

MANY
faces of
WISDOM

THE COMBINED TEACHER'S GUIDE

SUMMER QUARTER 2020

JUNE • JULY • AUGUST

Christian Education Department
Rev. Garland F. Pierce, Executive Director
Bishop David R. Daniels, Chair

AMEC Publishing House (Sunday School Union)
1722 Scovel St • Nashville, TN 37208

BASIC SUPPLIES

Bible dictionary	writing paper
Bible pictures and maps	DVD recorder/player
CD players	milk crates
chart paper	paper – letter, drawing, pen-
Christian music – books, sheets, recordings	cils, pens, markers
Christian videos and DVDs	poster boards
crayons	robes, scarves
digital camera	old clothing
digital camcorder	scissors, glue, paste
drawing paper	video player

The Teacher's Guide
Liberating Faith Studies
Summer Quarter: June – August 2020
Prepared by Rev. Tashara S. Void

Lesson 1

June 7, 2020

The Call of Wisdom

Devotional Reading: Psalm 34:11-18

Lesson Scripture: Proverbs 1

Focus Scripture: Proverbs 1:1-4, 7-8, 10, 20-22, 32-33

Key Verse: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction. Proverbs 1:7

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Recognize the value of godly wisdom for discerning the direction one should go.
2. Evaluate reasons and motivations for why people do not heed wisdom.
3. Construct strategies not only to spread wisdom but to help people make a conscious effort to apply the standards of wisdom.

Key Terms

- **Wise Dealing** – Show oneself attentive.
- **Simple** – Lacking depth of understanding; inexperienced.
- **Scoffers** – Mockers.
- **Equity** – Even, level, upright.
- **Prudence** – Skill and good judgment.
- **Fear** – Reverence, deep respect.
- **Shrewdness** – Power of devising; discretion.

- **Waywardness** – Turning away, renunciation of belief.

Complacency – Self-satisfaction accompanied by unawareness of deficiencies. **Teaching Strategies**

1. Have students list some influencers (people who have a big following), i.e. – pastors of mega churches, reality TV stars, political leaders, athletes, etc. Have the class list something these influencers have said or done that has influenced other people, and give the effects of their action or words.
2. Ask students who they identify with in the **Case Study**. If some identify themselves as Harriet Tubman, ask how it felt to be in that position? How did it feel to be the voice of wisdom (to call out, to know there is better for someone or a group and be rejected)?
3. Then ask about a time when they were a part of a group that did not listen to wisdom. What kept them from moving forward? What stopped them from listening to wisdom? What was the result of them not taking heed to wisdom's warnings? How do we generally handle rejection of our wisdom? Do we in turn reject the person (or group of people) or, do we change our tactics?
4. *Lessons to Myself from My Younger and Older Self* – have the students write a letter from their younger self to their current self.

Resources: Any instructional materials that are needed by teacher to teach lessons effectively, including but not limited to props, reference tools, chart paper, videos, charts, music, regalia, etc.

Lesson 2**June 14, 2020****The Value of Wisdom****Devotional Reading:** Proverbs 2:12-22**Lesson Scripture:** Genesis 39; Proverbs 2**Focus Scripture:** Proverbs 2:1-11**Key Verse:** "For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding." Proverbs 2:6**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand that the search for the wisdom that comes from God is more important than striving for wealth or any other temporal gain.
2. Value ways God's wisdom guides our lives.
3. Grow more consistent in aligning one's heart, will, and thoughts with God's wisdom.

Key Terms

- **Incline** – To lean towards.
- **Faithful** – Active practice of kindness or piety, loyalty rooted in belief.
- **Scoffers** – Those who make fun of/show contempt.
- **Upright** – Morally correct behavior or thinking.
- **Good** – Pleasant and agreeable.
- **Fear** – Reverence, deep respect.
- **Blameless** – Having integrity/without fault.
- **Soul** – Inner being of a person.
- **Complacency** – Self-satisfaction accompanied by

unawareness of deficiencies.

Teaching Strategies

1. Go through each *If-Then* statement and have students match the *If...* statement with the *Then...* statement. It is okay if some are used twice. There are no right or wrong answers. The key is to have the students expand their understanding of wisdom and the effects wisdom has.
2. Have students describe the best gift they have ever received, and what made it so. Guide the class in comparing these reasons to the reasons we value the gift of wisdom.
3. Describe the connections wisdom might hold with righteousness and justice (v. 9). Can they be separated? Why or why not?
4. Ask: If you seek wisdom, will you also find God? Have student defend their answers.
5. Compare and contrast godly wisdom with various categories of worldly wisdom.
6. Compare and contrast wisdom, knowledge, prudence, and understanding (vs. 10-11).

Lesson 3

June 21, 2020

The Gifts of Wisdom

Devotional Reading: Job 28:12-28

Lesson Scripture: Job 1; 42; Proverbs 8

Focus Scripture: Proverbs 8:8-14, 17-21

Key Verse: “Take my instruction instead of silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold; for wisdom is better than jewels, and all that you may desire cannot compare with her.” Proverbs 8:10-11

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Recognize the incomparable value of wisdom in producing wealth, righteousness, and justice.
2. Appreciate the difference between wisdom's rewards and those of mere wealth.
3. Personally analyze his or her life's pursuit to ensure that godly wisdom, with its attendant rewards, is in view and not a cheap substitute.

Key Terms

- **Twisted** – Tortuous/not straight.
- **Right** – Pleasing.
- **Yield** – Revenue.
- **Crooked** – Perverted.
- **Choice** – Option.
- **Endowing** – Giving possession of.
- **Straight** – Plain, straightforward.
- **Enduring** – Surpassing/lasting.
- **Treasury** – Storehouse.

Teaching Strategies

1. List and discuss the ways that the road to justice is paved by wisdom.
2. List various pursuits in life (education, career, family, etc.).

What questions can we ask of ourselves to analyze if these pursuits are guided by godly wisdom, rather than cheap substitutes?

3. Identify and discuss ways or circumstances where wisdom is more valuable than money (v. 18).
4. The goal of this activity is to get those who are proponents of formal education to understand the complexities that go into making such a decision, and to learn what is necessary to help someone see the value in education. Education takes many forms; some pursue formal education (primary, secondary, and then higher education); others enter the workforce or begin a trade, often receiving on-the-job training and gain knowledge and skill through practice. Reflect on each of these paths to gaining wisdom. What can be involved with each? Which is preferred? How does one make a determination on which is better for an individual?

Split the room into an even number of small groups (no more than 8-10 per group). Evenly assign the groups *Education* or *Profession*. Have the *Education* group(s) list all the ways their topic affirms Proverbs 8. Have the *Profession* group also list all the ways their topic affirms Proverbs 8. Give each group about five minutes to discuss. Have the all of the education groups report first.

Allow class about two minutes to share their thoughts with the larger group. Ask the class not to repeat ideas that have already been stated. Ask if everyone agrees, or ask them to share their insights about *Education's* assessment. Now have the *Profession* group(s) share. Be mindful that there are several people who believe in the value of education and

may have an issue with the *Profession* group going against that. Hopefully, the group affirmation will be that individuals often choose different paths to gain wisdom based on gifts, experiences, circumstances, and the like. The important thing is that we all strive to gain knowledge. Life is about learning, and learning is a life-long process.

Closing Devotion

THE GIFTS ACCORDING TO PROVERBS 8

As a closing act of devotion for this study session, have the learners reflect on these gifts of wisdom as recorded in Proverbs 8 and invite them to meditate on the list and identify the gifts which they want to acquire and how to use wisdom to go about acquiring them.

Resources:

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/life/music/2015/05/15/bb-king-mississippi-mourns/27361575/>

James Brown: "Don't Be a Dropout" <https://g.co/kgs/8Nty98>

Lesson 4

June 28, 2020

Wisdom's Feast

Devotional Reading: Psalms 119: 97-104

Lesson Scripture: Proverbs 9

Focus Scripture: Proverbs 9:1-6, 8-10, 13-18

Key Verse: Lay aside immaturity, and live, and walk in the way of insight. Proverbs 9:6

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Compare and contrast sound judgment and foolish actions.
2. Desire to walk the path of wisdom and receive its benefits,

avoiding the peril of foolishness.

3. Pray for the courage to act wisely.

Key Terms

- **Hewn** – Chop or cleave, carved.
- **Faithful** – Active practice of kindness or piety, loyalty rooted in belief.
- **Scoffers** – Mockers.
- **Without Sense** – Lacking knowledge and understanding.
- **Good** – Pleasant and agreeable.
- **Fear** – Reverence, deep respect.
- **Blameless** – Completeness, integrity.
- **Soul** – Inner being of a person.
- **Complacency** – Self-satisfaction accompanied by unawareness of deficiencies.

Teaching Strategies

1. Discuss ways in which folly leads to destruction, and wisdom is life-giving.
2. Compare and contrast the call and promise of wisdom with that of folly.
3. Distribute the *Life Lessons Playlist* to the students. If the class is small enough, have them each share their wisdom song. If teaching a larger class, have class break into small groups and share among themselves.
4. Before the end of the quarter, allow the class to share (briefly) their feedback on the gathering they hosted. See **Life Application** in the student book.

Note: Each of us is on different parts of the path of wisdom, and it looks different for everyone. The wisdom we need now may look different from what we need later, and that's okay. Just apply God's wisdom and the wisdom from our maturing years.

Resources: Pencils, pens, *Life Lessons Playlist*

<https://spinditty.com/playlists/Life-Lessons-Playlist-35-Best-Songs-With-A-Message>

Lesson 5

July 5, 2020

Wisdom's Vindication

Devotional Reading: Matthew 10:1-14

Lesson Scripture: Matthew 11:1-19

Focus Scripture: Matthew 11:7-19

Key Verse: The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, "Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax-collectors and sinners!" Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds. Matthew 11:19

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explain how the actions of Jesus and John the Baptist, while very different from one another and different from the expected, ultimately displayed divine wisdom.
2. Feel encouraged to behave in ways contrary to the expected in order to follow Jesus.
3. Review one's own behavior to determine whether or not it reflects godly wisdom, and commit to one specific area of improvement.

Key Terms

- **Wilderness** – Lack of population; bare; an untamed land.
- **Prophet** – One who speaks forth by divine inspiration.
- **Astonish** – Strike with panic or shock.
- **Reed** – A tall, slender-leaved plant.
- **Messenger** – Person delegated to carry a message.
- **Anxiety** – Painful sorrow; uneasiness.
- **Soft robes** – Fine clothing.
- **Amaze** – To remove from a standing (fixed) mindset.
- **Obedient** – Under arrangement.

Teaching Strategies

1. Have students review and describe what they expect in the *What Do You Expect?* exercise. Encourage them to really express what they imagine when they hear these things (Gender, hair, clothes, style, speech, demeanor, decorum, education, family, type of car/house/job, etc.). Encourage them to think deeply.
2. Ask, now what if a 15-year-old, unwed, pregnant girl entered your space and said, "I am the one you have been looking for!" How would you respond? What about a 19-year-old boy with big hair, skinny jeans, and a hoody? Or a 36-year-old homeless immigrant? Or a 68-year-old married man with a solid career? Which would you pick as the savior? Why?
3. Who have we rejected because of the package (s)he was in? (A young person with a call or ministry? A woman aspiring to be a bishop or general officer? A young or female pastor? A no

name “disconnected” leader?) Who have we judged based on who we thought someone was, and who we thought should fill a role?

4. *Hancock* may be on Amazon Prime if you are not familiar with the movie. Review the movie before class. Be mindful that there is strong language in the movie.

