



MAKING CHOICES The Price You Pay

May 31, 2025

1 PREPARING

A. THE SOURCE

Deuteronomy 30:15, 16 (NIV; see also verses 17-20) • “See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. For I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in obedience to him, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess.”

Joshua 24:15 (NIV) • “But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.”

Jeremiah 10:23 (NIV) • “LORD, I know that people’s lives are not their own; it is not for them to direct their steps.”

Micah 6:8 (NIV) • “He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

Romans 12:2 (NIV) • “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to

test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

Romans 12:12-15 (NIV) • “Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.”

1 Corinthians 16:13, 14 (NIV) • “Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong. Do everything in love.”

Ephesians 5:15 (NIV) • “Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise.”

Philippians 2:12, 13 (NIV) • “Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.”

James 1:5-8 (NIV) • “If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.”

B. WHAT'S TO BE SAID ABOUT "MAKING CHOICES"

There is a constant struggle between good and evil, between God's agenda to bless us and the devil's agenda to destroy us. God and the angels are on the sidelines cheering for us to make the choices that will bring us blessings and ground us in God's kingdom (Deuteronomy 30:15-20). It is our responsibility to represent our kingdom to the best of our ability. Every choice we make is a direct reflection of the kingdom we choose.

God gave us the freedom to make our own choices. Early teenagers are in the period of life between childhood and adulthood when they are learning to make more and more choices. It is in this freedom that we make choices about how to live as His special citizens on this earth. God has provided us with His Word and a conscience to help us make our choices. Sometimes we make choices that lead to negative consequences. But God, the one who created us and knows what is best for us, is always ready to forgive us, help us make the best choices, and offer guidance for the future.

C. WHERE WE'RE GOING WITH "MAKING CHOICES"

As a result of this lesson we would like the students to be able to:

1. Appreciate God, who created us with the freedom of choice.
2. Discover methods for good decision-making.
3. Commit to relying on God and His Word for help with decision-making.

D. MATERIALS NEEDED

Beginning • (Activity A) thick bag with an assortment of good- and bad-tasting food; (Activity B) two 100-piece puzzles, color markers.

Connecting • Bibles, student lessons.

Applying • Worksheets on page 94, pens or pencils.

2 BRIDGING

A. WHERE WE'VE BEEN BEFORE

Allow 10 minutes as students are arriving to:

1. Share anything that was meaningful to them in this lesson.
2. Engage in a discussion about the topic of the lesson in connection to the belief highlighted this week.
3. Say the Bible memory text either individually or in a group.

B. OTHER SABBATH SCHOOL COMPONENTS

- >> Song service
- >> Mission emphasis (find a link for Adventist *Mission* for youth and adults at www.realtimefaith.net)
- >> Service project reports

3 BEGINNING

NOTE TO TEACHER: Put together your own program with options from the categories below—Beginning, Connecting, Applying, and Closing. Please keep in mind, however, that the students need to have an opportunity to be interactive (participate actively *and* with one another) and to study from the Word.

A. BEGINNING ACTIVITY*

Get ready • Gather in a thick bag an assortment of foods—most of them items that are unpleasant to eat, stored in small jars or containers (for example: baby food, a shot of vinegar, sliced onions, salt, baking soda, lemon juice, unsweetened cocoa, etc.). Also include a few tasty things like chocolate and fruit.

Get set • Divide the class into two teams.

Go • Each team sends one person at a time to the bag to pick something without looking into it. Each person has to eat it all right there and return to the starting point to receive one point. If, for whatever reason, they cannot eat it all and return to the starting point, they cannot earn the point. The team whose members have all been to the bag and have earned the most points wins.

Debriefing • Ask: What did you like about this game? (Most of us had it just as bad as the others.) What did you not like about this game? (I couldn't look in the bag; I couldn't put it back if I didn't like it; I didn't have a choice.) What does this tell us about choices? (They allow us to have the freedom to distinguish between positive and negative experiences.) What is life like when you do not have freedom to make them? (meaningless)

* Be aware of any food allergies and adjust accordingly.

B. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • Use two 100-piece puzzles. With a different color marker for each puzzle, mark the backs of each piece.

Get set • Have both puzzles set out at either end of the same surface for students to work on as they arrive.

