

Junior Soldiers

Preparation Lesson 2



Holy Living

PURPOSE : For children to understand what it looks like to be a friend of Jesus/follower of Jesus in the things we say, think and do. They will explore what it looks like to have God with them on the journey as they make wise choices.

**BY HIS HELP, I WILL BE HIS LOVING AND OBEDIENT CHILD,
AND WILL HELP OTHERS TO FOLLOW HIM.**

**I WILL NOT USE ANYTHING THAT MAY INJURE MY BODY OR MY MIND,
INCLUDING HARMFUL DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO.**

(Promise Focus)

Consider & Prepare

This session is important to help the children navigate through life and wrestle with the choices that we need to think about each day. Some choices are only small but if we don't choose the wise response, our decision can impact our life and who we are. However, some choices that we need to make are more serious and making the wrong decision can really impact our journey and where we are headed.

Being willing to share with the kids some of your own difficulties in making right choices will be a helpful thing, helping them to realise that we all face these challenges and that there are some tools to use that can help and support us with this.

- Decide on the choices that you are going to use in each section of the 'Choose It' game
- Tins, boxes or presents for the 'What do you choose?' game
- Envelopes
- Decide on which scenarios to use
- Clues for where the kids will move to for the next scenario
- Bibles, journals, pens, textas, etc.

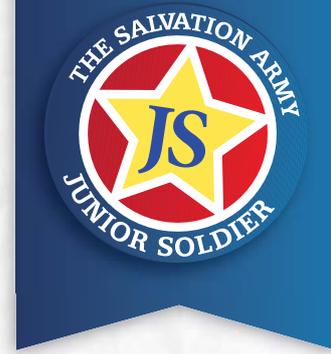
Connecting In

Choose It...

The kids have to run to the side of the room that the leader points too or designates for each choice. There are two options and the kids need to choose one, they cannot sit on the fence. Examples are chocolate or strawberry, Coke or Pepsi, Vegemite or Peanut Butter, etc.

The first part is where you are making a choice; there is no right or wrong answer, it is just what you prefer.

The second part is about making the wisest choice in relation to the statement, because some choices have consequences. Choose 'Yes' or 'No' on either side of the room:



- *The crossing light has turned to red, should you cross?*
- *Your teacher gives you homework, do you do it?*
- *Phil tells you that you're not allowed in the office, do you go in?*
- *Your friend tells you to lie to your parents about where you are going, do you do it?*
- *Your mum asks you to come home straight after school. Do you get home on time?*
- *You notice cigarettes were left at a bus stop. Should you smoke them?*
- *There's a stranger in a car asking you to come with him, do you go?*
- *Your dad asks you to clean your room, do you?*

- **Link:** Reinforce that we have choices—sometimes we may make one choice even though we could have made a wiser choice.
- What happened in the first part of the game? (They had to choose something that they preferred.) Did it matter which one you chose?
- What happened in the second part of the game? Did it matter which one you chose?
- Was there a right or wrong answer or one that might have seemed wiser than the other?
- What made the first part of the game different to the second part? (There are consequences to the choices that we make.)
- Today we are going to explore more about the choices we make and how God can help us to make the wise choice.



What do you choose?

- You could use tins of food—get a number of tins of similar sizes, carefully swap the labels. What is inside the tin is not what it seems to show on the outside. Sometimes we think we are choosing something and it might not be what we think it will be. It is hard to always make the wise choice. This can also be done with a box of biscuits—carefully open the box and then put something different inside and close it up to look like it has not been opened.
- You could also use a range of presents—some decorated really nicely and then others that are not as nicely wrapped, and some very grungy. What is inside is not necessarily reflected by the way it looks on the outside. Choices can be difficult.
- 'Why did you choose the tin or present, was there something that influenced your choice?'
- 'If you knew what was inside would you still have chose that tin/present?' Choices can be difficult and sometimes we don't know if we are making the right or wise choice.
- What kind of tools has God given us to help us make the wise choices? (The Bible, the Holy Spirit, other Christians, parents, church leaders, friends, etc.)

The Main Thing

Testimony: This might be a good opportunity to have a young Salvo who has made the Junior Soldier promise talk about the challenges of living a holy life. It can be helpful and encouraging for them to share some of their stories with those preparing to become Junior Soldiers.



MAZE

Depending on the number of children you have doing this session you might like to divide into small groups and start in different places or times for this activity.

Write a clue that will lead the children to a place in your building where they will find the first scenario laid out for the kids to engage in, e.g. 'Your first choice will happen in the place in this building where you might make a cup of coffee.' (Kitchen)

Scenarios

- At each 'scenario station' in the maze, there will be two envelopes, each envelope will have a choice related to the scenario listed on the outside. With the 'wise choice', the clue for the next scenario will be given. In the envelope that is not the wise choice, the children will be given a list of consequences for their choice but then be given the option of choosing again. This will then give them the clue to move on to the next scenario station.
- Choose the scenarios that are most appropriate for your children from those listed below, however, keep in mind that even if all your children are from Salvationist families, they will need to grapple with other scenarios that other children their age (at school) will be exposed to (choices around alcohol, drugs, smoking, etc).

Scenario #1 – *There is a group of children bullying a child that you know at school...the child is obviously upset by this. Do you ignore it, do nothing and walk away or take action to stop the bullying?*

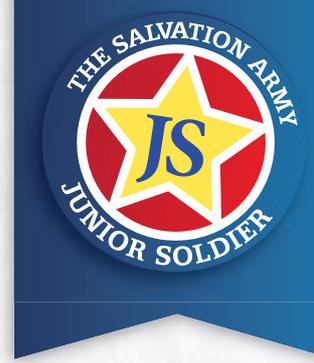
- **Envelope 1** – Take action to stop the bullying
- What sort of action would that look like? (Tell a teacher, intervene yourself, speak up and say that what they are doing is not right.)
- When would it be better to get a teacher?
- The next clue is in the envelope.
- **Envelope 2** – Ignore it, do nothing and walk away
- What are the consequences if this is the choice that you make?
- Why would this be your choice?
- If you were the child being bullied how would you like someone to help you?
- What would help you to be make a different choice?
- Would you like to choose again? (Go to envelope 1 and read it before moving on.)

When the children chose the other envelope, they then can get the next clue and move on to the next scenario.

Scenario #2 – *You are at a friend's house and they want to watch a DVD or play a video game that you know you shouldn't be watching/playing and you know that mum/dad would not be happy about this. What do you do? Would you watch the DVD or would you not watch the DVD?*

- **Envelope 1** – Not watch the DVD
- Why is it a wise choice not to watch the DVD/play the game? (This is not what Jesus would want us to be watching and spending our time doing. Sometimes the yucky feelings in your stomach can be the Holy Spirit saying to you that this is not right; adults also call it 'conscience' or 'discernment'.)

- If you didn't want to watch the DVD or play the game, what would you do? (Ask them to change it. Find something else to do, ask adults for something else to do. Call your parents to come and get you.)
- The next clue is in the envelope.
- **Envelope 2** – Watch the DVD
- Why would you choose to watch the DVD?
- What does the M rating mean?
- Why do you think the people who set the rating on these games/movies decided that they are not good for you?
- How might it affect you in the long term?
- What would help you to make a different choice?
- Would you like to choose again?



Scenario #3 – *One of your friends invites you along to her sister's/brother's 18th birthday party. There will be alcohol served at this party. You are offered a drink of alcohol during the party, what do you do? Drink the alcohol **or** don't drink the alcohol?*

- **Envelope 1** – *Drink It*
- *Why would you choose to drink it?*
- *What are some consequences for choosing to drink it? (Against the law for someone under 18, could you make you sick, you might want to have more, if you do choose to have some more it might change who you are, how you think and how you behave, have you seen anyone behave this way?)*
- *What would help you to make a different choice?*
- *Would you like to choose again?*
- **Envelope 2** – *Don't Drink It*
- *Why is it a wise choice not to drink it? (Jesus wants us to be safe and healthy and behave in ways that honour Him. Have a look together at what the Junior Soldier promise says.)*
- *Would it always be an easy choice to make? Why/why not?*
- *What can help us in making the wise choice in relation to alcohol? (Jesus, The Holy Spirit, scripture, prayer, significant adults, parents, Big Bud, etc.)*
- *The next clue is in the envelope.*

Scenario #4 – *You are having fun with your friends when you start to realize that what you are doing is not following the rules, might be dangerous, out of control, what do you do? Continue along with your friends **or** find a way to remove yourself from the situation?*

- **Envelope 1** – Continue along with your friends
- Why would you choose to continue on with your friends?
- What might be some of the consequences for choosing to continue in this situation? (Someone might get hurt or into serious trouble, you could do something that you might later regret. Have you seen anyone behave this way?)
- What would help you to make a different choice?
- Would you like to choose again?
- **Envelope 2** – Remove yourself from the situation
- Why is it a wise choice to take yourself out of this situation? (Jesus wants us to be safe and healthy and behave in ways that honour him. Have a look together at what the Junior Soldier promise says.)
- Would it always be an easy choice to make? Why/why not?
- What can help us in making the wise choice when hanging out with our friends? (Jesus, The Holy Spirit, scripture, prayer, significant adults, parents, Big Bud etc)
- The next clue is in the envelope.

Scenario #5 – *Your parent/s ask you to do something that you really don't want to do, e.g. clean up your room, unpack your school bag, wash the dishes, sweep the floor, etc. How do you respond? Do you immediately respond without complaint to the request or do you not do it?*



- **Envelope 1** – Immediately
- Why is it a wise choice to respond in this way? (Jesus wants us to behave in ways that honour him and our parents, this shows respect to both.)
- Would it always be an easy choice to make? Why/why not?
- What can help us in making the wise choice in relation to following through with the things we need to do?
- The next clue is in the envelope.

- **Envelope 2** – Do not do it
- Why would you not do it?
- What are some consequences for choosing to respond in this way? (Fighting, anger, hurting your relationships, letting people down, other people have to do your share, things get lost, etc.)
- What would help you to make a different choice?
- Would you like to choose again?

Scenario #6 – *Your parent/s ask you if you have some homework, you know you do but how do you reply? 'Yes I do' or 'No I don't'?*

- **Envelope 1** – Yes I do
- Why is it a wise choice to respond in this way? (Jesus wants us to behave in ways that honour him and others and to tell the truth in all situations.)
- Would it always be an easy choice to make? Why/why not?
- What can help us in making the wise choice when you know we should be communicating the truth?
- The next clue is in the envelope.

- **Envelope 2** – No I don't
- Why would you say that you do not have any homework when you know you do?
- What are some consequences for choosing to respond in this way and telling a lie? (Lies getting bigger, people finding out that you lied, not doing homework and getting into trouble at school, falling behind on your work, hurting your relationships.)
- What would help you to make a different choice and to tell the truth?
- Would you like to choose again?

These scenarios are examples for you to use, however, you may like to create some for yourself.

At the end of the maze – discuss both the wise and unwise choices with the kids. Go back through the envelopes to reinforce what might happen if you make a choice that is not wise, how might it impact our health, our bodies, how we think, what we say, who we become, how we behave and our relationships. Talk about and reinforce the choices that the kids made today and stress that, at times, it can be difficult to always make the wise decision but that God can help us to do this.

- How can Jesus help me to make the right choice? (Reading the Bible, reading other Christian books, through prayer, parents, Big Bud and other significant adults' support and guidance, friends.)

Tying In

Scripture: Read the scripture outlined in the journal. What is God saying to us in these verses about living a holy life?

- Philippians 4:8-9
- Romans 12:2

- Reflecting – What does this week look like for me if I'm doing good, saying good and thinking good?
- Write or draw options about doing good, saying good, thinking good in your journal.
- What is something that you need to focus on this week in relation to making a wise choice?
- Before going to sleep, think about the wise choices you need to make.
- Did God help me make a wise choice today? YES/NO/HOW?



Home & Beyond

The 'Home and Beyond' section will be outlined in the journal for the kids but it is important that we make them aware of it, what it means and even challenge them about what they will do in response to this section.

- Talk with family/Big Bud about times when they find it hard to make the wise choice.
- How does God help them?
- Children can share their difficulties (that they have reflected on above) and the areas that they need help with this week.
- Pray together. Ask that family member or Big Bud to pray for you about this during the week.

It would be good to follow up at the start of the next lesson with the kids and share together what difficulties they might be having and how God is helping them.