Resources:

“Whatcha Lookin 4” song and lyrics

<https://youtu.be/Rz0iJKJtbUY>

“May the Work I’ve Done Speak for Me”

<https://youtu.be/qdhh1Hr7DzE>

Lesson 6

July 12, 2020

The Boy Jesus

Devotional Reading: Leviticus 12:1-8; Numbers 3:11-13

Lesson Scripture: Ecclesiastes 3:1-15; Luke 2:39-52

Focus Scripture: Ecclesiastes 3:1, 7b; Luke 2:39-52

Key Verse: The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him. Luke 2:40

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explore the account of Jesus’ experience in the temple at the age of twelve.
2. Appreciate that youth are endowed with the wisdom of God.
3. Engage in activities that make room for the young and gifted.

Key Terms

- **Season** – An appointed time.
- **Wisdom** – Clarity.

- **Astonish** – Strike with panic or shock.
- **Grow** – Gain mastery; improve.

Teaching Strategies

1. **Introduction** – Discuss with students how they would have handled Rita's defiance?
2. **Background Information:**

Jesus was growing physically and spiritually. And, now having the knowledge that she did, Mary stood behind Jesus honing his gifts. Based on Mary encouraging Jesus to perform Jesus' first miracle in later chapters, one can deduce that Mary made sure Jesus kept up with learning the Torah and studying the Talmud. This story is not just one about a child prodigy or a boy beyond his years. This story is about the disruption of a culture – a religious culture that said one had to be of a certain age or training in order to do God's work and a familial culture that said one had to take up the trade of his or her parents.

Sankofa

Background Information

Hansberry was a unique character, being the youngest of seven children, born to parents who had already set a precedent for challenging the status quo. Her parents' zeal for equality fueled her desire to do the same. Leaving both her parents' home and school, Hansberry went to New York to pursue a full-time writing career. Though she successfully worked as a writer and associate editor, it would be years before Hansberry would walk fully into her role as a writer. She became a critically acclaimed playwright, earning the spot of the first black playwright on Broadway, and

youngest American to receive the New York Critics' Circle award.

Hansberry used her work *Raisin in the Sun* to examine Langston Hughes' question, "What happens to a dream deferred? Does it dry up? Like a raisin in the sun?", exposing the economic conditions of black people in Chicago and the difficulties they faced. If it were not for the support of her parents and the notable persons who gave her a platform, it may have been difficult for Hansberry's work to reach the level of fame and impact that it did.

Lesson 7

July 19, 2020

The Wisdom of Jesus

Devotional Reading: Mark 7:14-23

Lesson Scripture: Mark 6:1-6; 7:1-23

Focus Scripture: Matthew Mark 6:1-6

Key Verses: On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, "Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him?..." And they took offense at him. Mark 6:2-3

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Identify the reason(s) the people in Nazareth could not accept the wisdom of Jesus.
2. Have students share their feelings and reactions about times when their wise suggestions were rejected by others.
3. Embrace Jesus' teachings that challenged traditions, and nurtured growth.

Key Terms

- **Wilderness** – A place that is lacking/barren.

- **Prophet** – One who speaks forth by divine inspiration.
- **Astonish** – Strike with panic or shock.
- **Reed** – A tall, slender-leaved plant.
- **Messenger** – Delegate.
- **Anxiety** – Painful sorrow; uneasiness.
- **Soft Robes** – Fine clothing.
- **Obedient** – Under arrangement.

Teaching Strategies

1. Discuss: When did someone you know display surprising insights and knowledge? What was the reaction of others? Was anyone surprised? Did anyone express disbelief or reject the person? What was your personal response?
2. List and discuss traditions held by people today that Jesus' teachings may strongly challenge.
3. Identify the reason or reasons people in Nazareth could not accept the wisdom with which Jesus spoke.
4. Explore the tension between a person and family/hometown using the experiences of your students.

Helpful Hints

Be mindful that Queen Nzinga does not have a “squeaky clean” background, which someone who is familiar with her will use to discredit her work and influence. To counter this, remember the era and what was allowed and was common practice. And, keep the topic focused on Queen Nzinga's rejection at home because of who she came from (a slave) and the fact that she was a woman (which were the two

main reasons for her not initially receiving honor at home).

Resources:

Queen Nzinga

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nzinga_of_Ndongo_and_Matamba

<https://www.blackpast.org/global-african-history/queen-nzinga-1583-1663/>

“Different Drum” by Blanca

<https://youtu.be/ho354ea73TA>

Lesson 8**July 26, 2020****Wisdom: The Way, Truth, and Life****Devotional Reading:** Proverbs 3:13-18**Lesson Scripture:** Proverbs 3:17; 8:32-36; John 14:1-14**Focus Scripture:** John 14:1-14

Key Verse: Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” John 14:6

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explore the encounter between Jesus and the disciples in the upper room.
2. Appreciate the difficulty the disciples had in understanding Jesus.
3. Celebrate the promise of Jesus to prepare a place for Jesus’ followers.

Key Terms

- **Heart** – “The feeling, mood, center of our being.”
- **Place** – A spot where one can settle, abide, dwell.

- **Name** – The character or essence of.
- **Troubled** – Stirred up inside.
- **Way** – Path, journey.
- **Believe** – Have confidence in.
- **Truth** – Fact, reality.

Teaching Strategies

1. So, what was Jesus saying? What did Jesus mean by, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life”? Ask students to share what they believe Jesus is saying here.
2. There may be some controversies concerning how Dr. King lived his life. However, this lesson is to highlight the positive ways in which he lived. Also, people may have varying ideas about whether or not we have reached the promised land, even extreme opposites. To channel the conversation, have the group focus strictly on Dr. King’s “I’ve Been to the Mountaintop” speech, using it as the guide for answering the questions.
3. Split the class into small groups. If smaller class, into pairs. Using Lessons Five (Matthew 11:7-19), Six (Ecclesiastes 3:1, 7b; Luke 2:39-52), and Seven (Mark 6:1-6), list the examples of Jesus being “The Way,” “The Truth,” and “The Life.” Have the class write the book, chapter, and verse.

Resources: Pencils

“I’ve Been to the Mountaintop” by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

<https://m.afscme.org/union/history/mlk/ive-been-to-the-mountaintop-by-dr-martin-luther-king-jr>

Lesson 9**August 2, 2020****Faith and Wisdom****Devotional Reading:** Isaiah 40:1-8**Lesson Scripture:** James 1:1-11**Focus Scripture:** James 1:1-11

Key Verse: If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you. James 1:5

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Consider the relationship between wisdom and perseverance through trials.
2. Affirm the value of trials and hardships in making one a more wise and productive disciple.
3. Pray for godly wisdom by which to endure life's trials and temptations.

Key Terms

- **Joy** – Favor, grace.
- **Complete** – Whole.
- **Doubting** – Not having trust or confidence.
- **Lowly** – Humble.
- **Lacking (vs. 4)** – Lacking, being inferior.
- **Trial** – Test or temptation.
- **Lacking (vs. 5)** – To be destitute, without necessities.
- **Produce** – Accomplish.
- **Generously** – Holding nothing back; opposite of *grudgingly*.

- **Endurance** – Steadfastness.
- **Double-minded** – Split in decision making.

Teaching Strategies

1. Ask class to think of a time when they were facing a tough situation or decision, or received bad news.
2. Make a list of qualities or characteristics that typify the person who has the kind of wisdom James is talking about. Have the class identify a quality from this list that they would like to strengthen.
3. Have class briefly share stories of past experiences with trials and hardships, and how those experiences made them wiser and more productive.
4. Have participants write prayers, asking for godly wisdom, and use those each day to seek help for enduring life's trials and temptations.

Resources: Pencils, paper

Jefferson Pinder

<http://www.jeffersonpinder.com/the-art-of-black-endurance>

Sherman Fleming

<http://www.washingtonart.net/fleming/sherman.html>

Lesson 10

August 9, 2020

Hearing and Doing the Word

Devotional Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

Lesson Scripture: James 1:19-27

Focus Scripture: Same

Key Verse: Be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. James 1:22.

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand that doing good involves actions as well as words.
2. Share feelings about those who say they are Jesus' followers, but refuse to help those living in dire circumstances.
3. Engage in ministry that demonstrates a "religion that is pure and undefiled before God."

Key Terms

- **Law** – A force or influence impelling to action.
- **Sordidness** – Filth, moral defilement.
- **Implanted** – Placed in, which enables something to develop.
- **Save** – Deliver into safety.
- **Rank Growth** – Abundance.
- **Anger** – Full of, swarming with unsettled opposition.
- **Wickedness** – Malice, ill-will, desire to injure.

Teaching Strategies

1. Display a variety of mirrors and discuss the purpose and value of a mirror. Discuss how ridiculous it would be for one to look into the mirror and then ignore what he or she sees. Relate that to verses 22-23 of the text.
2. Research the community to determine areas of need, and put together a team of volunteers to begin a ministry to address one of those needs.

Helpful Hints

1. God's Word is like a mirror. It exposes the parts of ourselves that we try to hide. God's Word lets us know where we falter and where we need more work. The Word reveals the parts of ourselves that we didn't even know were there.
2. Once our being has been exposed and our gifts have been revealed, scripture gives us instructions on what to do with these newfound revelations.
3. As we commit to being doers of the Word, blessings will shower down. Why? Because being a doer means doing more for God's people, taking care of God's children, and pouring resources into and investing in the least among us. And, as we show God our faithfulness over what has already been given, we will be rewarded with an increase to do even more.

Resources: Mirrors

Lesson 11

August 16, 2020

Faith Without Works Is Dead

Devotional Reading: Matthew 18:23-35

Lesson Scripture: James 2:14-26

Focus Scripture: James 2:14-26

Key Verse: Just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead. James 2:26

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Believe that godly wisdom produces alive faith with good works.
2. Reflect on the power of Abraham's and Rahab's examples of

faith in action.

3. Commit to demonstrating faith with tangible works.

Key Terms

- **Faith** – Having trust in.
- **Shudder** – Shiver from fear.
- **Reckoned** – Logical conclusion.
- **Works** – Deeds that carry out an inner desire (intention, purpose).
- **Barren** – Inactive, idle.
- **Friend** – Someone dearly loved and often trusted.
- **Demons** – Fallen angels/devils.
- **Justified** – Approved, to show what is right.
- **Law** – A force or influence impelling to action.

Teaching Strategies

1. Discuss the church's policy for responding when someone in the church or community requests financial assistance for food, clothing, rent, etc. Apply principles from the text to evaluate the policy, and suggest changes if necessary.
2. Summarize the points that are in common, then suggest ways to apply James' unique message.

Resources: A.J. Burgess, Jr. –

The story: <https://abcnews.go.com/US/georgia-toddler-denied-kidney-transplant-due-fathers-criminal/story?id=50885879>

The protests: <https://emorywheel.com/let-the-baby-live-dozens-protest-childs-transplant-delay/>

The update: <https://www.fox5atlanta.com/news/family-friends-celebrate-2nd-anniversary-of-georgia-boys-life-saving-transplant>

Lesson 12

August 23, 2020

Taming The Tongue

Devotional Reading: Isaiah 50:4-11

Lesson Scripture: James 3:1-12

Focus Scripture: James 3:1-12

Key Verse: The tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great exploits. James 3:5

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Learn that godly wisdom teaches believers to control what they say.
2. Recognize the power of the tongue and seek to use their tongues to bring healing and refreshment to others.
3. Repent when students discern that they have used their tongues in destructive ways.

Key Terms

- **Judgment** – Conclusion of right from wrong.
- **Iniquity** – Opposite of justice, divine disapproval.
- **Evil** – Inner or outer malice flowing from a morally-rotten character.
- **Bridle** – a line, rope, or device that is used to restrain
- **Stain** – Defile, pollute.
- **Bless** – Speech or actions which confer benefit.

