How can we/you make the wise choice? If Jesus were in charge of your life today, what decision(s) would he make in these situations facing you right now?

**Week 3: There Was a Wise Old King — Choose 2 Kings of Israel or Judah. Read their story in 1-2 Kings or 2 Chronicles.**

Have everyone share a summary of the life of the king they read about. What were his decisions? In which scenarios did he make the wise choice? In which scenarios did he make the foolish choice? How does the Bible characterize his life overall – he was a good king or a bad king? What does this say about what happens in the end for all people? Can you find what led these kings toward the wise or foolish decision—was there a bad counselor or good prophet, a parent or friend, the people or something else that influenced them?

What choices are facing our world today? What decisions are we facing in our group right now? How about individually? What are the options? How will we/you make the wise choice? If your story was in the Bible, how would you like for your final evaluation to read? What would you need to do today to get your closer to that goal?

**Week 4: The Proverbs of the New Testament— Read 1-2 chapters of James. What topic in those chapters is most interesting to you (e.g. riches, partiality, friendship with the world, prayer, trials)?**

Share the topic with the group and tell them why this is interesting to you right now in life. What does James say is the wise thing to do in relation to that topic? What does James say is the foolish thing to do in relation to

that topic? Where have you seen this advice taken or not taken in the world today? What would it look like if this wisdom was followed or this folly avoided in the world today?

Have everyone share their topic and what James says about it. How can we follow the wisdom of James in our own passage this week? Or how can we as a group follow the advice of the same passage in James this week? Let's come back next week and discuss how it went.