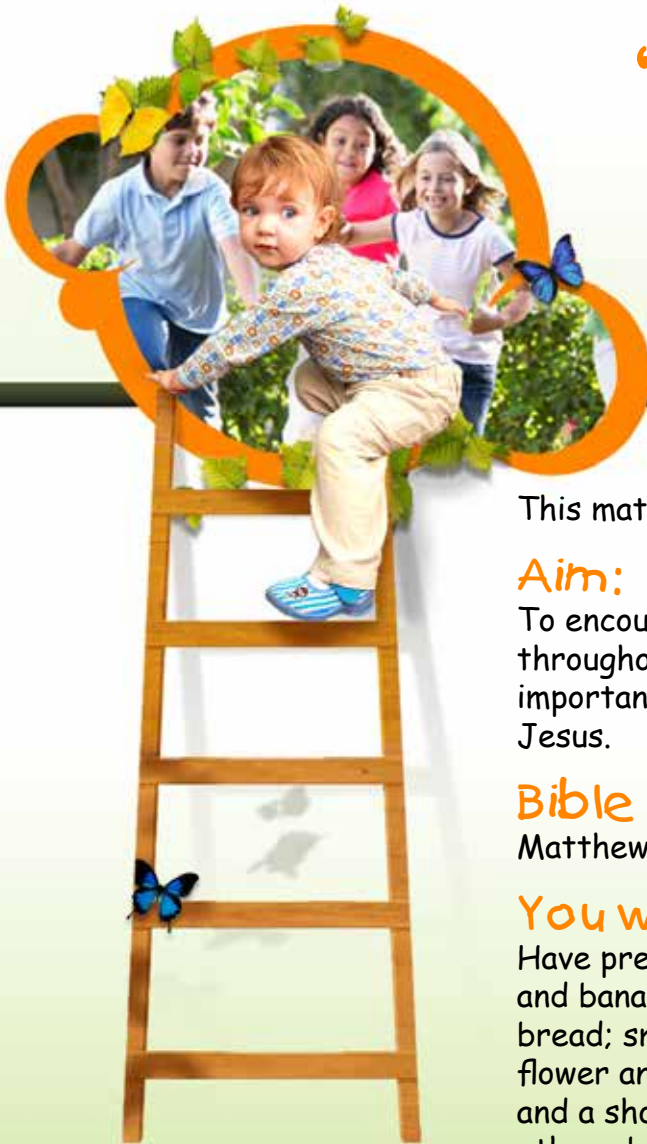


Decision Resources

'Choosing (or Deciding) What Is Best'



This material is suitable for ages 8+ years.

Aim:

To encourage young people to make good choices throughout their lives, emphasizing the most important decision they can make is to follow Jesus.

Bible focus:

Matthew 19:6 - 22 (The rich young ruler).

You will need:

Have prepared five sets of paired objects: banana and banana peel; fresh bread and stale, mouldy bread; smooth paper and wrinkled paper; a fresh flower and a wilted flower; a long, sharpened pencil and a short, blunt one (you may choose to have other objects).

Introduction:

Children should look at the items and choose which is best from each set of two.

Ask: Why did you choose the banana instead of the peel, fresh bread instead of stale, mouldy bread; smooth paper instead of wrinkled? Why did you choose a fresh flower and a long pencil? (Allow time for their responses.) Possibly the reason you chose the items you did is because they are more useful or beautiful.

No one wants to eat a banana peel or mouldy bread. Who would write on wrinkled paper if smooth paper is available? Everyone enjoys a fresh flower more than a wilted one. And a long pencil will last longer than a short one.

When we looked at the items and decided which one was best, we were making a choice. The decision was simple because it was easy to see which item was more valuable to us. Not all choices however, are this simple. Every day we make decisions. And often it can be difficult to decide what is best. Sometimes the choice is between two things, both of which seem good. We might even need to say no to all options because they are negative in some way. Sometimes we forget that we can make choices.

Bible time:

In the Bible, the book of Matthew has a story about a young man who had to make a choice.

Read Matthew 19:16 - 22. (If you have access to the 'Matthew' series of videos produced by The Visual Bible cue it and show this segment. The verses are in the bottom right corner to make it easy for you to find. Alternatively you could use flannel graph, pictures or puppets to tell the story.)

Tell the young people you will be asking them some questions about the story when you have finished. (You could do this as a quiz and have prizes for the team or individual who answers correctly.)

1. What does the Bible tell us about this man? (He was rich.)
2. What question did he ask Jesus? (What did he need to do to get eternal life.)
3. What was Jesus first answer? (Jesus explained to the man that he needed to obey the commandments, which the man said he did already.)
4. What else did he tell the man to do? (Jesus told him to go and sell all he had, and give the money to the poor and to follow Him.)
5. What choice did the man make? (The man chose not to do what Jesus asked and went away sad.)

At the end of the quiz say:

The young man was sad because he loved his riches and could not give them up to follow Jesus. He chose not to follow Jesus that day.

Application:

We can choose to put Jesus first in our lives. Some of you have already made that choice and that's great. But some of you might like to choose to start following Him from today.

If you would like to make that choice today you can pray with me now and ask Jesus to be your friend. I'm going to stop between each sentence so that you can



pray silently to yourself if you would like to make this choice today.

Prayer:

Thank you Jesus for loving me. I am sorry for the wrong choices I've made. I ask you to forgive me and be my friend forever. Please help me to love you and to follow and obey you for the rest of my life. Amen.

Follow up:

Ensure you follow up any children who indicate they said this prayer with you for the first time. For this age group Scripture Union produces Bible reading notes called 'Hot Shots' (8 - 9 years) and 'Snapshots' (9 - 10 years) which are helpful in encouraging children to read their Bible regularly. Linking them to other sections in the corps e.g. Sunday School, SAGALA, Kids Club or Junior Soldiers, will also help with their ongoing spiritual development.

A further counselling resource that may be helpful if a child has more questions is 'Team Talk' again produced by Scripture Union. It is available through their Scripture Union's Resources For Ministry bookshop ph. 02 4337 0200 or check out the website [www. scriptureunion.org.au/resources_ministry.htm](http://www.scriptureunion.org.au/resources_ministry.htm).

This resource includes pages for children who are recommitting their lives or for children who have asked questions about a particular issue. E.g. Why did dad leave home?