- **Exploits** – Deeds, achievements, activities.
- **Tame** – Restrain.
- **Curse** – To utter or invoke evil against something or someone.
- **Brackish** – Bitter, pungent.
- **Restless** – Unstable, unsettled.

Teaching Strategies

1. Discuss how this quotation from Benjamin Franklin draws from James 3, or compares and contrasts with it: “A slip of the foot you may soon recover, but a slip of the tongue you may never get over.”
2. Recall the childhood chant, “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.” Have participants tell why they agree or disagree with the sentiment. Given what James says about the destructive power of the tongue (thus, of words), why would a parent teach a child such a slogan?
3. Compare what James says with an incident in Jesus’ life. After accusing the Pharisees of honoring God with their lips but not their lives, Jesus’ disciples asked him, “Do you know that the Pharisees took offense when they heard what you said?” (Matthew 15:12). Given what James says about the tongue, when is it okay to “offend” people with our words?
4. Display a picture of Smokey the Bear pointing his finger at the viewer and saying, “Only you can prevent forest fires.” Include the reference **James 3:5b-6** prominently on the image. Lead the participants in making a pledge to be more careful with their tongues and to prevent “forest fires.”

Helpful Facts

We have seen an increase in suicide among youth and adolescents who have been on the opposing side of technology use. Businesses have gone under due to bad reviews. People's characters have been destroyed, and some have even lost their jobs, relationships, and families.

Resources: Mobile device with internet access

Smokey the Bear

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smokey_Bear

Daily Tongue Evaluation

http://media.focusonthefamily.com/fotf/pdf/fof_daily_broadcast/2018/web-extras/daily-tongue-evaluation-checklist.pdf

Lesson 13

August 30, 2020

Two Kinds of Wisdom

Devotional Reading: Psalm 32:1-11

Lesson Scripture: James 3:13-18; 5:7-12

Focus Scripture: James 3:13-18; 5:7-12

Key Verse: The wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. James 3:17

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Know the difference between godly wisdom and earthly wisdom.
2. Trust that patience in enduring trials will make one mature and wise.
3. Compare and contrast godly and earthly wisdom.

Key Terms

- **Understanding** – Thoroughly knowledgeable.
- **Disorder** – Out of control.
- **Peaceable** – Wholeness from discerning the Lord's will and obeying it.
- **Selfish Ambition** – Self-seeking.
- **Pure** – Uncontaminated, not mixed with guilt or anything condemnable.
- **Grumble** – To groan because of pressure of being exerted forward

Teaching Strategies

1. Compare and contrast what James says about the use of the tongue by one with heavenly wisdom, with that used with earthly wisdom. Discuss how one can be sure to follow the former.
2. Compare and contrast the teaching of James 5:12 with occasions in scripture when making oaths or vows are presented as positives. For example: Acts 18:18; 21:23-26; Hebrews 6:13-18. Encourage the class to work to resolve any apparent discrepancies.
3. Invite participants into a time of reflection on whether they have been using godly or earthly wisdom to make recent decisions. Encourage repentance from earthly wisdom.

Resources: James 3 Commentary

<https://www.preceptaustin.org/james-3-commentary>

The Teacher's Guide
Senior Lessons
Summer Quarter: June 2020 – August 2020
Prepared by Ben Howard, Tim Gossett, Mark Simone,
Maureen Supple

Lesson 1**June 7, 2020****Careful Keepers****Focus Scripture:** Deuteronomy 8:1-10

Key Verses: Keep the commandments of the Lord your God by walking in his ways and by fearing him, because the Lord your God is bringing you to a wonderful land, a land with streams of water, springs, and wells that gush up in the valleys and on the hills. Deuteronomy 8:6-7 (CEB)

Take-Away

Christian disciples should listen to the teachings of Scripture and follow God's commandments carefully.

Bible Background

- The opening verse of chapter 8 is key for all that follows and provides the chapter theme.
- "The entire commandment" (verse 1) refers to the Ten Commandments, not a larger body of laws. The commandments are stated in chapter 5.
- This chapter emphasizes the real danger of the Israelites' forgetfulness. First, they may forget about how God cared for them while wandering in the wilderness. (God led, fed, and clothed them; verses 2-4.) Second, they may forget God's commandments after living in a rich and bountiful land,

focusing on their own accomplishments (verses 11-18).

- Deuteronomy contains several verses similar to other parts of the book. For example, chapter 8 is quite similar to the message of Deuteronomy 4:1-40. Verse 4 is repeated in Deuteronomy 29:5 (and again in Nehemiah 9:21).
- Those who wrote this section of Deuteronomy likely lived in a time shortly before Israel was conquered. The threat of verse 20 apparently was seen as highly likely, and the message of this chapter may have been a final appeal to the people.

Artistic Inspiration

Hand out various art supplies for the students to use. If time permits, call on volunteers to tell about their individual verses and explain why they designed them in the style they did. Suggest they display their verses at home as reminders.

Lesson 2

June 14, 2020

The Value of Wisdom

Focus Scripture: 1 Kings 18:20-39

Key Verse: All the people saw this and fell on their faces. "The Lord is the real God! The Lord is the real God!" they exclaimed. 1 Kings 18:39 (CEB)

Take-Away

Often we are tempted to follow others, but only God offers the power of salvation and the gift of real love.

Bible Background

- The phrase translated "go limping" in verse 21 is challenging to translate, and it is useful to check out other translations. In Hebrew, the phrase is an idiom that literally means "hobbling

upon two branches” and brings to mind the image of a bird jumping between branches. This same phrase is used in verse 26 to describe the prophet's ineffective “hopping dance.”

- Elijah goes out of his way to make sure the deck is fully stacked in Baal's favor and the context is very public. In verse 27, Elijah even makes fun of Baal for not being omnipresent (“wandered away”) or omnipotent (“perhaps he is asleep”).
- Mount Carmel was the highest point in the geographical area, a short range of coastal mountains separating Israel on the south and Phoenicia (the center of Baal worship) to the north.
- Elijah's repair of the destroyed altar of the Lord recalls Joshua's twelve-stone altar set up when Israel first entered the Promised Land.
- The twelve stones represent the unity of the tribes during the days of the monarchy. It symbolically acts as a sign that Ahab has no authority.

Ranking Their Power

There are no perfect rankings because power comes in many forms. Some people have a great desire for power. And sometimes we give things or people undeserved power. Today's Bible verses are about powerful people who put their trust in something that was not so powerful.

Lesson 3

June 21, 2020

The Discover of the Scroll

Focus Scripture: 2 Kings 22:8-20

Key Verses: The Lord must be furious with us because our ancestors failed to obey the words of this scroll and do everything written in it about us. 2 Kings 22:13b (CEB)

Take-Away

Even when we don't mean to do so, we sometimes lose our way. When we realize this has happened, it's important to turn back to God immediately.

Bible Background

- When the lost scroll was discovered, Josiah was in his eighteenth year as king. The Book of Kings skips over the first seventeen years of his reign, and Josiah is primarily remembered as a reformer.
- Scholars have long debated what portion of the Torah was included in the found scroll. Some have argued for chapters from the Book of Deuteronomy, while others have suggested different passages.
- The important part of the scroll is the theological perspective laid out: God will bless Israel with descendants and land to live in, but they must keep God's laws and commandments. Disobedience meant that God would curse them with both destruction and the loss of their land.
- Like his great-grandfather, Hezekiah, Josiah is portrayed as a king who sought prophetic counsel.
- Huldah, a prophetess, said that disaster would come to Israel and Judah. This disaster did come to pass and emphasizes the truth that sometimes our actions set situations in motion that we can't change and, despite our best efforts, we ultimately will suffer the consequences. However, Huldah also prophesied that Josiah himself would die a peaceful death.

Read and Respond

One reason we study the Bible is so we, like King Josiah, can recognize when we've strayed from the path God has for us and

need to make some changes.

Challenge students to choose and read one chapter from the Bible this week. Also, ask them to record one thing this chapter prompts them to work on in their life. (If you want to add more focus, assign a chapter for students to read or restrict them to a single book.)

Lesson 4

June 28, 2020

God, Though Jilted, Still Loves

Focus Scripture: Hosea 1:2-11

Key Verse: Yet the number of the people of Israel will be like the sand of the sea, which can be neither measured nor numbered; and in the place where it was said to them, “You are not my people,” it will be said to them, “Children of the living God.” Hosea 1:10 (CEB)

Take-Away

Even in the midst of pain, we still have hope when our lives are grounded in God.

Bible Background

- The Book of Hosea is the first of the twelve Minor Prophets. This category is a reference to the length of the books and not the importance of the prophets.
- Hosea served as a prophet from approximately 750–722 BCE, just before Assyria conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Hosea was a native of Israel, and during his time as a prophet, seven kings—all bad—reigned.
- Hosea's marriage to a sexually promiscuous wife, as well as the names of his children, are a metaphor for the nation of Israel. The country has engaged in idolatry and has been

unfaithful to Yahweh.

- Later in the book all three childrens' names are reversed to symbolize the change in relationship between God and God's people.
- We don't know if Hosea's wife was a temple prostitute, a prostitute-for-hire, or simply a woman with loose morals.
- At this point in time, Queen Jezebel has been dead for a century, but the idolatrous worship she instituted still plagues Israel.
- The promise made in 1:10 recalls God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 22:17 and later to Jacob in Genesis 32:12. God keeps God's promises.

A Text With Tough Questions

If possible, make available copies of a Bible commentary on the Book of Hosea, the Bible Background from the leader guide, and Internet access.

Ask students to use the resources provided to answer the questions in the student book. Invite students to work together to answer the questions and prepare a short presentation for the class.

Lesson 5

July 5, 2020

God's Care for the Remnant

Focus Scripture: Jeremiah 23:1-8

Key Verse: I myself will gather the few remaining sheep from all the countries where I have driven them. I will bring them back to their pasture, and they will be fruitful and multiply. Jeremiah 23:3 (CEB)

Take-Away

God knows God's people and is with them wherever they are in life.

Bible Background

- This passage in Jeremiah refers to a group many scholars call “the remnant.” The theme of the remnant runs throughout prophetic literature, especially in the words of those prophets who came after Judah was taken into captivity by Babylon. The remnant is made up of those who continue to be faithful in a country that has largely turned its back on God.
- The idea of the remnant also appears in Paul's writings (Romans 11:5) where he says, “at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace” (NIV). This verse refers to Gentiles being added to the original group of Christians who were Jewish.
- The Book of Jeremiah covers the nearly forty-year career of the prophet Jeremiah. His work begins with the reign of King Josiah in the seventh century BC (around 627 BC) and continues until Jerusalem is conquered and the people are exiled.
- In the Bible Lesson, Jeremiah uses a metaphor that describes the leaders of God's people as shepherds and the people as sheep. Jesus uses this metaphor repeatedly in the Gospels.

Lesson 6

July 12, 2020

The Community's Connection With God

Focus Scripture: Daniel 1:8-17

Key Verse: And God gave knowledge, mastery of all literature, and wisdom to these four men. Daniel himself gained understanding of every type of vision and dream. Daniel 1:17 (CEB)

Take-Away

When we place our trust in God to help us grow and develop, God will reward us in unexpected ways.

