Bible Point

Good advice can help us follow God.

Bible Verse

“Get all the advice and instruction you can, so you will be wise the rest of your life” (Proverbs 19:20).

Growing Closer to Jesus

Children will
- practice choosing whose advice to listen to,
- find out where to go for advice to help them follow God, and
- give good advice to one another.

Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

- Ruth follows Naomi’s plan.

When Ruth’s husband died, she accompanied her also-widowed mother-in-law, Naomi, back to Naomi’s homeland of Israel. Being a foreigner there, Ruth knew little of the customs and traditions of the land or its people. So she learned to rely on Naomi.

Before today’s passage, Ruth had already listened to Naomi in finding grain to feed the two of them and in assuring a safe place to gather the grain (Ruth 2:1-23).

In Boaz, Naomi recognized someone who might be obligated to care for both her and Ruth. In Jewish law, a “kinsman-redeemer” was the next of kin to marry the childless widow of his relative. Naomi’s plan was to make Boaz aware of Ruth’s situation and to attract him to Ruth. The plan worked. But Boaz was not actually the next of kin. So he went to the city gate and asked the actual kinsman-redeemer if he would forfeit his right to buy the land that had belonged to Naomi’s husband and to take Ruth as his wife.

By listening to wise advice from Naomi, Ruth found and married a generous man who took care of Naomi as well.

Prayer

- Read Proverbs 19:20.
- Think about the last time you heard wise advice. How did you respond?
- Pray that God will help you be open to the advice of wise people he sends your way. Ask God to grant you wisdom in a specific situation as you teach the children.
Lesson 3

Before the Lesson
- Collect items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed in the chart.
- Make photocopies of the “Growing Together” handout (at the end of this lesson) to send home with your children.
- Pray for your students and for God’s direction as you teach the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

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Welcome

**SUPPLIES:** “In the Fields Name Tags” (p. 22), scissors, markers, tape or safety pins

- Greet each child individually with an enthusiastic smile.
- Thank each child for coming to class today.
- As children arrive, ask them about last week’s lesson or take-home page. Ask questions such as “How were you generous with your neighbors last week?” and “How can you be generous with your belongings?”
- Say: **Today we’re going to learn that good advice can help us follow God.**
- Hand out the name tags children made during Lesson 1, and help them attach the name tags to their clothing. Have extra name tags on hand for children who were not in class last week or to replace damaged name tags.

Tell the children that the attention-getting signal you’ll use during this lesson is the *balloon squawker*—blow into the balloon, and let the air squawk out. Ask children to respond to the sound by focusing their attention on you. Rehearse the signal with the children, telling them to respond quickly so you’ll have plenty of time for all the fun activities for this lesson.

Attention Grabber

**Who to Listen To**

**SUPPLIES:** none

Choose one volunteer to be the Finder. Have the Finder step outside the room, and then choose another volunteer to be the Hider. Say: **The Hider is going to hide the brilliant ball, which we’ll call the “treasure.”** When the Finder comes back into the room, the Hider will tell the truth about where the treasure is hidden. The Hider will give advice to help the Finder go to the right place in the room. For example, the Hider might say, “Listen to my advice. The treasure is hidden under the table.” Everyone else will try to fool the Finder by saying the treasure is somewhere else. For example, someone might say, “Listen to my advice. The treasure is hidden on top of the piano,” or “Listen to my advice. The treasure is hidden in the desk drawer.” Make sure you have kids begin each statement with “Listen to my advice.”

Have the Hider hide the treasure. Bring the Finder back into the room, and say:

**You may ask as many people as you want to find out where we’ve hidden the treasure. Then you have to choose whose advice to follow. You can look in only one place, so be careful about who you choose to listen to.**

Have the Finder ask several children where the treasure is and then look in the one place he or she thinks the treasure is hidden. Give the Finder a round of applause for finding the treasure or for a good try if he or she didn’t find the treasure. If the Finder is unsuccessful, have the Hider show where the treasure was hidden.
Choose another Finder and another Hider, and play the game again. Play several rounds of the game as time allows.

After the game, gather the children and ask:

• **How did you decide who to listen to in this game?** (I picked my friend; I picked Shayla because she always tells the truth.)

• **How did you know who was giving you good advice or bad advice?** (I was lucky; I just guessed; I could tell one person was telling the truth.)

• **Do you ever have trouble deciding who’s giving you good advice in real life? What do you do?** (I decide for myself what to do; I believe my friends; I ask my dad what to do.)

Ask: • **What is some good advice that Jesus gave us?** (Love others; love your enemies; follow God; love God.)

• **What is some good advice we can give to others about Jesus?** (Jesus loves them; Jesus died for our sins.)

Have kids find a partner and share one way they will tell others “some good advice” about Jesus this week. After kids have finished sharing, ask volunteers to share what they discussed.

Say: **Today we’re going to talk about advice because good advice can help us follow God.** The Bible tells us: *“Get all the advice and instruction you can, so you will be wise the rest of your life”* (Proverbs 19:20). The person in our Bible story today needed good advice, but the advice she got sounded kind of strange. We’re going to find out what she did.