Go • (1) At one point, ask the students to stand back, go over to the surface and mix up the pieces of the two puzzles. Then let the students continue. (2) Before both puzzles are finished, call the class to order, away from the puzzles. Distribute the pieces that have not yet been placed correctly to the seated students and let one at a time go quickly to put their piece in the correct place.

Debriefing • Ask: When frustration is expressed, ask: What different conditions did you have in which to choose and use a puzzle piece? (At first we knew whatever we chose belonged to the right picture; then

we could choose among many pieces, but didn't know for sure it was for the right picture until we looked on the back; then we didn't have much choice of which piece to choose so we had to decide for which puzzle it was and then we weren't sure if it connected to anything already there or not.) **How can what happened here relate to making choices in our own lives?** (When we are young we make simple choices; we know what the picture is; sometimes our choices are more confusing; the devil mixes us up; it's important to know which picture we are working on.)

C. BEGINNING ILLUSTRATION

In your own words, tell the following story:

Pythagoras, the Greek philosopher and mathematician, was seen at the Olympic Games. Not being an athlete or a sports fan, he looked out of place. Someone sarcastically asked him what he was doing there. He replied: "Some come to try out for the prizes, some come to sell their merchandise, some come to enjoy themselves and to meet their friends. I am one of those who come just to stand on the sidelines and to look on."

Debriefing • Ask: Can we get by in this life without being involved in making choices? (In this world we must all make choices. We can't just stand and look on; even that is a choice.) What are some important choices that you have had to make? What choices do you have to make on a regular basis? Whom do our choices affect besides ourselves? (It ranges from just those around us to everyone else.)

4 CONNECTING

A. CONNECTING TO THE KINGDOM

Say: There are two kingdoms. Between the two kingdoms rages an ongoing battle. God is trying to recruit us all to be special citizens

of His kingdom. **Ask:** Why are our choices important? (The choice of whether or not to let Him recruit us is important.) **If we accept the assignment of being a citizen of His kingdom, how does that affect all the other choices in our lives?** (All the choices we make as citizens of His kingdom, once we are recruited, affect His kingdom.)

Say: It's like this. Everything that goes on in this world is part of a big dramatic battle. We know how it's going to end. But until then, every change in scene, every act is brought about as a consequence of a choice somebody on earth makes. God and the angels of heaven are on the sidelines watching the constant struggle between the good and the bad, right and wrong, God's way and the way of the evil one. Let's find and read Deuteronomy 30:15-20. Ask volunteers to take turns reading the verses.

B. CONNECTING TO THE LESSON ILLUSTRATION

Ask someone beforehand to read or tell the story from Sabbath's section of the lesson.

Ask: What relevance does this story have to our topic today? (Encourage students to notice in which direction the choices in the story led.) **What are some important choices that you have had to make? What choices do you have to make on a regular basis? Who do our choices affect besides ourselves?** (It ranges from just those around us to everyone else.)

C. CONNECTING TO LIFE

Pose the following scenario:

You really want to be on the school soccer team. All through elementary school you have been dreaming of belonging to the team. You've practiced. You've attended training camps every summer. The tryouts are finally here. You are ready. You know you'll make it. But the tryouts are on Sabbath. What do you do?

Give students time to share their first reac-

tions. Then **ask** the following:

Where did your ability to play ball come from? (My father, hard work, natural ability I was born with, but ultimately all our talents and abilities come from God, our Creator.) **How important is the decision you make here?** (God created us with the power to choose, and choosing is a serious responsibility.) **Does God give us any help in making hard decisions?** Have volunteers find and read the following texts: **Jeremiah 10:23; Micah 6:8; Deuteronomy 30:19.** (God doesn't leave you alone in the valley of indecision. He gives you His Word.) **What is another resource you have for making the best choice in difficult situations? Let's find and read Isaiah 30:21.** (The Holy Spirit, through your conscience, is there to tell you what is right and what is wrong.) **Once you have decided what you think is the right thing to do, what if you don't really want to do the right thing?** Have a volunteer read **Philippians 2:12, 13.** **What does this text promise us?** ("To will and to act" [NIV] means that God will even help you with the desire and the power to do what He asks.) **The ultimate motivation to make the right choice should always be our love for God and our respect for our role as a citizen of His kingdom.**

5 APPLYING

A. APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Distribute the "What Would You Do?" worksheets (see p. 94) and this week's lesson. Have the students work in pairs to get different points of view. Remind them to refer to the texts you just read and the discussion you just had. The worksheet also requests that they refer to the chart in Friday's section of their lesson.