Bible Background

- The Nebuchadnezzar in today's Bible Lesson is actually Nebuchadnezzar II. The first Nebuchadnezzar was king of Babylon in the late 12th century BC.
- Nebuchadnezzar was the king of Babylon. He first appears in the books of Jeremiah and 2 Kings, both of which describe his sieges on Jerusalem. Jeremiah refers to him as "a destroyer of nations" (Jeremiah 4:7). He was also responsible for looting and destroying the temple.
- The Book of Daniel is divided into two parts. The first six chapters cover the narrative of Daniel and tell stories from the court of Nebuchadnezzar. The final six chapters explore four apocalyptic visions and are more prophetic in nature.
- Daniel was taken into exile in 605 BC by the Babylonians (though there is some scholarly debate regarding the date). He was freed from Babylonian captivity when Babylon was overthrown by the Persian empire. Although a slave, Daniel and his friends held a privileged position in the Babylonian court. The Book of Daniel tells the story of how he and his friends remained true to God and God's laws.
- Daniel's companions Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego appear again in the more famous story of the fiery furnace in Daniel 3.

Focus Scripture: Daniel 3:19-30

Key Verse: Nebuchadnezzar declared: “May the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be praised! He sent his messenger to rescue his servants who trusted him. They ignored the king’s order, sacrificing their bodies, because they wouldn’t serve or worship any god but their God.” Daniel 3:28 (CEB)

Take-Away

Life’s many distractions attempt to pull us away from the true God, but God is present with us and will protect us always.

Bible Background

- Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were punished by King Nebuchadnezzar because they refused to bow before a statue of his likeness and worship him.
- This statue of King Nebuchadnezzar measured 90 feet high by 9 feet wide—not the normal proportions of any human. It is likely the statue was built on a pedestal or exaggerated for dramatic effect.
- The idol was made from gold, however scholars dispute whether it was solid or built overlaying a wooded frame, as was normal during this time.
- The idol was set up in the Dura Valley (3:1), which allowed it to be seen from great distances.
- The word “messenger” in verse 28 can also be translated as “angel.”
- Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego also appear in the story told in Daniel 1. They were part of the group who ate the same diet as Daniel, though they are referred to by different names

until verse 7, when they receive new names.

Based on the death of the guards, the fire must have been at least 1000 degrees. For reference, a first-degree burn occurs at 118°F, a second-degree burn at 131°F, and at 140°F the pain receptors overload and become numb. Cremation happens between 1400 and 1800 degrees.

Lesson 8

July 26, 2020

Remembering the Lord's Mighty Deeds

Focus Scripture: Nehemiah 9:9-17

Key Verses: But our ancestor acted arrogantly. They were stubborn and wouldn't obey your commandments. They refused to obey, and didn't remember the wonders that you accomplished in their midst. They acted arrogantly and decided to return to their slavery in Egypt. But you are a God ready to forgive, merciful and compassionate, very patient, and truly faithful. You didn't forsake them. Nehemiah 9:16-17 (CEB)

Take-Away

As a reminder of God's presence, the people recall the history of both their past failures and all that God has done for them.

Bible Background

- While in exile, Nehemiah was the king's cupbearer, which means he was responsible for testing the king's drinks for poison.
- Nehemiah also led the effort to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem when the people began to return from their time in exile.
- The story of Nehemiah follows the rebuilding of the temple that Ezra recorded. Together Nehemiah and Ezra not only sought to restore Israel's spiritual integrity but also to create a nation by

politically restoring Israel's homeland.

- Nehemiah was instrumental in leading Israel out of captivity and back into freedom before God.
- Today's Bible verses are taken from a much longer speech given by Israel's religious leaders. It was delivered as part of a day dedicated to fasting and the confession of sins.
- In this speech, the leaders of Israel walk through the history of the Israelites and their relationship with God. It is a relationship that spanned roughly eleven hundred years and was filled with ups and downs.

The Story of Our Family

Our own story and family history can be incredibly illuminating when trying to understand our faith and see God's activity in the lives of our family members.

Invite students to take a few minutes to develop a genealogy of their family history as far back as possible. Allow a few minutes for them to work on this individually. When they are finished with the genealogies, ask them to answer the questions in the student book. After a few minutes, invite volunteers to share their genealogies with the group and discuss the importance of family stories. Encourage students who come from nontraditional family backgrounds and reinforce the importance of family in all forms.

Lesson 9

August 2, 2020

Jesus Visits Zacchaeus

Focus Scripture: Luke 19:1-10

Key Verse: When Jesus came to that spot, he looked up and said,

“Zacchaeus, come down at once. I must stay in your home today.”

Luke 19:5 (CEB)

Take-Away

When we view others as neighbors, we are eager to spend time with them.

Bible Background

- In verse 8 of the Common English Bible translation of this passage, Zacchaeus uses the present tense to talk about money (“I give,” “I repay”), but the New Revised Standard Version uses the future tense (“I will give,” “I will pay back”). The CEB is arguably a more accurate reflection of the original Greek which may change our perception of Zacchaeus and this story.
- The previous chapter in Luke contains the story of the Pharisee and the tax collector (Luke 18:9-14). In this story, the tax collector shows humility, in contrast to the Pharisee, and prays, “God, show mercy to me, a sinner” (verse 13). Although the Jews of Jesus’ time may have considered tax collectors as sinners, Luke does not always portray them that way.
- The story of Zacchaeus in the Bible immediately follows a story about Jesus restoring the sight of a blind man (Luke 18:35-43). Both this man (who could not see because he was blind) and Zacchaeus (who could not see Jesus because he was short in stature) wanted a closer relationship with Jesus, and both received the ability to see Jesus.

Lesson 10

August 9, 2020

Jesus in a Samaritan Village

Focus Scripture: John 4:7-30, 39-42

Key Verse: So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. John 4:40 (CEB)

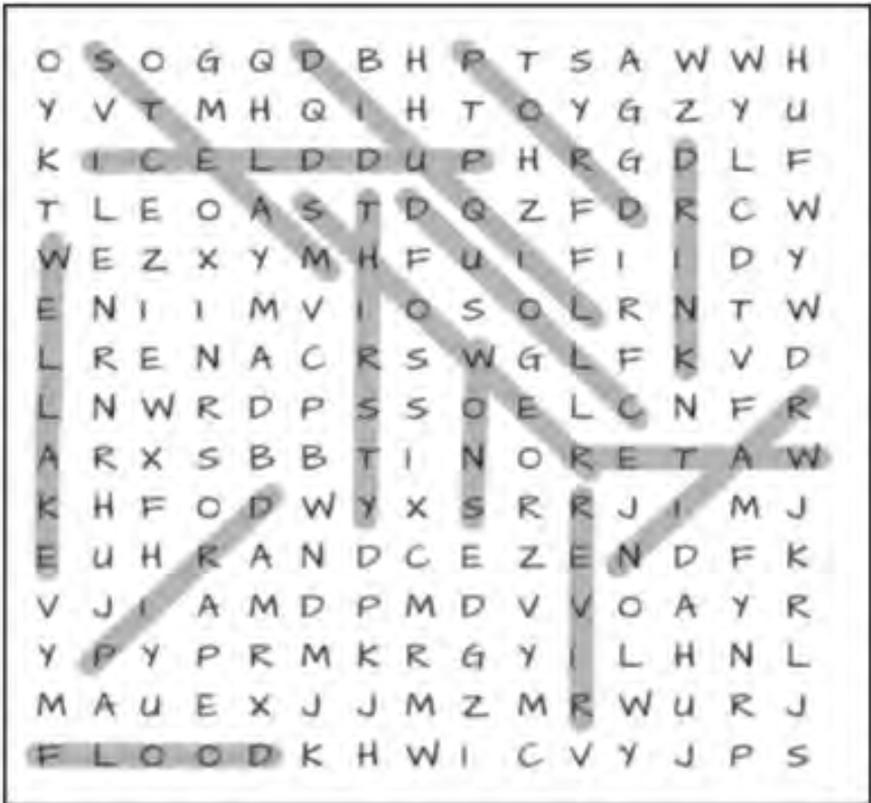
Take-Away

When we view others as neighbors, we are interested in what they say.

Bible Background

- The current location of Jacob's Well, the well mentioned in today's Bible Lesson, is in the West Bank city of Nablus. Its mention in today's Scripture is the only one in the New Testament.
- When the Samaritan woman says that her ancestors worshiped "on this mountain" (verse 20), she is referring to Mt. Gerizim, one of two mountains nearby. The other is Mt. Ebal.
- One of the disagreements between Jews and Samaritans was over where the temple was meant to be constructed. Jews contended it should be in Jerusalem, but Samaritans believed Mt. Gerizim should be its site.
- In Deuteronomy 27:4-8, Moses commands the Israelites to construct an altar of uncut stones on a mountain. In the Masoretic text, dating back to around the 9th century CE and considered the authoritative basis for the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament), the mountain mentioned is Mt. Ebal. However, recent discoveries in the Dead Sea Scrolls, which are centuries older, name Mt. Gerizim as the site.
- Deuteronomy 27 continues and describes a ceremony of blessing from Mt. Gerizim and cursing from Mt. Ebal (verses 11-26).

Water Is Wet



Listen Closely

One definition of an **icebreaker question**, according to indeed.com, is, “**Icebreaker questions** are thought-provoking questions you can use to encourage people to talk and get to know them better. These questions can be used in most situations where fun, light-hearted conversation is needed to lighten the mood and encourage real bonding.”

Lesson 11

August 16, 2020

The Good Samaritan

Focus Scripture: Luke 10:25-37

Key Verse: The Samaritan went to him and bandaged his wounds, tending them with oil and wine. Then he placed the wounded man on his own donkey, took him to an inn, and took care of him. Luke 10:34 (CEB)

Take-Away

When we view others as neighbors, we work toward their well-being.

Bible Background

- The legal expert quotes two passages in response to Jesus' question: Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18. The passage from Deuteronomy is part of a daily Jewish prayer (Deuteronomy 6:4-9) called the *shema*, from the Hebrew command to "Listen!"
- The road from Jerusalem to Jericho is long and steep, and it passes through desolate mountain ravines that easily could provide cover for thieves.
- The Gospel of Luke does not contain the words good Samaritan. Today when we call someone a "good Samaritan," we mean they help others even at their own expense, as did the man in Jesus' parable.
- All fifty states and the District of Columbia enforce some type of good Samaritan law. These laws protect "good Samaritans" (people who willingly assist others who are in danger) from being sued if unintended consequences result from their well-intentioned assistance.
- The oil and wine poured on the traveler's wounds was a traditional treatment. Modern scientists have discovered that compounds in wine act as antiseptics.

Lesson 12**August 23, 2020****Jesus Heals a Gentile Woman's Daughter****Focus Scripture:** Matthew 15:21-28

Key Verse: Jesus answered, "Woman, you have great faith. It will be just as you wish." And right then her daughter was healed. Matthew 15:28 (CEB)

Take-Away

When we view others as neighbors, we are generous with them.

Bible Background

- Both Matthew and Mark position this story of a Gentile woman begging for "crumbs" between two stories of people being fed miraculously. In Matthew 14:13-21, "five thousand men plus women and children" (verse 21) are fed with five loaves and two fish; in Matthew 15:32-38, "four thousand men ate, plus women and children" (verse 38) from seven loaves and a few fish. In both cases, there were baskets full of leftovers.
- The Greek word used here for "dog" is *kunarion*, which refers to a pet dog. In contrast, in Matthew 7:6, where Jesus says not to give holy things to dogs, the Greek word used is *kuón*, which means a loose dog that scavenged on the streets.
- Matthew called the woman a "Canaanite" (15:22), but in Jesus' time an area called Canaan no longer existed. By using this term, Matthew marked the woman not only as a Gentile but also as a descendant of the people conquered by the Israelites. Mark called her Greek (7:26) and said she was born in Syrophenicia, the area where Jesus was traveling.