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**Bible Exploration & Application**

**Naomi’s Advice**

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, CD player

Cue the **CD** to track 4, “Naomi’s Advice.” Say: **Our story on this CD comes from Ruth 3:1-15.** Show children the story in your Bible. **Listen for the advice Ruth was given in this story.**

Have children sit in a circle to listen to the story. When the story ends, turn off the CD player, and ask:

• **If I told you to lift the blankets off someone’s bed and curl up by their feet, would you think that was good advice? Why or why not?** (Yes, if I knew I could trust you; no, it sounds silly to me.)

• **Why do you think Ruth followed the advice that Naomi gave her?** (Because Naomi was her good friend; because she trusted Naomi; because she knew she was supposed to do what she was told.)

• **Whose advice do you follow? Why?** (My mom’s, because I’m supposed to obey her; the pastor’s, because he knows a lot about God; my big sister’s, because she’d be mad if I didn’t.)

• **Whose advice don’t you follow? Why?** (My next door neighbor’s, because he’s always getting in trouble; my cousin’s, because she doesn’t believe in Jesus.)

Say: **There are lots of people who give us advice, but not all advice is good advice. We need to listen to people we trust so we can be sure that**
what they tell us is good advice. Let’s find out more about the difference between good advice and bad advice.

**Good and Bad**

**SUPPLIES:** Bible

Remove the felt strips from the Learning Lab. Choose two colors to represent good advice and two colors to represent bad advice. Gather kids in a circle, and distribute to each child “good advice” felt strip and one “bad advice” felt strip. Each child should have two felt strips for this activity.

Say: We hear a lot of advice every day! Sometimes it’s good advice, but sometimes it’s bad advice. We need God’s help to know what advice we should follow. We’re going to take turns telling the group advice we might hear in our lives. I’m going to give you one minute to think of some advice you might hear—good or bad. For example, good advice could be to obey your parents. Bad advice would be to drink a can of pop before bed. Think of some advice to tell the rest of the group, good or bad, and then we’ll play a game with that advice.

Give kids one minute to think of advice. Encourage students to think of both good and bad advice and to come up with several different pieces of advice (in case another student has the same great idea).

After about a minute, explain that each person will take turns sharing advice, but not saying whether it’s good advice or bad advice. The rest of the class will decide if it’s good or bad by quickly throwing the appropriately colored felt strip in front of them. Make this game fast-paced so kids have to make a decision quickly. When the voting for each piece of advice is complete, quickly tally up the votes by counting the strips. If you have more votes for bad advice, have the class give a thumbs-down signal and make the sound of a buzzer. If the votes tally in favor of good advice, the class will give a thumbs-up signal and make the sound of a bell. After the game, ask:

• **How can God help us know what advice to follow?** (We can ask him; through the Bible.)

• **How can we help each other do the right thing?** (Give good advice; help others when they need help; encourage them.)

Say: Listen to this verse, and think about what Christians should do for each other. Have a volunteer read Hebrews 10:24.

Ask: • **What are ways we can encourage one another to do good deeds and show love?** (Tell others when we see them do something good; help my brother do something nice for my sister; help my mom cook something for someone else.)

Say: Now listen to this verse, and think about how we can run away from bad advice. Have another volunteer read 2 Timothy 2:22.

Ask: • **How can we remember to run away from bad advice?** (Pray for God to help; do good things instead.)

• **How can good advice help us follow God?** (By showing us the right thing to do; by encouraging us to obey.)

Say: It’s great when we get good advice, but even when we get bad advice, there’s something good we can do. The Bible tells us to run away from evil. We can always run away from bad advice and look for good advice instead.
**Piece of Advice**

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, CD player, colored paper, scissors, glue, pencils

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**HANDS-ON BIBLE**

You’ll need about 30 to 40 paper cups and two 2x2-foot pieces of cardboard. Put 10 to 20 of the cups upside down in a tight square on the floor. Keep the cardboard pieces put away or hidden for now.

Ask: **Do you think you can stand on these cups without crushing them?** Have a volunteer try.

Ask: **Why didn’t the cups hold your weight?**

- **What can we do to make the cup arrangement hold your weight?**

  Put a piece of cardboard on the floor. Arrange about 20 more cups on the cardboard, and then place the other piece on top of the cups. Have another volunteer try.

  Have kids form groups of three to discuss the following questions.

  Ask: **What happened during our second experiment that was different from the first time we tried it?**

  - **How could we make it a better structure?**

    Have groups turn to the “Got Wisdom?” activity near Proverbs 10 of their Hands-On Bibles. Have one member of each group read the passage at the beginning of the activity aloud to the group members. Then have children read the last paragraph to find out what a foundation made of cups has to do with “fear of the Lord.”

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**BIBLE POINT**

Before class, cut different-colored paper into approximately ¼-inch squares. Keep the colors separate.

Cue the CD to track 5, “Good Advice.” During class, set out the paper squares, half-sheets of colored paper, pencils, and glue.

