

KIDS *of*  
INTEGRITY

**Righteousness**



**Explore how our conscience is like a smoke detector, how sin is like a fire, and what a game of Tug of War can teach us about winning our “tug of war” with temptation!**

Build kid-captivating lessons from loads of ideas that help kids:

- desire to please and obey God
- listen to their conscience
- enlist the Holy Spirit to help them resist temptation
- make God-honouring choices.

This lesson also helps kids deal with uncontrolled anger, impulsiveness and giving in to peer pressure.

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## Parents' prayer

Before you begin leading your children through this study, spend time alone with God interceding for His help. Ask Him to help you grow in righteousness, and to release His power in your kids.

Use the sample prayer below, or build your own prayer using the verses under “Scripture-guided prayer.”

### Sample prayer

Lord of Righteousness, righteous are You, Lord, and Your laws are right. The statutes You have laid down are righteous; they are fully trustworthy (Psalm 119:137-138). You are a just ruler and I know that someday You will come and judge the world in righteousness (Psalm 98:9). Thank you for sacrificing Your Son, Jesus, so that in Him I can become “the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21). His Spirit living in me means I can experience the joy of living free from the control of my sinful nature – thank you! (Romans 8:9-11).

Choosing righteousness means making a decision to live to honour You instead of ourselves. I pray that each family member in our home will choose to follow You. According to 2 Peter 3:9, it is not Your will for anyone to choose the way of death and perish. Based on this promise, I ask that You will send Your Holy Spirit to meet with my children’s spirits and draw them to Yourself daily until they willingly turn over control of their lives to You.

Please forgive me for the many times I have disregarded Your commands and given in to temptation, allowing my sinful nature to reign in anger, self-pity, jealousy or \_\_\_\_\_ (list any tendency to sin). My heart’s desire is to live to honour You, according to Your Word. Please teach me to do Your will, for You are my God; may Your good Spirit lead me on level ground (Psalm 143:10).

In our permissive culture, I think of all the slippery slopes that my children will have to negotiate. There will be obvious temptations: addicting and mind-altering substances, pre-marital sexual encounters and other compromises of integrity, but \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ will also experience more subtle forms of Satan’s seduction. They may be enticed to

disregard parental instructions, tell white lies, over-indulge in pleasures, or feed a sinful thought life. On a daily basis they will be faced with the challenge of saying no to their sinful human nature. When they are tempted to sin, please remind them that You offer a way out and that You do not allow them to be tempted beyond that which they can handle. Please give them the ability to recall Your Word and the spiritual maturity to rely on You as their “power source” to resist temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13). My prayer is that at the end of their lives my children will be able to say, “My steps have held to Your paths; my feet have not slipped” (Psalm 17:5).

As a family, our desire is to learn to obey Your commandments and walk according to Your laws; please give us understanding. We ask You to direct us in the path of Your commands and teach us to delight in righteousness (Psalm 119:33-35). Please inspire us and fill us with Your Spirit. Amen.

### **Scripture-guided prayer for parents**

*Read and pray through one or more of the selected Scriptures under each heading. Focus on listening to God and allowing His Spirit to direct you as you pray.*

#### **Character focus**

Begin by honouring God as righteous and holy.  
Psalm 71:16-19 | Psalm 89:14-16 | Psalm 97:1-6 |  
Isaiah 5:16 | Isaiah 45:21-24

#### **Heart search**

Acknowledge any areas of temptation in your life.  
Proverbs 1:23-33 | Isaiah 5:20-24 | Isaiah 59:14-20 |  
James 4:1-5 | 1 John 3:7-10

#### **Gratitude**

Thank God for the times your family members have chosen righteousness over sin.

#### **Family requests**

Ask God to help you and your children depend on Him to help you live righteously.  
Psalm 4:6-8 | Psalm 5:11-12 | Psalm 94:18-19 |  
John 16:24 | Romans 15:13

## **Kids talk with God**

*Use this section to help your children learn to reach out to God in all things. If your children are ready to pray original prayers, you may wish to use the Bible verses provided under “Scripture-guided prayer for children.”*

### **Sample prayers**

Dear God, when I have a choice between doing what is right and what is wrong, I want to choose to do right. Amen.

Dear God, I want Your way, not mine. Amen.

Dear God, sometimes I'd rather do wrong than right. Please send Your Holy Spirit to show me how to make choices that please You. Amen.

Dear God, right now I am feeling \_\_\_\_\_ (name the emotion, such as mad, hurt, upset). Please show me how to manage these emotions in a way that honours You, not me. Amen.

Dear God, I love You. Please have Your Holy Spirit teach me how to obey Your directions from the Bible. Amen.

Dear God, please be my guide and show me how to make choices that please You. Amen.

Dear God, I know that You know what is best for me. Please help me to learn to listen to Your plans for my life. Amen.

Dear God, thank you that You are wise and know what is best for me. Please help me to be willing to listen to You. Amen.

### **Scripture-guided prayer for children**

*Read through one of the selected Scriptures under each heading and help your children pray based on the verse you read. Encourage them to listen to God and allow His Spirit to guide them as they pray.*

#### **Character focus**

Begin by honouring God for being righteous and holy.  
Psalm 5:4-5 | Psalm 33:5 | Psalm 50:6 | Psalm 71:16,19 |  
Psalm 97:1-6 | Isaiah 61:8-11

## Heart search

Tell God about the times you choose to live your way instead of His way.

Isaiah 53:6 | Isaiah 59:2 | Ephesians 6:1 | James 4:1 |  
1 John 4:19-21

## Gratitude

Thank God for the times you have chosen to do right instead of wrong.