Lesson 13**August 30, 2020****Jesus Frees a Demon-Possessed Man****Focus Scripture:** Mark 5:1-20

Key Verse: "Go home to your own people," Jesus said, "and tell

them what the Lord has done for you and how he has shown you mercy.” Mark 5:19 (CEB)

Take-Away

When we view others as neighbors, we accept that their past does not define them.

Bible Background

- The demon-possessed man gives his name as “Legion,” which is a reference to the basic military unit of Roman soldiers. A legion usually included three to six thousand soldiers.
- At the time it was believed that multiple demons could inhabit a person. As a result, Mark switches between the singular (“he responded” in verse 9) and the plural (“they begged” in verse 12).
- The actions of the demoniac mirror those described in Isaiah 65:4-5. Living among tombs and eating pork were actions performed by people who did not believe in the God of Israel. Numbers 19:16 states that touching a grave makes someone unclean, and Leviticus 11:7 says that Jews may not eat the flesh of pigs.
- This story of Jesus subduing a man who clearly was believed to be dangerous immediately follows the story of Jesus calming a dangerous storm on the Sea of Galilee (Mark 4:35-41). The people living in the area were unsettled at the display of God’s power.
- The Gospels of Matthew (8:28- 34) and Luke (8:26-39) also tell this story, though there are some differences in details.

The Teacher's Guide
Intermediate Lessons
Summer Quarter: June 2020 – August 2020
Prepared by Faith M. Waters

Lesson 1**June 7, 2020****The Call of Wisdom****Lesson Scripture:** Proverbs 1**Focus Scripture:** Proverbs 1:1-4, 7-8, 10, 20-22, 32-33**Key Verse:** The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction. Proverbs 1:7**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Recognize the importance of godly wisdom when making decisions.
2. Value godly wisdom as life choices are decided.
3. Consult the Word of God to make wise decisions.

Vocabulary

- **Wisdom** – The ability to judge rightly.
- **Righteousness** – Behaving according to God's Word.
- **Equity** – Acting fairly.
- **Shrewdness** – Cleverness (at judging people or situations).
- **Prudence** – Carefulness.
- **Entice** – To persuade.
- **Scoffers** – Those who ridicule others.
- **Complacency** – To be satisfied.

Teaching Strategies

1. *Proverb* is a translation of the Hebrew word *mashal*, which means “a saying.”
2. Ice Breaker: say to the class, “Can you remember any current news stories or headlines that exhibit people acting foolishly? What about people making wise decisions?” The class can give examples of friends or family members acting foolishly or wisely. After they respond, say, “Today we will discuss the importance of using godly wisdom when faced with life situations.”
3. Be sensitive to students who live with parents who do not use wisdom when making personal decisions, which in turn negatively impacts their lives.
4. Be sensitive to students who have issues with identifying wisdom as a female. It is important to explain how wisdom is being personified in the scriptures.
5. Be sensitive towards students who may have learning disabilities, and are called offensive names by others. They may not feel comfortable talking about using wisdom.
6. **Life Application** answers: 1. Bezaleel was a wise artist and builder. He designed and supervised the construction of the tabernacle and its utensils in the wilderness; 2. Joshua was a wise leader. He learned by observing Moses, obeyed God, and led the Israelites into the Promised Land; 3. Abigail was a wise wife. She managed her household very well in spite of a husband who was a mean alcoholic; 4. Stephen was a wise leader. He organized the distribution of the food to the Grecian widows and preached the Gospel to the Jews; and 5. Jesus Christ was a wise youth. Jesus is a wise Savior; and,

he embodies the wisdom of God. Jesus Christ not only lived a perfect life, but died on the cross to save us and make God's wise plan of eternal life available to us.

Resources: Newspapers, magazines

Lesson 2

June 14, 2020

The Value of Wisdom

Lesson Scripture: Genesis 39; Proverbs 2

Focus Scripture: Proverbs 2:1-11

Key Verse: For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. Proverbs 2:6

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Know that God will fulfill all our needs.
2. Desire God's wisdom more than craving wealth or fame.
3. Focus our hearts on the will and wisdom of God on a consistent basis.

Vocabulary

- **Wisdom** – The ability to judge rightly.
- **Righteousness** – Behaving according to God's Word.
- **Equity** – Fairness toward others.
- **Treasure** – To accumulate and store something valuable.
- **Prudence** – Carefulness.
- **Attentive** – Listening or watching carefully.
- **Blameless** – Having done nothing bad or wrong.

Teaching Strategies

1. Ice Breaker: After everyone arrives, say, "We are going to

play a game of Hide and Seek. Instead of you hiding, I hid small gifts around the room, such as book markers, wrapped candy, fruit, plastic bracelets, etc. You have 5 minutes to find the treasures. Go!" (You can find small gifts on sites like the Oriental Trading website.) Once youth are finished, tell them, "You looked diligently for the treasures hidden around the room. God wants us to diligently seek out and value God's wisdom contained in the Bible. We will be blessed in doing so."

2. Be sensitive towards students who may live in impoverished areas and have no valuables.
3. Be sensitive towards students who may be experiencing injustice.
4. Be sensitive to students who have issues with identifying wisdom as a woman. It is important to explain how wisdom is personified in the scriptures.
5. Read Genesis 39 and prepare for class by identifying how Joseph acted wisely, the injustices he suffered, and how God gave him favor. Divide the class in two. After each side discusses their responses, ask if any of them have experienced injustices, or discuss current events that demonstrate injustice.

Helpful Hints

1. We have to follow God's plan for our lives when we practice wisdom.
2. The church offers youth opportunities to experience how knowledge, wisdom, justice, and faithfulness work together for the building of God's kingdom.

Resources: Paper, pencils

Lesson 3**June 21, 2020****The Gifts of Wisdom****Lesson Scripture:** Job 1; 42; Proverbs 8**Focus Scripture:** Proverbs 8:8-14, 17-21

Key Verses: Take my instruction instead of silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold; for wisdom is better than jewels, and all that you may desire cannot compare with her. Proverbs 8:10-11

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Recognize wealth, righteousness, and justice are the benefits of godly wisdom.
2. Desire to act in a fair and just manner.
3. Demonstrate fairness and just behavior while in pursuit of life's rewards.

Vocabulary

- **Wisdom** – The ability to judge rightly.
- **Righteousness** – Behaving according to God's Word.
- **Instructions** – Teachings.
- **Arrogance** – Pride, overconfidence.
- **Prudence** – Carefulness.
- **Perverted** – Deviating greatly from what is accepted as right or proper.
- **Prosperity** – Well-being, success.
- **Justice** – Doing that which is right and fair.

Teaching Strategies

1. Be sensitive to students who have issues with identifying

wisdom as a woman. It is important to explain how wisdom is personified in the scriptures.

2. Research the book of Job and provide additional information to the class. Job is an example of wisdom because he trusted in God; carefully listened to God and people; guarded his speech; and was fair in his treatment of his children and people.
3. Research the current value of an ounce of silver and gold before class. It may have to be provided to the class if they lack access to Wi-Fi or the Internet.
4. Be sensitive towards students who have experienced family or friends who lost personal relationships and material possessions because of their faith in Christ.
5. Discuss the value of good advice by referring to Psalm 73:24a.

Lesson 4

June 28, 2020

Wisdom's Feast

Lesson Scripture: Proverbs 9

Focus Scripture: Proverbs 9:1-6, 8-10, 13-18

Key Verse: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight. Proverbs 9:10

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Recognize the difference between wise and foolish actions.
2. Appreciate the value of wisdom and using it to avoid foolishness.
3. Take steps to grow in the fear and knowledge of God, which can lead to wiser decisions.

Vocabulary

- **Wisdom** – Good judgment.
- **Hewn** – Cut or carved wood or stone.
- **Immaturity** – Lacking the wisdom usually associated with adults.
- **Insight** – A clear perception of something.
- **Scoffer** – One who ridicules others.
- **Rebuke** – To give criticism.
- **Sheol** – The grave or place of the dead.

Teaching Strategies

1. The invitations to the feasts are somewhat similar to the parable of the Great Banquet in Luke 14:15-24. Discuss the similarities and differences with the class.
2. Be sensitive towards students who may not have adequate food available at home. They may be limited to eating unhealthy food.
3. Activity: Bring popsicle sticks and glue to class for students to assemble a house. Discuss the importance and purpose of a house.
4. This scripture declares that the wise love wisdom. Discuss why it is important to get knowledge and understanding about God.
5. Be sensitive towards students who may have made poor decisions concerning personal relationships.

Resources: Popsicle sticks, glue

Lesson Scripture: Matthew 11:1-19

Focus Scripture: Matthew 11:7-19

Key Verse: “The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax-collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.” Matthew 11:19

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Discover that Jesus and John the Baptist were unpopular but both had divine wisdom.
2. Appreciate that by following Jesus it is okay to be unpopular with others.
3. Commit to using godly wisdom when making choices.

Vocabulary

- **Wilderness** – A dry, barren, unfertile land.
- **Prophet** – God’s spokesperson, the divinely called person who announces the will of God to people.
- **Prophecy** – To be able to reveal the will of God about future events.
- **Glutton** – Someone who eats too much.
- **Vindicate** – To show that somebody or something is justified or correct.

Teaching Strategies

1. Discuss the similarities between Elijah and John the Baptist.
2. Be sensitive towards those who are bullied for being different.
3. Share more background information on the life of John the Baptist with the class.
4. Share examples of people in the Bible who behaved in unusual or unexpected ways, but were displaying godly wisdom (e.g.,

Noah; Esther; the persistent widow in Luke 18; Paul). Say, "What do these people actions suggest about living a wise life?"

Helpful Facts

1. John was reclusive, lived in the wilderness, and fasted. Jesus and the disciples did not fast and mingled among tax collectors/sinners. Jesus' and John's social interactions were dissimilar, but both were considered controversial.
2. The mention of violence to the Kingdom is a precursor to John's violent fate (Matthew 14:10).
3. Matthew 11:10 is drawn from Malachi 3:1 and is also reflected in Mark 1:2 and Luke 7:27.

Special Concerns

This Sunday is the day after Independence Day (Fourth of July) in the United States.

Lesson 6

July 12, 2020

The Boy Jesus

Lesson Scripture: Ecclesiastes 3:1-15; Luke 2:39-52

Focus Scripture: Ecclesiastes 3:1, 7b; Luke 2:39-52

Key Verse: After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Luke 2:46

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Discover what happened with Jesus, at the age of twelve, when Jesus visited the temple.
2. Marvel at the wisdom God gives youth.
3. Demonstrate godly wisdom through positive activities.

Vocabulary

- **Season** – Appointed/set apart period of time.
- **Favor** – Grace, kindness, pleasure.
- **Amazed** – Filled with wonder.
- **Astonished** – Very surprised.
- **Anxiety** – Feelings of worry.
- **Treasured** – To regard somebody or something as valuable.
- **Divine** – Related or connected to God.

Teaching Strategies

1. Briefly discuss the meaning of Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 and give examples for each verse.
2. Before class, spend time researching more information on Ecclesiastes and Luke to share with the class.
3. Show a movie clip that demonstrates someone who misunderstands another person.
4. In the **Life Application** section, the questions students give to the teacher on index cards may have to be answered by the pastor or another church leader.

Scripture Facts

1. The account of young Jesus in the temple is only recorded in the Gospel of Luke.
2. All males ages twelve years and older were required to attend the three feasts according to the law. They often took their families.
3. Verse 52 appears to be borrowed from 1 Samuel 2:26.

Helpful Hints

“Be in my Father’s house” can also be translated, “Be involved in my Father’s affairs” and, “Be among those belonging to my Father.” In either case, Jesus’ response indicates awareness that the relationship with the heavenly Father was of greater importance than the earthly one (Mary’s question in Luke 2:48).