Call them back together when you decide they have had enough time. **Ask: What was the driving force behind your decisions? What do your choices reveal about you? In the Bible, who had tough choices to make? How did they confront them?**

Say: Choices shape your life. What you choose to do or choose not to do, shapes the person you are going to be. Choices are also reflections—reflections of your beliefs, your values, your culture, your personality.

B. APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. What are some guidelines in the Bible to use when making choices?
2. How do our choices reflect who we are and what we believe?
3. How can you become a better representative of the kingdom of God?
4. How can you be sure you've made the right decision?
5. How do choices shape our lives?
6. How do our choices affect/influence those around us? Explain.

6 CLOSING

SUMMARY

In your own words, conclude with the following ideas:

As citizens of God's kingdom, it is our responsibility to represent our kingdom to the best of our ability. Every choice we make has a direct reflection on the kingdom. Imagine if you were in the army and you were sent to fight. And just as the battle is about to begin, instead of fighting, you choose to turn and run away because you feel uncomfortable or you're worried about what may happen. What kind of reflection would that be on your country? Call on God as you make choices every day. Ask His help to make you a better representative of His kingdom through the choices you make.

FOR LESSON NINE:

THIS HANDOUT IS FOR THE APPLICATION ACTIVITY

What Would You Do?

Read the following scenarios and use the chart provided in the Friday section of your lesson to decide what you would do.

1. You're at school and you overhear some people making fun of Christians. What would you do?

2. A friend tells you about a place where you can get a cheap CD player. You think it may be stolen, but you don't know for sure. What would you do?

3. You've just been dismissed from assembly. You see a \$100 bill on a chair. What would you do?

4. Your friend copied your math homework from you. The teacher asks whether you know that your friend cheated. What would you do?

5. You're on the basketball team at school. Someone offers you \$100 to make sure your team loses the game. What would you do?



STUDENT LESSON

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May 31, 2025

Sabbath FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it” (Matthew 7:13, 14, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 19, The Law of God:** “The great principles of God’s law are embodied in the Ten Commandments and exemplified in the life of Christ. They express God’s love, will, and purposes concerning human conduct and relationships and are binding upon all people in every age.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 138-141

THE PRICE YOU PAY

When Benjamin Franklin was a child, an adult friend gave him a small amount of change as a gift. Young Ben used all the money to buy a whistle from a playmate. Benjamin went all through his house blowing on his whistle. He thoroughly enjoyed his new whistle till someone advised him that he had paid four times what it was worth. Instantly that whistle lost all its value to young Benjamin.

In later years Franklin remembered the bad bargain he had made in buying the whistle from

his playmate. Whenever he observed someone sacrificing family for fame or fortune, he would say, “He pays too much for his whistle.”

Satan designs the things of this world to be attractive and pleasurable. There is nothing really wrong with wealth and fame unless we give up Jesus in the bargain to get them. For a child like young Benjamin Franklin, a lowly whistle may be the most desirable thing he can think of. As we grow up, however, we tend to become drawn to more sophisticated things.

—Gary B. Swanson, *The Moose, the Goose, and the Kingdom of God*, pp. 118, 119

How do we determine what is most worthwhile? How do we establish our priorities? Is the chase after the things we desire in line with God’s will for our lives? Where is Jesus and His kingdom in the order of our priorities?

You are no longer a child. Where you are in life is a transition between childhood and adulthood, and it begins now, in your early teen years. It’s a time you learn to take responsibility for the decisions you make. You will have to face the consequences of your choices. If you make wrong choices, they could change the course of your life for the worse. That’s why making wise choices is so important: they could change the rest of your life for the better. Every choice has a consequence, and it behooves you to think of the end result before making any decision. King Solomon advised in the book of Ecclesiastes: “Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth; walk in the ways of your heart,

and in the sight of your eyes; but know that for all these God will bring you into judgment" (Ecclesiastes 11:9, NKJV).