## Personal requests

Ask God to help you depend on Him to help you live righteously.

Psalm 16:11 | Psalm 23:1-3 | Psalm 37:6 |  
Psalm 119:9-11 | Psalm 119:34-35 | James 4:7-8

## Speak a blessing

*Your affirmation will give tremendous encouragement to your children as they strive to live righteously. Use this section as a reminder to “speak a blessing” when you see evidence of this godly characteristic.*

- That was a righteous choice that you made, \_\_\_\_\_.
- \_\_\_\_\_, you chose wisely.
- I see that you have a sensitive conscience, \_\_\_\_\_. It pleases God when you listen to Him.
- I’m so proud when you make wise choices.
- You have a soft heart, \_\_\_\_\_. I can tell that you want to please God.
- God is pleased with the choice that you just made.
- \_\_\_\_\_, I can tell you are tuned in to God’s voice.
- I’m glad you’re trusting God, \_\_\_\_\_.
- God is honoured when you obey Him.

- I’m happy that you want to do the right thing, \_\_\_\_\_. God is pleased too.
- You chose the way of righteousness when you decided not to \_\_\_\_\_ (list the sin or temptation your child resisted).
- Choosing to do right is not always easy. I’m proud of you, \_\_\_\_\_.

## Memory verses

*Memorizing Scripture with your children helps God’s Spirit bring about lasting change. Choose a verse that your kids can learn in a pre-determined period of time. Aim to review the verse at least once every day.*

Psalm 5:12 “Surely, Lord, You bless the righteous; You surround them with Your favor as with a shield.”

Psalm 11:7 “For the Lord is righteous, He loves justice; the upright will see His face.”

Proverbs 16:3 “Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and He will establish your plans.”

Psalm 23:3b “. . . He refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for His name’s sake.”

Psalm 33:5 “The Lord loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of His unfailing love.”

Psalm 34:15 “The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are attentive to their cry . . .”

Psalm 119:9-11 “How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to Your Word. I seek You with all my heart; do not let me stray from Your commands. I have hidden Your Word in my heart that I might not sin against You.”

Psalm 119:35 “Direct me in the path of Your commands, for there I find delight.”

Psalm 119:133 “Direct my footsteps according to Your Word; let no sin rule over me.”

Psalm 119:137 “You are righteous, Lord, and Your laws are right.”

Psalm 119:142 “Your righteousness is everlasting and Your law is true.”

Proverbs 3:5-6 “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight.”

Proverbs 10:16 “The wages of the righteous is life, but the earnings of the wicked are sin and death.”

Proverbs 11:5 “The righteousness of the blameless makes their paths straight, but the wicked are brought down by their own wickedness.”

Proverbs 11:18 “A wicked person earns deceptive wages, but the one who sows righteousness reaps a sure reward.”

Proverbs 11:20 “The Lord detests those whose hearts are perverse, but He delights in those whose ways are blameless.”

Proverbs 13:6 “Righteousness guards the person of integrity, but wickedness overthrows the sinner.”

Proverbs 15:9 “The Lord detests the way of the wicked, but He loves those who pursue righteousness.”

Proverbs 16:8 “Better a little with righteousness than much gain with injustice.”

Proverbs 20:7 “The righteous lead blameless lives; blessed are their children after them.”

Proverbs 20:9 “Who can say, ‘I have kept my heart pure; I am clean and without sin?’”

Proverbs 20:11 “Even small children are known by their actions, so is their conduct really pure and upright?”

Proverbs 21:21 “Whoever pursues righteousness and love finds life, prosperity and honor.”

Proverbs 28:13 “Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy.”

Isaiah 56:1 “This is what the LORD says: ‘Maintain justice and do what is right, for My salvation is close at hand and My righteousness will soon be revealed.’”

Matthew 5:6 “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.”

Matthew 6:33 “But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

John 10:27 “My sheep listen to My voice; I know them, and they follow Me.”

Ephesians 4:26-27 “‘In your anger do not sin’: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.”

1 Thessalonians 4:7 “For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life.”

Hebrews 12:10b-11 “. . . God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in His holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.”

James 3:18 “Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.”

James 5:16 “Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”

1 Peter 1:15-16 “But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: ‘Be holy, because I am holy.’”

## Kick-off craft

In this activity, you'll create a poster depicting the ocean beneath the night sky. Based on Isaiah 48:17-18 and Philippians 2:14-16, your poster will illustrate righteousness "like the waves of the sea" and that "shines like stars in the universe."

### Nighttime ocean scene

#### Directions

You will need the following supplies to create your poster:

- white poster board
- white glue
- turquoise, green or blue tissue paper
- black tissue paper
- water
- old magazines
- star stickers
- paintbrushes
- decorations such as sandpaper and sea shells

**1** To make clean up easier, cover your working surface with newspaper. Prepare your "paint" by mixing one tablespoon of white glue with two tablespoons of water.

**2** Begin by having your children use a paintbrush to cover the lower two-thirds of the white cardboard with paint/paste. You may wish to colour the paste with a few drops of blue food colouring so it's easier to tell where you have painted. Before the glue dries, cover the lower two-thirds of the poster with ocean-coloured tissue paper. Help your child create "waves" in the tissue using your fingertips to scrunch the tissue along the top edge, making a wavy surface on the ocean. Leave the lower region of the tissue flat for the undersea design.

**3** Depending on how much time your children want to spend on the project, you may wish to make glittery paper fish, unique sea creatures and stringy seaweed. Add a sandy ocean floor by gluing a strip of sandpaper along the bottom of the picture.