Resources: Index cards, pencils

Lesson 7

July 19, 2020

The Wisdom of Jesus

Lesson Scripture: Mark 6:1-6; 7:1-23

Focus Scripture: Mark 6:1-6

Key Verse: On the sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. They said, “Where did this man get all this? What is this wisdom that has been given to him?” Mark 6:2

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand the reasons the people of Nazareth rejected Jesus’ wisdom.
2. Repent of occasions when the wisdom in Jesus’ words was rejected.
3. Commit to adhering to Jesus’ teachings that go against cultural norms but promote growth.

Vocabulary

- **Teach** – To impart knowledge.
- **Astounded** – Very surprised.
- **Deed** – An act or work.

- **Offense** – Something that causes displeasure, anger, or hurt.
- **Honor** – To have or show great respect to someone.
- **Unbelief** – Lack of faith, distrust.

Teaching Strategies

1. Be sensitive towards students who are enduring or endured bullying.
2. Be ready to discuss: “God desires for us to love one another. We are not to bully others.”
3. Be sensitive towards students who are being mistreated at home by parents or siblings.
4. Discuss Mark 7:1-23 to stress the importance of obeying God’s Word versus traditions.
5. After reading the definition of bullying, suggest students go on YouTube and watch a video clip on bullying others.

Helpful Hints

1. Bullying can be verbal, physical, financial, or emotional mistreatment.
2. Some students may mention that certain leaders are bullies based on their public and private behavior.
3. After the students complete the **Life Application** section referencing Richard Allen, give a summary of Bishop Allen’s life and ministry. Other AME Church members that God used to do extraordinary work are bishops, Rosa Parks, Gwen Ifill, etc.

Lesson 8

July 26, 2020

Wisdom: The Way, Truth, and Life

Lesson Scripture: Proverbs 3:17; 8:32-36; John 14:1-14

Focus Scripture: John 14:1-14

Key Verse: Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” John 14:6

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explore the encounter Jesus had with the disciples in the Upper Room, about being the only path to the Father and going to prepare a place for believers.
2. Appreciate why the disciples had trouble understanding Jesus' proclamations.
3. Celebrate Jesus' promises and trust that our prayers are heard.

Vocabulary

- **Troubled** – To feel anxious or upset.
- **Believe** – To have faith or confidence in God.
- **Prepare** – To make ready, arrange.
- **Dwell** – Live.
- **Glorified** – Honored.

Teaching Strategies

1. Icebreaker: Using Google Maps or another directions App, let each student put in their home address to start, and the church address as the destination. Discuss the various ways they can get to church. Then say, “The only path to get to God is through Jesus Christ. There are no alternative routes.”
2. After doing research, discuss with the class the beliefs of various groups about God and/or heaven (also talk about atheists).

3. Discuss the good advice contained in Proverbs 3:17 and 8:32-36. Compare and contrast those scriptures with John 14:1-14.
4. Ask the question, "What can cause us to have trouble understanding Jesus' teachings?"
5. As an alternative to the **Bible Story**, let the class role-play the discussion between Jesus and the disciples in the Upper Room.

Helpful Hints

1. The Farewell Discourse is found in John 14–17.
2. The unity of the Father and the Son (14:11) is a recurrent theme in John's Gospel.
3. Life Application statements: 1. T; 2. F; 3. T; 4. F; 5. F; 6. T; 7. T; 8. F; 9. F; 10. T.

Lesson 9

August 2, 2020

Faith and Wisdom

Lesson Scripture: James 1:1-11

Focus Scripture: James 1:1-11

Key Verse: If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you. James 1:5

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Analyze wisdom's role as we endure life's trials.
2. Appreciate how fiery trials make us wiser.
3. Pray for wisdom and endurance as we face life's trials and temptations.

Vocabulary

- **Trial** – A painful experience that tests one's ability to endure.

- **Joy** – Happiness, gladness, delight.
- **Endurance** – The ability to tolerate prolonged suffering or hardship.
- **Generous** – Willing to give money, help, or time freely.
- **Ungrudgingly** – Feeling or showing no reluctance or reservations.
- **Unstable** – Apt to change, uncertain.
- **Boast** – To praise or exalt oneself.

Teaching Strategies

1. As leader of the Jerusalem church, James was overseer of Jewish believers everywhere. They came annually to the great feasts held in the capital city from every part of the Roman Empire.
2. Role-play occasions when youth are tested, and let students give responses about the proper choices. For example, friend steals from a store; forwarding inappropriate pictures via social media; cheating on a test; taking drugs; drinking alcohol; breaking into a neighbor’s car.
3. Be sensitive towards students whose families have wealth and feel like they are better than others.
4. Be sensitive towards students that may be living in poverty and feel Jesus has not responded to their prayers to have more wealth. They may be looked down upon by others at church, school, and the community.
5. Verse 2 represents the first of fourteen times that James addresses his readers as “brothers (and sisters),” (Greek, *adelphoi*). See 1:16, 19; 2:1, 5, 14; 3:1, 10, 12; 4:11; 5:7, 10,

- 12, 19 (except the NRSV does not translate *adelphoi* in 1:16, 19; 5:7, 10, 12).
- Using art supplies, invite students to draw a picture to depict the metaphor of God giving wisdom generously and ungrudgingly.
 - Instead of letting the students write a prayer in the book, provide an index card to write it. Allow students to take the index card, and use it each day to seek help for enduring life's trials and temptations. Suggest they find one or two scriptures to write on the card and memorize as well.
 - Closing Devotions song, "I Love the Lord; He Heard My Cries" by Whitney Houston (<https://youtu.be/iPLP1ui4YNc>) found on YouTube. Use the song during the closing.

Resources: Art supplies, paper, index cards, smartphone with access to YouTube

Lesson 10

August 9, 2020

Hearing and Doing the Word

Lesson Scripture: James 1:19-27

Focus Scripture: James 1:19-27

Key Verse: But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. James 1:22

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Discover what "be doers of the word" means for believers.
- Feel compassion for the poor, sick, and needy.
- Commit to serve others in need.

Vocabulary

- Righteousness** – Behaving according to God's Word.
- Sordidness** – To demonstrate the worst aspects of human

nature such as immorality, selfishness, and greed.

- **Meekness** – Quietness, gentleness.
- **Deceive** – To convince yourself of something that is not true; lie.
- **Bridle** – To exercise control or restraint.
- **Undefiled** – Perfect, whole, unpolluted.

Teaching Strategies

1. Be sensitive towards those who have hearing or speech challenges.
2. Be sensitive towards those who live in environments where angry outbursts are the norm.
3. Discuss how we should handle people who act in an ungodly manner towards us in speech and actions.
4. Play a listening game. The class forms a horizontal line. The first person is given a statement to repeat to the next person, and they repeat it to the next person, etc. The last person tells the teacher the statement. Most often the last statement given is not the original one. Say to the class, "We have to pay attention and listen to others. If we don't, we may miss an important message."
5. Discuss Matthew 15:10-20, about inner purity and defilement. Emphasize that defilement comes from within, and out of our mouths by what we speak.
6. The class may want to volunteer with local organizations to help those in need. Organizations that help others include local church Missionary Society; YPD, Compassion International; Feed the Children; Red Cross; Salvation Army. They can also partner with another church or individual faith community to do a service project.

Lesson 11**August 16, 2020****Faith Without Works Is Dead****Lesson Scripture:** James 2:14-26**Focus Scripture:** James 2:14-26**Key Verse:** For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead. James 2:26**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explore the differences between faith that is empty talk and a faith that is proved by actions.
2. Appreciate examples of faith in action, such as Abraham and Rahab.
3. Commit to exhibit our faith by our actions.

Vocabulary

- **Righteousness** – Behaving according to God's Word.
- **Faith** – To believe and trust in God.
- **Works** – Deeds or actions.
- **Dead** – Lacking any signs of life.
- **Shudder** – To shake violently.
- **Justified** – Made acceptable, right with God.

Teaching Strategies

1. Compare and contrast James 2:14-26 with Romans 4:1-5.
2. Research the lives of Abraham and Rahab to share additional info with the class. Or the students can do research through electronic devices.
3. In Hebrews 11, there is a list of heroes of the faith. Let each student take one of the listed persons and research that person's life.

4. The scripture teaches that we are showing faith by helping to meet the needs of others who are suffering or struggling.
5. Discuss daily occasions when we can do good works at home, school, church, or community.
6. Be sensitive towards students who have to perform well in athletics, schoolwork, etc., to meet their parents’ approval. They may believe it has to be the same way with God.

Scripture Facts

In verse 19, “You believe that God is one,” refers to one of the most basic tenets of the Jewish faith (Deuteronomy 6:4).

Lesson 12

August 23, 2020

Taming the Tongue

Lesson Scripture: James 3:1-12

Focus Scripture: James 3:1-12

Key Verse: From the same mouth come blessing and cursing.

My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be so. James 3:10

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explore how powerful words can either heal or harm others.
2. Repent of times when our words have harmed others.
3. Commit to controlling one’s tongue so words spoken bring healing.

Vocabulary

- **Bridle** – A device used to control or restrain animals.
- **Bits** – A part of a bridle consisting of a metal mouthpiece held in a horse’s mouth to control the horse.
- **Iniquity** – Great injustice or extreme immorality.
- **Tame** – To subdue.

- **Cursing** – Uttering profanity or blasphemy.
- **Blessing** – Approval or good wishes.

Teaching Strategies

1. Study Matthew 12:34-37 and 15:1-20 and use it to explain the power of our tongues.
2. James speaks of the tongue as if it operates independently. Compare this with what Jesus says about the role of the heart in what comes out of the mouth (Matthew 12:34-37). Controlling the heart, then, becomes the key to controlling the tongue.
3. Before class, ask a student to find a rap song that has a positive message. Then ask another student to find a rap song that has degrading words and message. Compare and contrast the two songs during class. Pay close attention to and be sensitive to the language in the songs when discussing.
4. There has been an increase in hate speech and incidents throughout the world. Show a video clip of hate speech and have youth discuss how it makes them feel. Discuss how it impacts the children and youth.
5. Show videos to demonstrate the use of a bridle with a horse, a rudder for a boat, and how a spark can start a blazing fire.
6. The cards created by the students can be given to the elderly, sick, pastor, family members, friends, neighbors, etc.

Resources: Mobile device with YouTube/Internet access

Lesson 13

August 30, 2020

Two Kinds of Wisdom

Lesson Scripture: James 3:13-18; 5:7-12

Focus Scripture: James 3:13-18; 5:7-12

Key Verse: The wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. James 3:17

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Interpret the difference between godly and earthly wisdom.
2. Appreciate that enduring trials will make us mature and wise.
3. Commit to demonstrating godly wisdom and peaceful behavior towards others.

Vocabulary

- **Gentleness** – Mildness, kindness.
- **Envy** – Jealousy.
- **Selfish** – Concerned with one's own interests, needs, and wishes while ignoring those of others.
- **Hypocrisy** – To pretend to be what you are not.
- **Peace** – A state of security and tranquility.
- **Patient** – Capable of waiting without becoming upset.
- **Endurance** – Ability to bear prolonged hardship.
- **Compassionate** – Showing feelings of empathy for the suffering of others, often with a desire to help.
- **Condemnation** – Being without faith in Christ and judged guilty of committing sin.

Teaching Strategies

1. Remind students that no matter what they have done in the past, once they receive Jesus Christ as their Savior they are forgiven. If there are students present who are not saved, be prepared to explain the way to salvation. They can begin

today to yield to godly wisdom.