Say: **Let’s listen to a song about following good advice.**

Play “Good Advice” for the children. Have them sing along to the tune of “Hark the Herald Angels Sing” when the song becomes familiar to them. Lyrics are at the back of this teacher guide.

After the song, turn off the CD player and say: **Sometimes when people want to let us know what they think about something, they say they want to give us a piece of their mind. Sometimes they might share bad advice, and sometimes they might share good advice. Good advice can help us follow God—and that’s the best advice to give, too.**

Let’s each make a fun picture to give to a friend or family member. Choose a sheet of paper, and lightly draw a picture with a pencil. Then fill in the shapes by gluing these tiny paper squares to the picture. Each time you put a square on your picture, think of a piece of good advice you could share with a friend or member of your family.
While children are creating their mosaics, talk about how we can tell the difference between good advice and bad advice.

Ask: • How do you decide whether advice is good or bad? (Ask others; do what my parents would do; think about who gave it to me.)

• Who are some people you trust to give you good advice? (Parents; friends; teachers; my pastor.)

Say: A lot of people like to give advice to us for lots of things, but not all advice is good to follow. We have to think about who gives us good advice. And we can always trust Jesus to do that. Our Bible verse for today tells us, “Get all the advice and instruction you can, so you will be wise the rest of your life” (Proverbs 11:20). Jesus told many stories and parables that give us a lot of advice on how to follow God. In all that we do, we want to follow God and be wise. ►Good advice can help us follow God.

Ask: • What advice has Jesus given to help us live for God? (Love God; follow him; ask for forgiveness of our sins.)

• How can we find Jesus’ good advice? (By looking in the Bible; by praying; by asking our pastor.)

Have the children pause what they are doing, and lead them in a prayer.

Pray: Dear Jesus, thank you for loving us so much and for telling us how we can follow God. Your advice is always the best advice! Thank you for teaching us to be wise. Help us share your good advice with others so they can learn to follow God, too. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Have the children finish their pictures and set the artwork aside to dry. As you set each picture aside, have the artist tell who will get the picture as a gift and what piece of advice he or she would like to share with that person.

Say: I’m proud of each of you! You made beautiful pictures, and you all have good advice to share. And telling someone about Jesus so they can follow God, too, is the best advice of all.

Closing

Advice Givers

SUPPLIES: none

Say: Today we learned that ►good advice can help us follow God. You can also help others follow God by giving them good advice.

Help children find partners to discuss whom they would give advice to at school, at home, and with their friends. Have kids talk about what advice they would give that would help those people follow God.

When pairs have finished discussing, ask:

• When are you going to give this advice to others? (Tomorrow at school; when I get home.)

If children have a difficult time thinking of advice to give others, prompt them by asking questions such as “What advice would you give to a teacher?” or “What advice would you give to your brother?”
Lesson 3

• **How will your advice help someone follow God?** (They will read the Bible more; they will become Christians; they will be nicer.)

  Close your class in prayer by asking pairs to pray silently for each other.

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**teacher tips**

Help children understand that people are happy to hear good advice. Make sure they know not to give advice when someone doesn't want it or if someone will get mad.

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**Growing closer to Jesus extends beyond the classroom.**

Photocopy the “Growing Together” handout (at the end of this lesson) for this week, and send it home with your children. Encourage children and parents to use the handout to plan meaningful activities on this week’s topic. Follow up the “Growing Together” activities next week by asking children what their families did together.
Wise Word Treats

Write words of wise biblical advice on strips of paper. Include verses such as Proverbs 3:3; Proverbs 15:1; Proverbs 21:21; Proverbs 24:14; and Proverbs 25:11. Then make Rice Krispies Treats. Instead of putting the mixture in a pan, mold it in a well-buttered kitchen funnel. Wrap the treats in foil and put a strip of advice in each one so that the treats look like giant Hershey’s Kisses. Distribute these wise-word treats to friends and family members.

Foolish Hearers

Holding the open end of an uninflated balloon, put the balloon inside a soda pop bottle. Blow into the balloon to try to inflate it. The balloon won’t inflate much, no matter how hard you blow. Compare the balloon to a foolish person who is given good advice but refuses to take it. Then take the balloon out of the bottle, and blow it up. Compare that to a wise person who listens to the counsel of many wise people. Talk about who you can listen to for good advice.

Refrigerator Counsel

Read Proverbs 6:20 and Proverbs 12:26. Then write your own proverbs. Begin with “A wise parent never _____ because ________.” or “A wise child is like __________.” or “Wise people remember to __________.” Compare your proverbs with your child’s proverbs. Write them all on a sheet of paper, and hang them on the refrigerator. Remind each other to listen to the wise advice of the proverbs.

Interviews

Ask a grandparent or an older church friend over for an afternoon tea. Serve biscuits with honey, tiny pimento or cream cheese sandwiches, and cookies along with the tea. Remind your child of the words in Proverbs 16:24 as you’re making the biscuits and honey: “Kind words are like honey—sweet to the soul and healthy for the body.” Interview your guest about the best words of advice he or she ever heard and ever gave.