**4** To create a night sky, invite your children to paint the remaining upper third of the poster board with paste. Smooth black tissue over the paste and have your child cut out a moon shape to glue on the sky.

**5** Explain to your children that they will receive a star to add to the scene each time they obey God's directions from the Bible or make righteous choices.

**6** Choose a memory verse to add to your poster, and use the poster as a reminder to review your verse regularly.

#### Questions for discussion

- Who made the ocean?
- How big is the ocean?
- Could you count the waves on the ocean?
- What does Isaiah 48:17-18 say about the "Lord your God" (see below)?
- Where can we find God's instructions?
- If we follow God's directions, how much righteousness will we have?
- What parts of our body do we use to "pay attention"?
- What does God want us to pay attention to?
- How can a person shine like a star?

#### Key concepts

God gathered the water to fill the ocean. He also made the creatures that live in the ocean. The ocean is vast and spacious. In the Bible we read that if we follow to God's commands, our righteousness will

be like the waves of the sea, that is, impossible to measure or count (Isaiah 48:17-18). We use our eyes and ears to pay attention, and God's Word is the instruction book we are to follow. God also tells us that when we follow His directions, living blameless and pure, or when we lead others to righteousness, that we will shine like the stars of the universe.

### **Relevant Scripture**

Genesis 1:7-10 "So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so. God called the vault 'sky.' And there was evening, and there was morning – the second day. And God said, 'Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.' And it was so. God called the dry ground 'land,' and the gathered waters He called 'seas.' And God saw that it was good."

Psalms 104:25 "There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number – living things both large and small."

Isaiah 48:17-18 "This is what the Lord says – your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: 'I am the Lord your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go. If only you had paid attention to My commands, your peace would have been like a river, your well-being like the waves of the sea.'"

Philippians 2:14-16a "Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, 'children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.' Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the Word of life."

Daniel 12:3 "Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever."



## **Bible stories**

*This section provides Bible stories with the theme of righteousness, along with questions that can be used as a guide for family discussions. Choose one story that is appropriate for your children. Before reading aloud, take a few minutes to review the story. If the Bible passage is too complex for your kids, paraphrase the story yourself or use the summary provided under "key concepts."*

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### **Your will, not mine**

Read Matthew 26:36-46 and Matthew 6:9-14.

### **Questions for discussion**

1. What does the Bible tell us that Jesus did?
2. Where did Jesus go to pray?
3. What did Jesus say when He prayed?
4. When Jesus left the disciples alone, why did He tell them to pray?
5. What did Jesus say when He taught the disciples to pray?
6. Can you think of a time when you wanted God's will to be done instead of your own?
7. What can you do when you are tempted to do wrong?

### **Key concepts**

The Bible tells us that Jesus knew He was about to die on the cross so He went to a garden to pray. Jesus was sorrowful and troubled. Luke describes Jesus as being in anguish (Luke 22:44). When Jesus prayed, He asked that God's will be done, not His own. As Jesus left the disciples to go and pray on His own a second time, He told them to watch and pray so that they wouldn't fall in to temptation. This was a review of what Jesus had taught His disciples before. He had taught them to pray, "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one" (Matthew 6:13). When we are in difficult situations or being tempted, we can pray and ask for God's help too.

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## God cares for the righteous

Read Genesis 18:1-2, Genesis 19:12-16, 27-29 and 2 Peter 2:6-10.

### Questions for discussion

1. Why was God going to destroy a whole city and the people living in it?
2. Why did Abraham ask God to consider leaving the city alone?
3. What did God do instead?
4. Why did God allow Lot to leave Sodom?
5. If there are people sinning in your town, what do you think God would want you to do?

### Key concepts

The Lord came with some angels and visited Abraham. During their visit, God decided to let Abraham know that He planned to destroy the city of Sodom because of the wickedness of the people who lived there. Humbly, Abraham asked God if He would leave the city alone if fifty righteous people could be found in it. When God said He would, Abraham kept asking how many righteous people would need to live in the city for God to spare it. Abraham's nephew Lot lived in the city and Abraham was worried that He might be destroyed along with the wicked people who lived in the city. That night, God sent two angels to warn Lot to leave the city. At the urging of the angels, Lot and his family left Sodom.

The next morning, Abraham awoke to see dense smoke rising where the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah had been. The Bible tells us that God had remembered Abraham and brought Abraham's nephew, Lot, out of the city before He destroyed it. Many years later, Peter was talking to people about choosing righteousness. Peter told the story of God rescuing Lot because Lot was righteous (2 Peter 2:6-10). Peter told this story to encourage the people to live righteously, even when those around them were choosing to sin.

### Relevant Scripture

2 Peter 2:6-10 “. . . if He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and

made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; and if He rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the depraved conduct of the lawless (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in His righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard) – if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to hold the unrighteous for punishment on the day of judgment. This is especially true of those who follow the corrupt desire of the flesh and despise authority.”

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## Cain chooses to sin

Read Genesis 4:1-16. For younger children, you may wish to use the word “hurt” instead of the word “kill.”

### Questions for discussion

1. Have you ever been angry with your brother or sister?
2. Have you ever wished that you did not have a brother or a sister?
3. Can you tell me what jealousy is?
4. Have you ever felt jealous of someone else?
5. Why was Cain jealous and angry?
6. What did God tell Cain?
7. Did Cain listen to God's warning?
8. Do you ever get mad?
9. What should you do when you are angry?

### Key concepts

Cain and Abel were brothers. One day, Cain and Abel both brought offerings to God. God was pleased with Abel and his offering, but he was not pleased with Cain and the offering he brought. This made Cain angry. God asked Cain why he was angry and upset. God told Cain that if he did what was right, he too would be accepted by God.