2. Like a tree, one with true wisdom is known by what he or she produces.
3. **Life Application** section: Seven characteristics are 1) Purity; 2) Peace; 3) Gentleness; 4) Willing to yield; 5) Mercy; 6) Good fruits; and 7) No favoritism. James 3:17-18 provides a list of what might be called the “fruits of wisdom,” similar to the “Fruit of the Spirit” in Galatians 5.
4. Review the story of Job with class, listing the trials Job endured and contrasting them with his restoration.
5. James’s prohibition on swearing (taking oaths) draws from the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:33-37).

The Teacher's Guide
Junior Lessons
Summer Quarter: June – August 2020
Prepared by Rev. Rachel Williams-Glenn

Lesson 1**June 7, 2020****Listen to God's Wisdom****Lesson Scripture:** Proverbs 1**Focus Scripture:** Proverbs 1:1-4, 7-8, 10, 20-22, 32-33**Key Verse:** Those who listen to me...will be secure...and will live at ease. Proverbs 1:33**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Compare the ways that modern people receive urgent messages to the way Wisdom reaches out to us.
2. Explore how God uses one generation of believers to help another generation make godly choices.
3. Understand why believers should listen to God's wisdom.

Word Power!!!

- **Equity** – Fairness.
- **Entice** – To tempt or lure.
- **Scoffers** – People who make fun of others.
- **Fools** – People who refuse to change or adjust to the wise way of living and being.
- **Trinity** – God in three persons (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) all wrapped into one.
- **Wisdom** – A quality of God that seeks to bring people back in right relationship with God.

Teaching Strategies

1. Either pass around the nursery rhymes you brought, or have students use the search engine on a mobile phone/table/laptop to find some of their own. Then have students answer the questions in the “Getting Ready” section.
2. **Activity #1 – A Few Pieces of Advice** answers: 1) The *fear* of the Lord is the beginning of *wisdom*. 2) If sinners *entice*, do not consent. 3) *Fools* despise wisdom and instruction. 4) Those who listen to Wisdom will be *secure* and will live at *ease*.

Resources: Some famous nursery rhymes (i.e. “Jack Sprat” and “Humpty Dumpty” are mentioned in the lesson); *Hot Off the Presses* newspaper image, breaking news TV image, phone text message box image; mobile device or laptop with search engine (such as: <https://www.emmasdiary.co.uk/baby/lets-play/nursery-rhymes>)

Lesson 2

June 14, 2020

Godly Wisdom Pays Off

Lesson Scripture: Genesis 39; Proverbs 2

Focus Scripture: Proverbs 2:1-11

Key Verse: The Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. Proverbs 2:6

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand why asking questions helps people know and fear God.
2. Identify ways to tune our ears to wisdom and incline our hearts to understanding.
3. Explore how we can show God we value the gift of wisdom.

Word Power!!!

- **Making Your Ear Attentive** – Adjusting yourself so you are able to make sense of what's being shared.
- **Inclining Your Heart** – Choosing to focus on something or someone.
- **Insight** – Correct and deep understanding of something.
- **Fear the Lord** – Showing God respect.
- **Prudence** – Wise choices.

Teaching Strategies

1. **Activity #1 – Training to Fear God** answers: 1. Make your ear attentive 2. Incline your heart 3. Cry out for insight 4. Seek it like silver 5. Accept my words.
2. Show your class some of the prayers and calls to worship found in the back of the *AME Book of Worship* as well as some kid friendly prayers and calls to worship from the *YPD Gazette*, *Journal of Christian Education*, and/or another source.

Resources: *AME Book of Worship*, *YPD Gazette*, *Journal of Christian Education*, kid friendly prayers, kid friendly calls to worship

Lesson 3

June 21, 2020

God Gives Great Gifts

Lesson Scripture: Job 1; 42; Proverbs 8

Focus Scripture: Proverbs 8:8-14, 17-21

Key Verse: Take (Wisdom's) instruction instead of silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold. Proverbs 8:10

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Discover why following wisdom's advice is better than having

material things.

2. Explore the difference between the evil behavior God hates and the godly behavior wisdom models.
3. Practice how to receive and pass on the great gifts that wisdom offers.

Word Power!!!

- **Words That Are Righteous** – Words that are helpful.
- **Prudence** – Good judgment.
- **Discretion** – Good sense.
- **Perverted Speech** – Words that harm, wrong, or corrupt.
- **Trinity** – God in three persons all wrapped into one (Father, Son, Holy Spirit).
- **Wisdom** – A quality of God that seeks to bring people back in right relationship with God.

Teaching Strategies

1. Allow the class to look at the different versions of Bibles that you were able to find after they read the **Getting Ready!!!** section (The student book has some images of Bibles that you could use.)
2. For the **Wisdom Sack Exchange** activity: 1) Have students create a small, medium, and large wisdom bag using the stickers and colored markers. 2) Have students create three wisdom promise cards by listing something that Wisdom promises on each card. 3) Have each student place a wisdom promise card in each of their three bags. 4) Have students exchange their bags with other students, by starting with the large bags, then the medium bags and finally the small bags so that each large bag contains a medium bag and each medium bag contains a small bag. 5)

Have students study what's in their stacked bags. 6) Have students repeat the process until everyone has a new set of bags.

Resources: Inspirational message stickers, colored markers, 3 x 5 lined index cards, small gift bags, medium gift bags and large gift bags; examples of different types of Bibles (i.e. Storybook Bible, Comic Book Bible, Study Bible, Devotional Bible, Coloring Bible, etc.)

Lesson 4

June 28, 2020

Feast on Wisdom

Lesson Scripture: Proverbs 9

Focus Scripture: Proverbs 9:1-6, 8-10, 13-18

Key Verse: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

Proverbs 9:10

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Recognize the difference between being nervous, and a sign that something is a bad choice.
2. Identify things that help people get close to God that students believe could be found at Wisdom's house.
3. Understand why it's important for students to listen to Wisdom's voice instead of Folly's voice.

Word Power!!!

- **Foolish Woman** – One who tries to draw people away from God by mimicking wisdom; also called “folly.”
- **Simple** – People who know little about wise and godly choices.
- **Without Sense** – Those who haven't yet decided whether to follow wisdom or folly.

Teaching Strategies

1. Have two students volunteer to be Wisdom and Folly, and then have them play the roles of Wisdom and Folly who invite people into their houses.
 - a. The students can use the doll and doll house you provide, or they may just act out the actions.
 - b. Hint: Wisdom should start first. Then Folly should mimic some of what wisdom does.
2. Show the *Raven's Home* episode 12 part 18 clip before the students read **Using God's Word!!!** section. Then have students compare how Logan acts in the clip to the way that Folly acts in the lesson.

Resources: A doll and doll house to represent Wisdom, a doll and doll house to represent Folly, or paper cutouts of a doll and doll house for each; mobile device with YouTube to show the *Raven's Home* episode 12 part 18 clip

Lesson 5

July 5, 2020

Proving Your Wisdom

Lesson Scripture: Matthew 11:1-19

Focus Scripture: Matthew 11:7-19

Key Verse: Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds. Matthew 11:19

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Discover godly ways to discern whether or not people acting in an unusual/unexpected way within the fellowship of believers are making wise choices, or not.
2. Explore how some people whom God uses to draw others to God get attacked for their efforts.

3. Identify ways that the lesson might empower someone to wait for Wisdom to make good choices.

Word Power!!!

- **John the Baptist** – A family member of Jesus who dressed strangely, ate a special diet, hung out in the wilderness and challenged people to repent and turn back to God.
- **Prophets and the Law** – Code words for the books of the Old Testament.
- **Elijah** – An Old Testament prophet who called the people of Israel to repent and turn back to God.
- **Son of Man** – Title Jesus uses for himself to show he's the Messiah.
- **Glutton** – Person who eats a large amount of food.
- **Drunkard** – Person who gets drunk a lot.
- **Vindicated** – Proved right.

Teaching Strategies

1. Show the YouTube video to help students understand why John the Baptist was so unusual. When you show the *God's Story: John the Baptist* YouTube video, stop at the 1:50 mark. When you show the *John the Baptist Bible Story – Matthew 3* video, stop at the 1:32 mark.
2. Have students read or listen to Matthew 11:1-7 in a kid-friendly translation like the NIRV, NLT, NCV, or ICB to help them fill out the job description for the Messiah.

Resources: Mobile device with YouTube, *John the Baptist Bible Story – Matthew 3* YouTube Video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9IKe3F_YapM), or *God's Story: John the Baptist* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7NMHOLPWetM>); kid-friendly Bible translation

Lesson 6**July 12, 2020****Jesus in the Temple****Lesson Scripture:** Ecclesiastes 3:1-15; Luke 2:39-52**Focus Scripture:** Ecclesiastes 3:1, 7b; Luke 2:39-52**Key Verse:** They found (Jesus) in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Luke 2:46**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand the relationship between wisdom, knowledge, and discernment.
2. Discover the ways that timing impacts how and when Jesus is received and perceived.
3. Identify some faith questions, and people with whom students can trust to share those questions.

Word Power!!!

- **Knowledge** – Information a person learns.
- **Insight** – Information a person discovers because of things s/ he has experienced.
- **Discernment** – Information a person knows without studying or experiencing anything that would give them that specific information.
- **Wisdom** – The ability to act or say something in a God-directed way.
- **Passover** – A special celebration; Jewish people in Jesus' day traveled to Jerusalem in large groups to celebrate their deliverance from the death angel in Egypt before the Exodus.
- **Twelve Years Old** – The year before most Jewish boys at the time would've been welcomed into the Jewish community as full members.

Teaching Strategy

1. Open class by showing a clip from *Young Sheldon* season 2 episode 5 that shows Missy being able to discern things in the twin test that Sheldon doesn’t. After watching the clip, ask students to list in the columns in their books, those who are smart, have insight, and are wise.

Resources: Paper, pencils, projector/screen, *Young Sheldon* season 2 episode 5 TV show clip showing “Missy Is Smarter than Sheldon” (The YouTube clip at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TiwyiHSPeNk&t=10s>)

Lesson 7

July 19, 2020

An All-Wise Jesus

Lesson Scripture: Mark 6:1-6; 7:1-23

Focus Scripture: Mark 6:1-6

Key Verse: (Jesus) began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astounded. Mark 6:2

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand the difference between why the people in Jesus’ hometown were amazed by Jesus’ teaching, and why Jesus was amazed by the people’s unbelief.
2. Discover wise and godly ways to manage the uncomfortable feelings developed, when familiar people reject our wise and godly actions or advice.
3. Explore ways that students can support each other when people don’t value their wise and godly ideas.

Word Power!!!

- **Hometown** – In Jesus’ case, the city of Nazareth.
- **Sabbath** – Seventh day of the week on which God told

Jewish people to rest so they could observe it as a holy day. Modern Jewish people worship God on this day.

- **Synagogue** – Jewish gathering place for worship and learning.
- **House** – Family line.
- **Kin** – Relative(s).

Teaching Strategy

1. Have students create two-sided fans, by decorating one piece of paper with how they'd feel if a familiar person rejected them after they made a wise and godly suggestion. Then have students decorate the second piece of paper with all the ways that God reminds us that God loves and supports us when we do wise and godly things.

Next, have students use the glue stick to glue the four corners of the two pieces of paper together, and the craft glue to glue the craft stick into the gap in the bottom center of their new fan. Then invite them to use the fan to help calm their hurt feelings whenever they feel rejected for doing a wise and godly thing.

