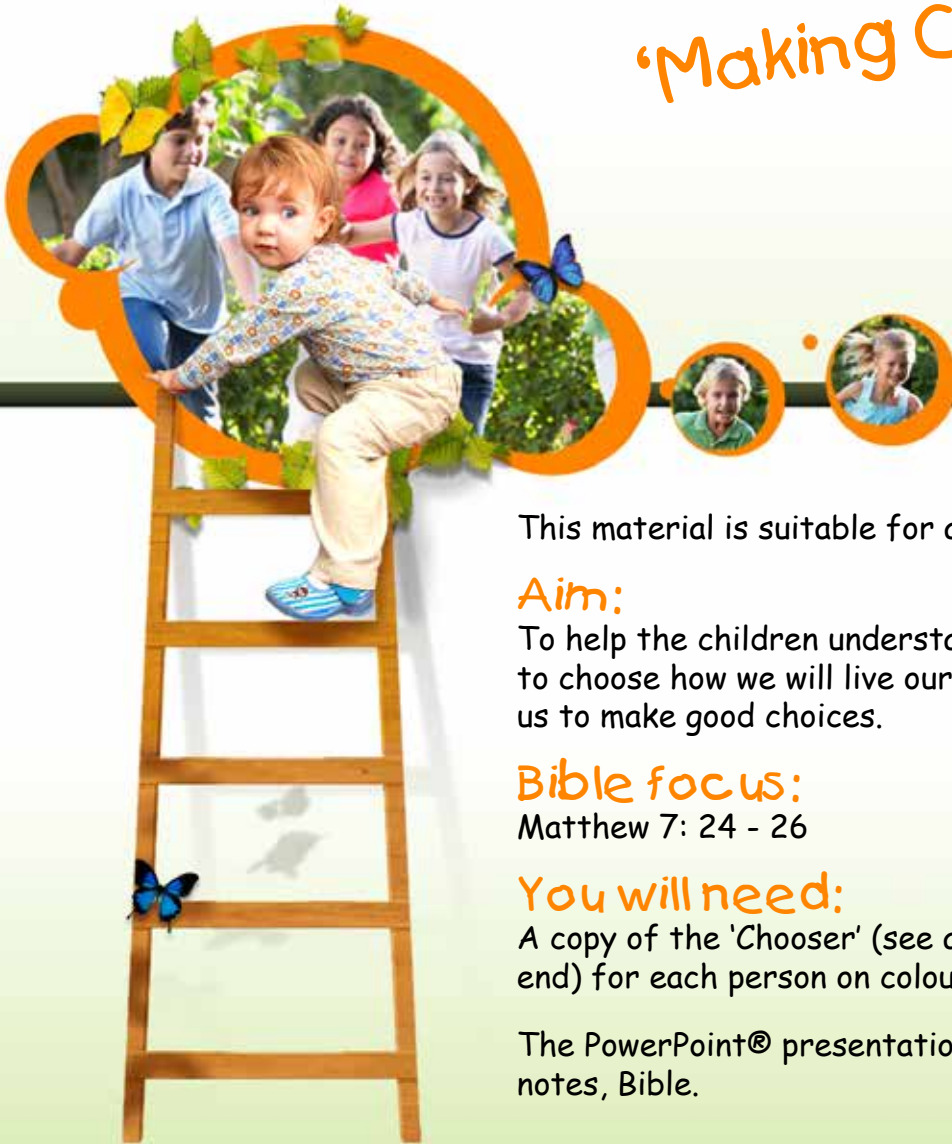


'Making Choices'



This material is suitable for ages 8+.

Aim:

To help the children understand that allows us all to choose how we will live our lives but He longs for us to make good choices.

Bible focus:

Matthew 7: 24 - 26

You will need:

A copy of the 'Chooser' (see attachment at the end) for each person on coloured paper.

The PowerPoint® presentation supplied with these notes, Bible.

Background:

Let the children make a chooser and have fun asking others questions and answering them.

Ask the children the following questions (allow them time to respond):

- ◆ What choices have you made today?
- ◆ What are some things in your life that you didn't have a choice about?
- ◆ What things might you have to make choices about in the future?

Bible time:

The Bible has some interesting things to say about choices.