Sunday
RESPONDING

- » Read 1 Corinthians 16:13.
- » It's Sunday afternoon. Nothing much to do. You and your friends are just hanging out in the mall. It's boring. You've done this a thousand times.
- » Then someone dares another to do something stupid. Everyone has a good laugh. But then the dares escalate. Each new one gets tougher and more dangerous. Excitement builds. It's your turn. You are dared to do something you know is against the law.
- » How will you respond? How will your choice affect your friendships? How will your decision affect the way you feel about yourself? How will your choice affect your relationship with God?

A.	Always tell the truth.
B.	Be committed to your spouse.
C.	Do not make idols of earthly things.
D.	Be content with what you have.
E.	Honor the Sabbath.
F.	Respect what belongs to others.
G.	Put God first.
H.	Be respectful to your parents.
I.	Show reverence to God.
J.	Value life.

	"Honor your father and your mother."
	"You shall have no other gods before Me."
	"You shall not steal."
	"You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain."
	"You shall not bear false witness."
	"You shall not murder."
	"You shall not make for yourself a carved image."
	"You shall not commit adultery."
	"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."
	"You shall not covet . . . anything that is your neighbor's."

Monday
**BIBLE ANSWERS ON THE
LAW OF GOD**

- » Read Psalm 19:7-9; Revelation 14:12.
- » God's law is the standard of how we should live. It helps us make right choices. As we endeavor to keep God's law, the Ten Commandments, He prepares us to live eternally.
- » How has knowing and loving God helped you make right decisions?
- » Match the right choices with the correct commandment. See Exodus 20:1-17. Commandments are from the New King James Version.

Tuesday

REFLECTING

- » Read James 1:5. It can be difficult to make decisions, especially if you feel torn between two parties. You've got parents expecting one thing of you and friends expecting another. You know what is right and what is wrong—usually it's obvious. But life is so much easier if you can just keep everyone happy. Right?
- » So how do you make your own decisions? Are there times you feel as if you could use some help, but you can't admit that to your friends or your parents? The truth is that everyone needs guidance—someone they can talk to who knows what they're talking about. Sometimes it is helpful for someone to say, "This is what will happen if you go through Door A. But Door B will get you in deep trouble." You can safely let God and His Word be your adviser.
- » Who better to take into your confidence? Who better to trust? Who else really knows you? Try God as your personal adviser. Your choices may not always be easy or may not always feel right. But, you can trust God to help you make the right decisions.
- » "The tempted one needs to understand the true force of the will. This is the governing power in the nature of man—the power of decision, of choice. Everything depends on the right action of the will" (Ellen G. White, *Mind, Character, and Personality*, vol. 2, p. 685).

Wednesday

BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Look up the following texts. Write the text next to the correct verse. All the verses are from the New King James Version.

John 14:15 Joshua 24:15 Proverbs 8:10
Romans 12:2 Ephesians 5:15 1 John 5:3

1.	"And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."	
2.	"For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome."	
3.	"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."	
4.	"If you love Me, keep My commandments."	
5.	"See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise."	
6.	"Receive my instruction, and not silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold."	

Thursday CONNECTING

- » Read Romans 8:3, 4.
- » Review the memory text.
- » Remember the story of Jonah? He made some really bad choices. But in spite of Jonah's choices, God didn't give up on him. God chased after him in a storm.
- » Jesus loves you so much that even when you are in the middle of something that you know you shouldn't be involved in, He is right there—ready to help you when you call. He does this because He understands your nature. He knows your weaknesses. He has been tempted more than any of us and yet He resisted temptation and overcame.
- » All He's asking you to do is to take that big, courageous step and try to do things His way.

- » Jesus promises to help you when you call on Him. He has already paid the price for your sins. All you have to do is ask Him to forgive you and show you a better way to live. The decision is yours. Won't you choose Him as your Savior?
- » "Every act of obedience to Christ, every victory obtained over self, is a step in the march to glory and final victory. Take Christ for your Guide and He will lead you safely along" (Ellen G. White, *Our High Calling*, p. 25).

Friday APPLYING

- » Read Isaiah 30:21.
- » With God's help and some simple guidelines, you can make good decisions. Try this simple decision-making plan. It is the product of an early teen and his dad—to help make good decisions. It works for them; maybe it'll work for you as well.