Resources: Two sheets of white 60 lb paper per student, scissors, one craft stick per student, craft glue, colored markers, stickers with encouraging Bible messages

Lesson 8

July 26, 2020

Wise Up and Live for God

Lesson Scripture: Proverbs 3:17; 8:32-36; John 14:1-14

Focus Scripture: John 14:1-14

Key Verse: “Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do.” John 14:12

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Discover why it was so hard for the disciples to understand that the salvation plan Jesus revealed was good and wise.
2. Understand all the ways that Jesus reassures believers when Jesus asks them to make an uncomfortable leap of faith.
3. Explore the kinds of evidence the students need to be sure that something presented as godly can be trusted.

Word Power!!!

- **Father** – God.
- **Father’s House** – Where God lives.
- **Dwelling Place** – Living space within God’s house that’s specifically designed for those who believe in Jesus.
- **Thomas** – The disciple who tells the other disciples that they should risk death with Jesus by going to Bethany to help Mary, Martha, and Lazarus.
- **Philip** – The disciple who leads two different people to Jesus, but also says that Jesus and the disciples don’t have enough money to feed the huge crowd of people that followed Jesus.

Teaching Strategies

1. **Activity #1** instructions: Have the students glue different images of the various types of places that people can live in. Then have them write the names of people from the church below each of the different “dwelling places.” Finally, have students label the top of the poster “God’s House.”
2. **Activity #2** answers: 1, 2, & 4.

Resources: Poster board, scissors, glue sticks, markers, magazines with different types of homes (i.e. houses, apartment buildings, etc.), images of mobile home parks, images of igloos, images of teepees, etc.

Lesson 9**August 2, 2020****Faith and Wisdom****Lesson Scripture:** James 1:1-11**Focus Scripture:** James 1:1-11**Key Verse:** If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly. James 1:5**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand the relationship between a solid faith in God and being able to receive wisdom from God.
2. Explore how being able to stick to our faith when it's tested helps believers to have a relationship with Jesus that they can boast about.
3. Find effective ways to ask God for wisdom during times of distress.

Word Power!!!

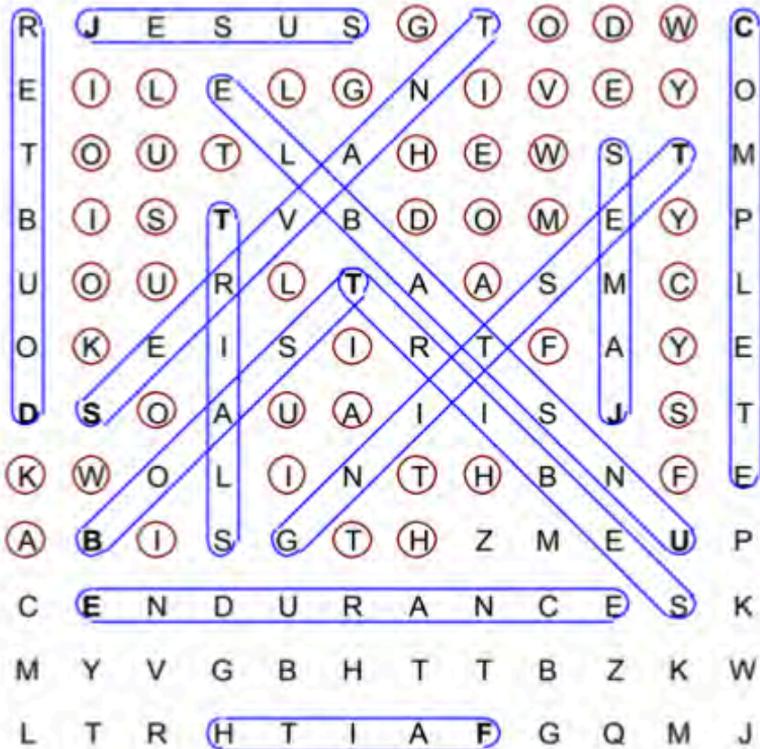
- **James** – A half-brother of Jesus who doesn't become a follower of Jesus Christ until after Jesus' death.
- **Twelve Tribes** – People of Jewish descent who have become followers of Jesus Christ.
- **Dispersion** – The many places around the world where members of the twelve tribes of Israel were forced to move.
- **Endurance** – Ability to keep doing something when it's hard to do so.
- **Doubter** – Someone who wavers in their belief in something or someone.
- **Double-minded** – Remaining loyal to two opposing points of view.

Teaching Strategies

1. In preparation for **Activity #1**, choose some hymns from the

AME Church Hymnal that you like, but might be confusing to children. Research the key message within the hymns and bring the research to class. Share the lyrics with the class, and ask them if they understand what the hymns mean. If they get the meaning, let them know it. If they don't, help them understand it. (Hint: Invite other students who get the meaning to help you with those who don't grasp it.)

2. Activity #2 answers:



GOD WILL GIVE YOU THE WISDOM YOU LACK IF YOU ASK WITH FAITH.

Resources: *AME Church Hymnal*; sheets of paper, pencils, Mobile device with YouTube; play “When I See Jesus ” by Douglas Miller (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rw95mufL2o>)

Lesson 10**August 9, 2020****Hearing and Doing the Word****Lesson Scripture:** James 1:19-27**Focus Scripture:** James 1:19-27**Key Verse:** Be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. James 1:22**Lesson Goals:** By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explore why righteousness requires believers to hear and do what pleases God.
2. Discover how a believer might make their faith in God appear useless.
3. Understand how helping people in need is a way to practice what they've learned about Jesus.

Word Power!!!

- **God's Righteousness** – Wise living that reflects what God feels is most important.
- **Meekness** – Open attitude that allows people to focus on more than their wants and needs.
- **Persevere** – Ability to keep doing something when it's hard to do so.
- **Unfiled** – Not spoiled, ruined, or discredited.
- **"Your Anger"** – The kind of anger that causes people to lash out in ways that don't right any wrongs.

Teaching Strategies

1. Help students to get ideas for **Activity #1**, and show them the pictures/videos that you've collected of Jesus helping people.
2. Show the three clips from the "Sugar Rush" episode of the *Elena of Avalor* TV show. Then, ask students to discuss what's going wrong in the clip. Next, ask what could be done

differently.

Resources: Pictures and/or videos of Jesus doing things to help people (e.g. Jesus raises the twelve-year old girl, Jesus invites himself to Zaccheus' house, etc.), mobile device with YouTube, Clips #3-5 of the *Elena of Avalor* season 3 episode 9 *Sugar Rush* video, posted by Gasley Markel

Lesson 11

August 16, 2020

Faith Without Works Is Dead

Lesson Scripture: James 2:14-26

Focus Scripture: James 2:14-26

Key Verse: Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith. James 2:18

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Discover what it takes to show that one's faith is alive.
2. Explore how the actions people take or don't take prove whether or not they're in right relationship with God.
3. Understand why it's important for believers to support others who cannot support themselves.

Word Power!!!

- **Epidemic** – When a disease spreads rapidly and affects a large number of people.
- **Works** – Godly actions that line up with what a person says they believe.
- **Reckoned** – Counted; regarded.
- **Justified** – Proved to be in right relationship with God.
- **Prostitute** – Person who earns money by having sexual relations with numerous people.

Teaching Strategies

1. Show the YouTube video about Rahab as well as the YouTube video about Sarah Allen. Then ask the class what their actions revealed about each person's idea of what it means to be a believer.
2. **Activity #1 – Faith with Saving Power** answers:
go in peace
daily food
God is one
demons believe
friend of God
welcomed messengers
faith is made complete by works
3. **Activity #2 – “Reclaiming My Faith”** answers: 2, 3 & 5

Resources: Pencils; mobile device with YouTube, “Rev. Mark Kelly Tyler on Sarah Bass’ Sense of Human Rights” YouTube video <https://youtu.be/-3jN-G-Xf4M>, “The Story of Rahab – Joshua 2” YouTube video posted by Sharefaith Kids <https://youtu.be/wQRSeegjhNk>.

Lesson 12

August 23, 2020

Taming the Tongue

Lesson Scripture: James 3:1-12

Focus Scripture: James 3:1-12

Key Verse: From the same mouth come blessing and cursing.
James 3:10

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand why it's unacceptable to bless God with the same mouth that we curse people who've been made in God's image.

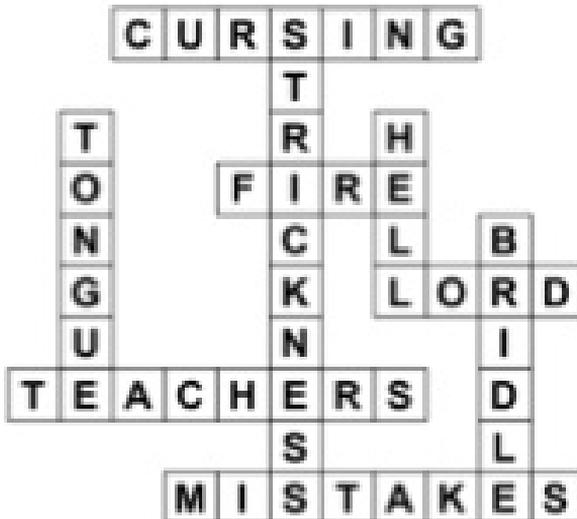
2. Explore how uncontrolled speech within the body of believers can destroy the group's ability to effectively minister to its members.
3. Identify things that could help students tame their tongues.

Word Power!!!

- **Perfect** – When a person is able to say and do what God desires, without making careless mistakes.
- **Tame** – Rule and control.
- **Teachers** – Religious scholars who help other people learn about their shared faith.
- **Bridle** – Something that's used to tame, guide, and control creatures.

Teaching Strategies

1. Before the class reads the **Using God's Word!!!** section, show the two clips from *Spirit: Stallion of the Cimarron*.
2. **Activity #1 – The Stakes Are too High Not to Try** answers:



3. **Activity #2 – To Tame My Tongue** answers: 1, 2, 4 & 6 =



. 3 & 5 =



Resources: Pencils, mobile device with YouTube, *Spirit: Stallion of the Cimarron* – “Spirit vs Colonel + Escape” YouTube video posted by Rose Westgren (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fiu8pAtST4M>), “Teaching Him How to Behave (Spirit)” YouTube video posted by Oreuioniel Eruan (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lq85wuvYNQ0>)

Lesson 13

August 30, 2020

Two Kinds of Wisdom

Lesson Scripture: James 3:13-18; 5:7-12

Focus Scripture: James 3:13-18; 5:7-12

Key Verse: Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. James 3:13

Lesson Goals: By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Understand how a person's attitude affects the way they practice their faith.
2. Explore how a person can sincerely apply the knowledge and wisdom God provides to his or her daily life.
3. Correctly tell the difference between what earthly wisdom and godly wisdom produce.

Word Power!!!

- **Wise** – Ability to use information that's gained in a God-honoring way.
- **Understanding** – Knowledge of God's ways gained through

study.

- **Gentleness** – Attitude that allows people to focus on more than just their wants and needs; a kind way of acting with and treating other people.
- **Partiality** – Showing special treatment to select people.
- **Hypocrisy** – Not being sincere.

Teaching Strategies

1. Before reading the **Using God's Word!!!** section, show the opening scene from the "Armadylan Action Hero" *PJ Mask* episode.
2. **For Activity #2 – Pin the Attitude on the Lifestyle**, post the various images of the good deeds and images of the people causing problems around the room. Then invite students to pin the negative attitude post-its and positive attitude post-its to the images of their choice.

Resources: Pencils, mobile device with Disney Now or YouTube, "Armadylan Action Hero" *PJ Mask* episode clip from YouTube or on Disney Now (<https://youtu.be/13Lzqd6-Uk0>), different images of kids doing a good deed (i.e. helping someone cross the street, collecting litter, etc.), different images of people causing problems (i.e. starting a fight, littering, writing in a hymnbook), post-it notes in two different colors

NOTES

NOTES

NOTES