Read Matthew 7: 24 - 26. In this passage the two men made different choices.

Ask the children the following questions:

- ◆ What were the choices for the two men? (To build on sand or on rock.)
- ◆ Who made the better choice? Why? (The man who built on rock because his

house was still standing after the storm.)

(At this point, use the PowerPoint® presentation. If you don't use the PowerPoint® then condense the following or use your own words.)

1. Start the PowerPoint® so the children see an arrow pointing to their right.

Say: 'God has given us clear instructions through the life of Jesus as recorded in the Bible telling us how we should live our lives. Jesus told the story of the two men who built their houses as an example of what happens when we make good and bad decisions. He has given us a choice about living the right way. Here is an arrow that is pointing to the right, which reminds us that the right way to live our lives is by following what Jesus taught. (Click on the PowerPoint® slide and the arrow will rotate a couple of times and finish still facing to the right.) God sent His own son Jesus to show us the right way to live. We need to make a decision to live Jesus' way by reading the Bible and following his example.'

Point to the arrow and ask, 'You tell me, the right way to live is...?' (Jesus' way.)

2. Say: 'But some people do not choose to follow Jesus' way, in fact they turn their backs on Jesus and they decide to live their own way. They do exactly what they want to do. (Click on the PowerPoint® slide and the arrow will now be pointing to the children's left.) The truth is that in this life we only have two choices - either we live Jesus' way (Click on the PowerPoint® slide and the arrow will be pointing right) or we live our own way (Click on the PowerPoint® slide and the arrow will be pointing left). We cannot live in two directions at the same time; our choice is between the right way and the wrong way.'

Point to the arrow and ask, 'You tell me... the wrong way to live is...?' (Our way).

3. Say: 'There is a problem if we choose to live our lives our own way. If we decide to turn our backs on Jesus and live our lives in a way that is completely opposite to the way that He wants us to live then we find there is nothing that we can do to bring us back to God. The way to God has been blocked. We have been separated from God.'

4. Say: 'And then there is another problem. The Bible tells us that there is a way that seems right to us but that way leads to death or destruction. (Click on the PowerPoint® slide so the arrow now faces down.) If we choose to live our lives our own way (that's the wrong way, remember) then all we can look forward to is being separated from Jesus forever which means we will not be able to live with Jesus in Heaven.'

Response time:

(Click on the PowerPoint® slide so that the arrow is now pointing to the right again.) Say: 'But if we choose to live our lives Jesus' way, the right way, He has promised us that we will live with Him in Heaven forever. (Click on the PowerPoint® slide so the arrow is now pointing up.) Which way will you choose to live your life? (Click on the PowerPoint® slide so the



picture and text appears.) The choice is yours. If you would like to make the decision right now to live Jesus' way there is a simple prayer you can pray. I'm going to say it right now and if you would like to pray it with me I will leave some time after each sentence so you can pray it silently.'

Prayer:

Dear Jesus

Thank you for coming to earth (pause) to show me the right way to live (pause). I want you to be part of my life (pause). I'm sorry I've been living my own way (pause), please help me to live the right way (pause). Amen.

Follow up:

Explain to the children that if they have further questions they would like to ask they can come and speak to you or one of the other leaders about this. Also encourage any children who have prayed this prayer for the first time to come and tell you so you can pray for them this week and help them to keep on trusting that Jesus will help them to live His way.

It will be helpful to have copies of Starting Out: how to be a follower of Jesus for 8 - 11's to help you follow up the children. Part 2 of the Starting Out booklet introduces the children to the Bible and helps them understand what it's like to live as friends of Jesus. Some age-appropriate Bible Reading notes may also be an appropriate method of following up the children who made decisions. These resources are available from your local Scripture Union Resources for Ministry bookshop. Make time to go through the Bible Reading notes to ensure the children have a good understanding of how to use these notes.

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 Resources for Ministry department ph. 02 4337 0200 [www. or Koorong Books \[www.scriptureunion.org.au/\]\(http://www.scriptureunion.org.au/resources/ministry.htm\)](http://www.scriptureunion.org.au/resources/ministry.htm) www.koorong.com.au. 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?

Linking children in to other sections in the corps e.g. Sunday School, SAGALA, Kids Club or Junior Soldiers will also help with their ongoing spiritual development.