God also gave Cain a warning. God told Cain that sin was ready to overtake him, and that he must gain control over it. But Cain did not listen. He took

his brother out to a field and killed (hurt) him. God punished Cain by telling him that he would be a lonely wanderer for the rest of his life, living in a land where the ground would no longer grow crops for him.

God offers us a similar warning. The Bible tells us that anger does not help us lead a righteous life that pleases God. The good news is that God promises that He will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we can handle and that He will also provide a way out.

### Relevant Scripture

1 Corinthians 10:13 “No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.”

1 John 4:19-21 “We love because He first loved us. Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. And He has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.”

James 1:20 “. . . human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.”

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### David chooses to do right

Read 1 Samuel 24:1-22.

*Background note: King Saul was not happy with David because he was worried that God was going to make David king in his place. David was out in the wilderness, trying to stay away from Saul.*

### Questions for discussion

1. We may not have people trying to kill us, but what kind of wrongs do others do to you that would tempt you with the desire to “get even”?
2. David could have killed Saul and left his body in the cave, claiming that “he didn’t do it.” Even if no one else saw the murder, who would have been watching?
3. What kinds of things are you tempted to do when it appears as though no one will find out?
4. What did David do instead of killing Saul?
5. The Bible tells us that David was “conscience-stricken.” What do you think that means?
6. Since Saul was trying to kill David, why didn’t David kill Saul when he had the chance?
7. What did Saul say when he found out that David had had a chance to kill him, but didn’t?
8. Have you ever been tempted to return wrong for wrong?
9. Where can you go for help when you are tempted to be unkind to someone who has hurt you?

### Key concepts

David and his men were hiding in a cave. Saul came into the cave to take a rest stop without knowing that David was hiding in there, concealed in the darkness. David’s men suggested that God had sent Saul into the cave so that David could kill him. David sneaked up close to Saul, but instead of killing him, David cut off a corner of the robe Saul was wearing.

After David did this, the Bible tells us that David was “conscience-stricken.” David felt very badly about cutting a piece off Saul’s robe, because Saul was the man God had chosen to be the king of Israel. After Saul left the cave, David came out of the cave and showed Saul the piece of robe that he had cut off. David explained that some of his men had urged David to kill Saul. Saul responded by saying to David, “You are more righteous than I. You have treated me well, but I have treated you badly. . . . May the Lord reward you well for the way you treated me today.”

Even though Saul was trying to kill David, David did not return evil for evil. Saul recognized David’s righteousness and Saul also knew that God would reward David for his righteous choices. We do not have people sneaking around trying to kill us, but are often faced with the temptation to be unkind to someone who has been unkind to us. In the Bible,

God gives us instructions on what to do in these situations. Rather than paying back wrongs, we are to be kind and to live at peace with others.

When we are hurt or angry, it is easy to think we will feel better if we take matters into our own hands, “judging” the person who has done wrong and applying what we think is fair in return. The Bible tells us that it is God’s job to judge and we are to trust Him with the outcome in situations where we feel we have been wronged. We are to wait for God to deal with the person who has sinned against us instead of planning to get revenge ourselves.

### Relevant Scripture

Romans 12:17-18 “Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.”

Proverbs 20:22 “Do not say, ‘I’ll pay you back for this wrong!’ Wait for the Lord, and He will avenge you.”

1 Thessalonians 5:15 “Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else.”

Proverbs 6:16-19 “There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to Him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a person who stirs up conflict in the community.”

Proverbs 15:3 “The eyes of the Lord are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good.”

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### Jesus the Lord, Our Righteousness

Read Luke 23:1-5,13-26,32-43.

*Background note: The Pharisees were jealous of Jesus and were looking for an excuse to kill Him. They made up lies about Him and took Him to the ruler of their country to get permission to crucify Him.*

### Questions for discussion

1. What did the people accuse Jesus of doing?
2. What did Pilate say about Jesus?

3. The people still wanted to kill Jesus. Why?
4. Who did the people want to go free, Jesus or Barabbas?
5. Who was crucified with Jesus?
6. What did the first thief say? And the second thief?
7. How did Jesus respond to the second thief?
8. Why was Jesus so ready to forgive the second thief?
9. Do you think Jesus is ready to forgive you?
10. Why do you think Jesus is called “The Lord, Our Righteousness”?

### Key concepts

Pilate was the man who had the authority to decide if someone was guilty of a sin that deserved the death penalty. When the people brought Jesus to Pilate, Pilate said he saw no reason to kill Jesus. The people insisted that Jesus deserved to die so Pilate consulted with another leader who too thought that Jesus had done nothing wrong. Even though both leaders said that Jesus had done nothing to deserve death, the people kept shouting that they wanted Jesus crucified.

The custom at that time of year was to set a prisoner free. Pilate suggested that Jesus be set free, but the people asked that a dreadful man named Barabbas (who had done many bad things) be set free instead of Jesus. To please the crowds, Pilate agreed to do what they asked. He let Barabbas go free, and let the people take Jesus to crucify Him.

Jesus was crucified between two thieves. As people were making fun of Jesus, one thief joined in and mocked Jesus. The other thief defended Jesus. “Don’t you fear God,” he said, “since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong” (Luke 23:40-41). Jesus told the thief who admitted to being sinful that he would be with Him in paradise.

Jesus wants us to do the same thing as the thief did and admit that we are sinful. The Bible tells us that when we confess our sins, God will get rid of the sin in our lives (1 John 1:9). Jesus is called “The Lord, Our Righteousness,” because through Jesus’ death on the cross, the penalty for our sins has been paid. When our sins are forgiven, God sees us as righteous.

### Relevant Scripture

Jeremiah 23:5-6 “‘The days are coming,’ declares the Lord, ‘when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. In His days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which He will be called: The Lord Our Righteous Savior.’”

Matthew 26:59-60 “The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for false evidence against Jesus so that they could put Him to death. But they did not find any, though many false witnesses came forward.”

1 Peter 2:24 “‘He Himself bore our sins’ in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; ‘by His wounds you have been healed.’”

2 Corinthians 5:21 “God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.”

### The righteous praise God!

Read Psalm 145:1-9,17-18,20 and Psalm 37:1-17.

### Questions for discussion

1. Can you think of a good reason to praise God?
2. What does the Bible say we are to praise God for?
3. What is one generation to tell the next generation about?
4. Can you think of a mighty act God has done?
5. Why do you think the Bible says the people who are righteous should praise God?

6. What does the Bible say will happen to the wicked?

7. Instead of fretting when we see people doing wrong, what are we supposed to do?

### Key concepts

In Psalm 147, David tells us that he praises God because of God’s greatness. David goes on to say that one generation will tell another all about God’s mighty acts. Just as we cheer when we are happy about something, we are to joyfully celebrate God’s goodness to us and to sing about His righteousness. Over and over again the Bible says that the righteous are to praise God. God is gracious, loving, and holy and He deserves to be admired, respected and worshipped.

It is easy to be discouraged when it seems like those who are doing wrong are getting the “better deal” in life, but God assures us that He will reward everyone for what he or she has done. Instead of fretting when we see people who appear to be getting away with doing wrong, we are to trust God to give them what they deserve.

### Balaam and his bad reputation

Read Numbers 22:21-39.

*Background note: Balak was king of Moab at the time that the Israelites were moving into the Promised Land – the new home God was giving them. Balak had seen how Israel was defeating all of the armies that tried to fight against them and all of the people of Moab were terrified that they were going to be the next nation that Israel would conquer (Numbers 22:2-3). Balak knew of a man named Balaam who could be paid to come and put a curse on your enemies. Balak hoped that if Balaam cursed Israel, Moab would win a war against them (Numbers 22:1-20).*

### Questions for discussion

1. Why do you think Balak sent his princes to go and get Balaam?
2. Who saw the angel of the Lord the first time? And the second time? How about the third time?

3. What did Balaam do to the donkey each time it tried to avoid the angel?
4. What did God do to get Balaam's attention?
5. What would you think if an animal started talking to you?
6. Would you answer it?
7. What is a "drawn sword"?
8. If you saw an angel holding a sword up ready to strike, what would you do?
9. Was Balaam known for doing right or for doing wrong?
10. Are there kids you prefer not to be around because you know they will cause trouble?
11. Do you know any kids who are known for doing right?
12. What do you think you are known for?
13. What would you like to be known for?

### Key concepts

Balak sent for Balaam, because he knew that Balaam accepted money to put curses on people or on nations. God was angry when Balaam prepared to visit Balak. God sent an angel of the Lord to stand in the road and block the way. Balaam's donkey saw the angel standing there, holding a drawn sword, so she turned off the road and went into a field instead. Balaam beat the donkey to make her go back on the road.

Next, the angel stood where the road went between the walls of two vineyards. Again, the donkey saw the angel and this time pressed up against the wall, crushing Balaam's leg. Balaam beat the donkey again. Finally, the angel stood in the road where there was nowhere for the donkey to turn, so the donkey laid down. Balaam beat her again.

God opened the mouth of the donkey and she spoke to Balaam, asking what she had done to deserve to

be beaten three times. Balaam told his donkey that he was so angry that he would kill her if he had a sword (Numbers 22:29). Then the donkey reminded Balaam that she had been a very reliable donkey and didn't usually behave this way.

At this moment, God opened Balaam's eyes and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road with a sword drawn. Balaam realized he had sinned and told the angel he would go back. The angel gave Balaam permission to go and see Balak, but the angel told Balaam only to say what the Lord told him to say. Even though Balak had planned evil against Israel through Balaam, God chose to protect Israel.

Balaam had a bad reputation. He was known for accepting money to do evil against others. The Bible says that Balaam "loved the wages of wickedness" (2 Peter 2:15). God knew Balaam's heart and his plans to do evil against Israel, so He used an angel and His great power to protect Israel. The Book of Proverbs says that even children are known by their actions – whether the things he or she does is right or wrong (Proverbs 20:11). What we are known for is called our "reputation." God knows our hearts and if they are right and pure, but people, who cannot see into our hearts, know us by our actions.

*Epilogue: Balaam made it clear to Balak that he could only speak God's words. Three times Balak asked Balaam to curse the Israelites, and three times Balaam spoke only the words of blessing that God allowed him to speak (Numbers 23-24).*

### Relevant Scripture

Joshua 24:9-10 "When Balak son of Zippor, the king of Moab, prepared to fight against Israel, he sent for Balaam son of Beor to put a curse on you. But I would not listen to Balaam, so he blessed you again and again, and I delivered you out of his hand."

Proverbs 12:10 "The righteous care for the needs of their animals, but the kindest acts of the wicked are cruel."

Proverbs 20:11 "Even small children are known by their actions, so is their conduct really pure and upright?"

2 Peter 2:15 “They have left the straight way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Bezer, who loved the wages of wickedness.”

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## Creative discipline

Here are some suggestions to help you encourage your children to habitually make righteousness choices.

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### For problems with unrighteous attitudes and actions

#### Biblical basis

Psalm 119:133 “Direct my footsteps according to Your Word; let no sin rule over me.”

#### Suggested disciplinary action

Help your child identify and name the sin that is “ruling over” him or her. Select a Scripture verse that indicates why that sin is not pleasing to God. (For help in finding a suitable verse, consult the **memory verses** section of other relevant *Kids of Integrity* lessons.)

Explain that you are going to spend your child’s “time out” with him/her, memorizing a verse together so that he/she can repeat the verse each time he/she is tempted to sin. During your time together, you can also review the story of Jesus using Bible verses to ward off temptation from Satan. This particular story is found in the **Bible stories** section of the **self-control** lesson.

#### Affirmation

Pray with your child, asking for God’s forgiveness. Also ask that He would provide them with a reminder from His Word each time he/she is tempted to sin. Encourage your child by reading Hebrews 12:11. Assure him or her you believe the discipline you are giving each time he/she disobeys God will eventually bring a “harvest of righteousness” in his or her life.

Hebrews 12:11 “No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.”

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## Hands-on options

These ideas require very little preparation, making it easy for you to share some simple but memorable lessons with your children. Read over the options at the beginning of your week and choose one or two that will fit your schedule.

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### Shining righteousness

#### getting into nature

Use the sun as an illustration for how brightly our lives shine when we choose to live righteously. If your kids like to be active outdoors, take a walk and watch the sunrise or head out at midday and soak in some warm rays (with sunscreen on). As you view the glory of the sun, read Psalm 37:5-7. The questions provided below can be used to guide your discussion. When you get home, make a sunrise or a sunshine picture and write a family motto on it as a reminder to “commit your way to the Lord” each new day.

#### Questions for discussion

- How do we usually start the day?
- What does Psalm 37:5 tell us to do?
- If we commit our way to God, what does He say He will do?
- Can you think of a rhyme that will help us remember to give our day to God when we see the sun shining?
- When you see someone getting away with doing wrong, how does it make you feel?
- Instead of fretting over the other person’s sin, what does God want you to do?

#### Key concepts

Most people start the day by eating breakfast. This is the way we refuel our physical bodies to give them energy to go through the day. It is also important to feed ourselves spiritually at the start of each day. Taking time to connect with God in the morning is a great way to remind ourselves that we want to obey God and honour Him with the way we live during the day. We can “feed” ourselves spiritually by reading our Bibles and praying.

The Bible tells us that if we commit (or dedicate/give) our way to God, He will make our righteousness shine like the dawn. In other words, when we ask God to guide our lives, He will help us live righteously. Some examples of “family mottoes” you can use as a reminder to begin your day with God include:

*Pray to start the day.*

*At the start of each day, we ask God to guide our way.*

*When God guides our way, we have a better day.*

Sometimes it can be hard to choose to do the right thing, especially when people all around you are doing wrong. The Bible tells us that when others do wrong, we are to “be still before God.” This means that we are to take our concerns about other people’s sins to God. Instead of fretting over someone else’s sin, we can simply say to ourselves, “I am going to talk to God about this,” and pray instead of getting all upset.

### **Relevant Scripture**

Psalm 37:5-7 “Commit your way to the Lord; trust in Him and He will do this: He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn, your vindication like the noonday sun. Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for Him; do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes.”

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### **Firefighting**

*drive time or any time*

*This story works well in combination with the **hands-on option** entitled “fire safety rules.”*

While you are driving, have your children look for a fire station or a fire engine. Use the questions provided below to set the stage for the story that follows.

### **Questions for discussion**

- What kind of equipment does a firefighter need? (See the list below for essential firefighting resources.)

- What is the most important thing a firefighter needs to fight a fire?

### **FIREFIGHTING POWER FOR YOU AND ME**

*Graham was a firefighter. Ever since he was a young boy, he had wanted to drive a fire truck and help put out fires. He loved his job because he liked helping people who were in trouble. Graham also loved and followed Jesus. People would often thank Graham and his crew for the work they did and Graham would always say, “Remember to thank God too.”*

*One especially hot day in the middle of the afternoon, all the firefighters on duty were wishing they were relaxing at the local pool instead of sitting in the sweltering fire hall. Moments later, the alarm bell went. The 911 operator had details of a house on fire at 23 Beaverton Court.*

*Upon arriving at the house, Graham’s crew immediately began soaking the blaze with the water available in their truck. Meanwhile, two other crewmen were working to open the nearby fire hydrant. Suddenly Graham received a message over the radio.*

*“Graham, we have a problem. The hydrant is stuck.”*

*Graham called dispatch. “Is there another pump on the way?” he asked.*

*“Yes, it should be there in three minutes. Over.”*

*“Three minutes is too long,” Graham thought. “We need to get more water on this blaze now.” Graham turned and looked at the fire hydrant where two of his crew were desperately working to open the hydrant.*

*“Please God,” Graham prayed, “we need water so we can do our job.”*

*Moments later the crew heaved one more time against the valve on the hydrant. This time it opened and water began to gush through the hose!*

*The fire crew turned the hose on the blazing house fire. Soon the firefighters were able to approach the front door of the house. Using an axe and a*

Halligen bar, they opened the large wooden front door. As soon as the door was open, a frightened little wiener dog ran out. Fearing that there might be people inside as well, Graham and another crewman searched the house.

Thankfully they were able to check the house completely, making sure that there were no people or other pets inside. As they were putting out the last of the flames, a van pulled up to the scene. It was the family who lived in the house. The children picked up their dog, hugged him and cried. They were so thankful that their beloved canine, Frankfurt, had been rescued.

Graham drove home from work with a grateful heart. They had been able to save the family's pet and had kept the blaze from spreading to the nearby houses. Sitting at the supper table with his family, Graham told his wife, his son, Josh, and daughter, Jesse, about the house fire and the faulty hydrant. For their Bible reading that night Graham read from Romans 8:7-10. It said, *"The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God. You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness."*

This all sounded pretty complicated to Jesse and Josh, until Graham explained the similarities between fighting sin and fighting fires.

Graham said, "Think of sin as the fire. Just as firefighters use water to fight a fire, the most important tool God gives us to fight sin is His Holy Spirit. Firefighters get connected to the source for their water – either a fire hydrant or their fire truck. When I had no water to fight the fire today, there was nothing I could do in my own strength to put it out." Graham continued explaining, "Sin is like the fire; we can't fight it on our own. What do we need to help us fight sin?" he asked.

"God's Spirit?" Josh answered.

"Ding, ding, ding," Graham smiled, making an amusing fire alarm sound. "That's right. Only through God's Spirit living in us can we win the battle against sin. God's Holy Spirit is like the water pouring through the hose that helped us fight that fire today. Our connection to God is through prayer. Let's pray right now and ask God to give us His Spirit to help us beat sin like we beat that fire today."

## **Firefighting equipment**

Firefighters use many pieces of specialized equipment to fight fires. Here's a list of some essential items:

**Clothing** | A firefighter's clothing is made from Nomex, a flame-resistant material, and includes a balaclava, a helmet, a bunker coat, bunker pants, gloves and leather boots.

**SCBA** | SCBA stands for "Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus." This allows a firefighter to breathe fresh air from tanks carried on their back, instead of breathing in smoke.

**Rescue equipment** | A fireman's axe and a Halligen bar (which resembles a pickaxe) help firemen gain quick access to locked areas. Extrication tools like the jaws of life, ropes, ladders and aerial towers help firefighters access areas they otherwise could not get to.

**TIC** | TIC is an abbreviation for Thermal Imaging Camera. An infrared camera helps a firefighter see, even in smoky conditions.

**Two-way radios** | Two-way radios and other communication devices allow firefighters to talk with each other, helping them work as a team.

**Fire truck** | In fire halls a basic fire truck is also known as a "pump" because it pumps water for the firefighters to use. Other trucks are known as "squads" if they are equipped with specialized rescue equipment. The truck that has a ladder and basket for reaching high areas is called an "aerial" or a "tower."

**Water** | Most fire trucks carry about 500 gallons of water. This is a lot of water, but not enough to put out a house fire. In the case of larger fires, firefighters need to attach their hoses to a fire hydrant. Water is the most important thing for a firefighter to have at a fire because without water and a means to pump the water, a firefighter is powerless.

### **Key concepts**

We all fight a kind of fire every day, and that fire is sin. God gives us many tools to fight against it: the Bible, wise friends and parents, and our own conscience. Just as water fights a fire, the most important tool God gives us to fight sin is His Holy Spirit. Firefighters know they must connect to a water source through a fire hydrant or their fire truck. We connect with the power of God's Spirit through prayer.

### **Relevant Scripture**

Romans 8:6-11 "The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God. You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of His Spirit, who lives in you."

### **Righteous rejoicing**

*drive time or any time*

Create an impromptu worship time by inviting your children to think of songs you can sing to praise God. Some song ideas to help you get started are *Our God Is an Awesome God*, *Praise Him All Ye Little Children*, and *Praise the Name of Jesus*. Affirm your children by reading your choice of the verses below and let them know that people who are righteous enjoy praising God.

### **Relevant Scripture**

Psalm 32:11 "Rejoice in the Lord and be glad, you righteous; sing, all you who are upright in heart!"

Psalm 33:1 "Sing joyfully to the Lord, you righteous; it is fitting for the upright to praise Him."

Psalm 64:10 "The righteous will rejoice in the Lord and take refuge in Him; all the upright in heart will glory in Him!"

Psalm 68:3 "But may the righteous be glad and rejoice before God; may they be happy and joyful."

Psalm 135:3 "Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good; sing praise to His name, for that is pleasant."

Psalm 140:13 "Surely the righteous will praise Your name, and the upright will live in Your presence."

### **Righteous warriors**

*creative crafts or drama / role play*

Most kids love an excuse to dress up. In this activity you will help your children make or select dress-up items to reinforce the idea that we can be "clothed in righteousness." You will need dress-up clothes, cardboard, wide fabric elastic and sticky-back jewels, or little wads of tinfoil to serve as jewels.

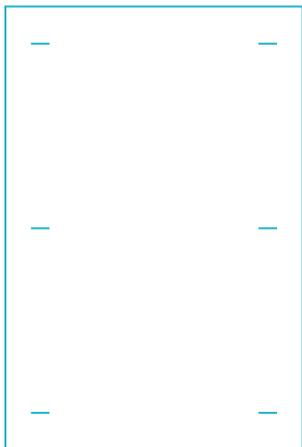
Read the verses provided below and ask your children to identify different pieces of clothing mentioned in the verses. For each piece of clothing they note, work together to make that item, then add it to your dress-up box.

Here are some suggestions to help you make the clothing you will need:

**Cloak** | Use a shiny scarf with metallic thread, a fuzzy blanket or any length of fabric that your children find appealing to wrap up in.

**Breastplate** | You will need a chest-sized piece of cardboard, scissors and 61 cm (24 inches) of fabric elastic measuring 2.5 cm (1 inch) wide, plus your choice of medium to decorate or cover the cardboard. Begin by slicing 1-cm-wide slits (half-inch slits) in the cardboard as shown on the next page – one at each corner and one in the middle of each side.

## Breastplate template



To make arm straps, take a 15-20 cm (6-8 inch) length of elastic and push the end through one of the top holes, working from front to back. Tie a knot so the elastic will not pull back through. Take the other end of the elastic and push it through the hole just below it, again tying a knot to keep it from slipping back through. This is your first arm strap. Repeat this step on the other side.

To make the waist strap you will need 20-31 cm (8-12 inches) of elastic. Use the same method you used to make the arm strap, attaching the elastic to each bottom corner of the breastplate. Help your child decorate their breastplate creatively. You may wish to glue large gold or silver buttons over the elastic knots and add other details using colourful ribbons or markers.

**Crown of righteousness** | Cut a 5-cm-wide (2-inch-wide) strip of cardboard, making it 5 cm longer than the circumference of your child's head. Help your child cut a jagged edge on one side of the strip. Colour and decorate the crown, leaving a 5-cm space at one end to allow for overlap. Use a glue gun or stapler to join the two ends of the cardboard, overlapping the ends as needed to fit around your child's head.

Pray, based on Colossians 3:12-14: "Lord God, please clothe us with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Help us to put up with each other and forgive whatever complaints we have about each other. We want to forgive others as You forgive us. And most important of all, please help us

to 'put on' love, so we can be a unified family who lives together enjoying peace."

Talk about the different ways your children can choose to be righteous. When you see your children choosing to be righteous, you can affirm them by giving out jewels to add to their crowns or breastplates. The "jewels" can be taken from old strings of beads or pearls. (*Beads can be a choking hazard so omit this idea if you have young children in the house.*) To add interest, you may also wish to have your children connect a "righteous act" with a specific jewel colour. For example, pink might represent kindness, yellow might represent generosity, love, justice or mercy etc. Continue to add jewels for the duration of your study on righteous choices.

## Relevant Scripture

Isaiah 64:5-6 "You come to the help of those who gladly do right, who remember Your ways. But when we continued to sin against them, You were angry. How then can we be saved? All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away."

Isaiah 59:17 "He put on righteousness as His breastplate, and the helmet of salvation on His head; He put on the garments of vengeance and wrapped Himself in zeal as in a cloak."

Isaiah 61:9-11 "Their descendants will be known among the nations and their offspring among the peoples. All who see them will acknowledge that they are a people the Lord has blessed. I delight greatly in the Lord; my soul rejoices in my God. For He has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the soil makes the sprout come up and a garden causes seeds to grow, so the Sovereign Lord will make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations."

2 Timothy 4:7-8 "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that

day – and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for His appearing.”

Colossians 3:12-14 “Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.”

## **Flee from wrong**

### *physical activity*

This adaptation of the game What Time Is It, Mr. Wolf? encourages kids to flee from unrighteousness. You will need a home-free base (such as a blanket) and a large open space where your children can run.

Begin by sitting on the ground with your children standing a “safe” distance from you. The home-free base should be placed about 5-10 metres away from all of you. As your children cautiously approach you, encourage them to ask, “What are you doing today, Mr. Snake?” Playing the part of the “snake,” you reply, “Today I am \_\_\_\_\_.” (List an action that is either sinful or not sinful).

When the snake calls out an action that is not a sin, the questioning continues. When the snake calls out an action that is a sin, he/she then gets up and chases the others, trying to tag someone before they get to home base. Sample replies that do not involve chasing could be, “Today I am being kind,” “Today I am listening to my parents,” and “Today I am using self-control.” Sample replies requiring the snake to give chase include, “Today I am losing my temper,” “Today I am being selfish,” and “Today I am disobeying my parents!” Give each child a turn as the snake. After playing the game, debrief using the discussion questions.

### **Questions for discussion**

- Why do you think the chaser was called Mr. Snake?
- What animal is Satan sometimes compared to in the Bible?

- How do you think Satan tries to cause you to sin?
- What does the Bible say we are to flee from?
- What should we pursue instead?
- In the game, you were free from Mr. Snake when you reached home base. What do you think the home-free base could be in real life?
- How do you “run to God” when you need help getting away from sin?

### **Key concepts**

The chaser was called Mr. Snake because Satan is often referred to as a serpent in the Bible. Satan likes to cause people to choose to sin, because that is “his work” (1 John 3:8). Any time we sin, it makes Satan happy and it makes God sad. When Satan is chasing us, God is our “home-free base.” We can run to God in prayer, asking for help any time we are tempted. We can also read the Bible or repeat memory verses. This is what Jesus did when Satan tempted Him to sin. (You will find this story in the **self-control** lesson, in the **Bible story** entitled “Jesus fights temptation” (Luke 4:1-13). Close by praying together. Ask God to send His Holy Spirit to help you be wise and strong when Satan is tempting you to sin.

### **Relevant Scripture**

1 Timothy 6:10-12 “For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.”

1 John 3:7-10 “Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. The one who does what is right is righteous, just as He is righteous. The one who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work. No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God’s seed remains in them; they cannot go on

sinning, because they have been born of God. This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not God's child, nor is anyone who does not love their brother and sister."

Revelation 20:1-2 "And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years."

## Five-bell alarm

*creative crafts*

This is a longer activity that can be completed over several days. The goal is to teach your children to manage their anger appropriately through prayer and by asking God to help them decide if their anger is "righteous" or "unrighteous." You will work with your kids to make an "anger alarm" that is similar to a fire alarm that can be pulled in case of fire. Begin by using the discussion questions to introduce the idea that anger can be similar to a fire. If you have the opportunity, show your children a fire alarm in a public building.

### Questions for discussion

- Do you know what a fire alarm looks like?
- