



PRETEEN LESSON ON WISDOM

Created by Ministry to Preteens

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Sometimes we think we are smarter than we actually are – it can be a tough lesson to learn as we are growing and maturing.

But when we lean on God’s wisdom, rather than our own, we will have insight and knowledge that is based on His truth that is eternal and never-failing.

Use this preteen lesson to help students understand that Godly wisdom is better than human wisdom.

- *Nick Diliberto*

PRETEEN MINISTRY LESSON ON WISDOM

Written by Stef Litzler

Bible: James 3:13-18

Bottom Line: Godly wisdom is better than human wisdom.

SUPPLIES

- Pack of cherry or grape tomatoes
- Straws (one per person)
- Dice (2 sets)
- Painter's tape

OPENING GAME: DICED TOMATOES

GAME PREP

Divide students into two teams of equal size - Team 1 and Team 2.

Have teams form two lines on one side of the room, divide a pack of tomatoes in half, and give each team their half of the pack to use for the game.

Use painter's tape to create a finish line directly across from where the teams are lined up to play the game.

Give each team two dice and pick one person on each team to be the "dice roller."

Also, give a straw to every person on both teams.

HOW TO PLAY THE GAME

Say: Raise your hand if you love tomatoes.

Well, hopefully, you will love this game!

The goal of this game is to get all of your team's tomatoes across the finish line.

When I say GO, one person from each team will use their straw to blow a cherry tomato on the floor and across the finish line.

But, wait! Here's where the game gets DICEY!

While the teams are moving their tomatoes toward the finish line, each team's dice roller will be trying to roll doubles.

Each time the dice roller on Team 1 rolls doubles, they will shout "Team 2 Diced Tomatoes."

At that point, Team 2's current tomato roller has to tag the next team member in line and go to the end of the line.

Every time the dice roller on Team 2 rolls doubles, they will shout "Team 1 Diced Tomatoes," and Team 1's tomato roller has to tag the next team member in line and go to the end of the line.

The first team to get all of their tomatoes across the finish line wins!

TEACH

Say: You might be wondering - why were we rolling tomatoes today?

That's a great question!

There is a quote that says "Knowledge is knowing that a tomato is a fruit, wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad."

How crazy would it be if your fruit cup at Chick-fil-A came with tomatoes instead of strawberries?

Listen to this list of "knowledge" and see if you can come up with your own wise saying about knowledge vs. wisdom.

- Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit. Wisdom is knowing not to put it in a fruit salad.
- Knowledge is knowing that you should respect authority. Wisdom is not talking back to your leaders when you are frustrated.

- Knowledge is knowing that you need sleep to be productive and feel healthy. Wisdom is turning off your phone or tv and going to bed at a reasonable hour.
- Knowledge is knowing that the sun is powerful in its light. Wisdom is wearing sunscreen.
- Knowledge is knowing that Jesus came to earth, died on the cross, and was raised from the dead. Wisdom is allowing those facts to change the heart in order to follow Jesus with your life.

Allow a few students to create their own saying and share it with the group.

All of us are reasonably smart and have at least a little worldly wisdom.

Think about some of the people you consider to be wise.

Your parents or grandparents? Teachers?

Some of your friends who are incredibly smart and make high grades?

Your friends who can know a lot of games, tv and movies?

Friends who make people laugh and are quick to joke around about things?

There is absolutely nothing wrong with having a sharp brain and knowing about people and things.

But God's Word warns us that earthly wisdom can be harmful and often disguise or distract us from what truly matters... Godly wisdom!

So, how do we become wise in God's eyes?

Let's look at James to learn about the characteristics of God's wisdom.

Read James 3:13-18.

If you are wise and understand God's ways, prove it by living an honorable life, doing good works with the humility that comes from wisdom.

But if you are bitterly jealous and there is selfish ambition in your heart, don't cover up the truth with boasting and lying.

For jealousy and selfishness are not God's kind of wisdom. Such things are earthly, unspiritual, and demonic.

For wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and evil of every kind.

But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and the fruit of good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere.

And those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of righteousness.

Say: *Wisdom is PURE, PEACE-LOVING, SELFLESS, OBEDIENT, FULL OF MERCY, FULL OF GOOD FRUIT, FAIR, AND SINCERE.*

When I think of those with earthly wisdom, I think of two kinds of people: Wise Guys and Einsteins.

Let's start with a "Wise Guy" - this is someone who is clever.

This person can think on their feet and knows a lot about people and the world.

They might understand the latest technology or know who is singing at an award show or who is playing in the Super Bowl.

Ask: How could someone with this kind of "wisdom" become what James says is selfish, prideful and evil?

Allow a few responses from students.

Say: You gave some great examples.

Knowing a lot can make us wise in the world's eyes.

But what is our motive?

What is the "heart" of our wisdom?

Proverbs 16:2 says that all man's ways are pure in his own eyes, but it is the Lord who weighs man's heart and motives.

If we become prideful in knowing more than others, or even knowing "better" than others than we are not filled with Godly wisdom.

What about the Einsteins?

These are incredibly smart people - the genius kind!

Some have mastered math, some science, and some language.

Then, there are the engineering minds that understand how things are made.

Others can remember every historical fact and detail of what happened a year ago at a particular event or in a class.

Ask: How could someone with this kind of genius mind become bitter, jealous, selfish or prideful?

Allow a few responses from students.

When we are selfish with what we know, we are not displaying Godly wisdom.

Have you ever understood a problem in school but didn't want to explain it to others because you enjoyed knowing more than others?

That is being selfish with what you know.

When we know something well, and others don't, we can start to think of ourselves more highly than others.

Sometimes what we know can cause us to be rude to others and make them feel less important.

We have to develop the skills to discern the kind of wisdom that God wants us to have.

It's the kind of wisdom that moves what we KNOW to what we feel, what we understand, and how we act.

We can know all the right answers from the Bible.

We can know right from wrong.

We can know how to treat other people.

However, unless we put these things into practice and make sure that we are not selfish in our wisdom, we cannot truly possess Godly wisdom.

Close in prayer.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Scripture tells us that the opposite of wisdom is foolishness.

Read the scripture verses below and discuss what it means to be foolish.

Proverbs 1:7; Proverbs 28:26; Romans 1:21-23

The good news is we don't have to guess whether or not we are acting like fools!

James clearly states what characteristics our wisdom should contain.

Let's take some time to determine what would be foolish based upon what God says about wisdom.

Take a few minutes to compare Wisdom and Foolishness.

2. What human wisdom do you think you possess? What do you understand well?
3. Can you think of a time when your earthly wisdom interfered with having true, Godly wisdom?
4. What does it mean when Paul says in 1 Corinthians 3, "The wisdom of the world is foolishness to God"?
5. Who in your life has Godly wisdom? What about them makes you think so?
6. If you could be a genius in one subject, what would you choose?

7. Is it wrong to have earthly wisdom?

8. When is the last time you asked God for wisdom? Why do you think it is difficult to remember to ask God to provide us with wisdom?

9. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Have you started your journey toward Godly wisdom? (Discuss the meaning of fearing the Lord.)

10. What can you do this week to help you seek Godly wisdom?

End lesson.

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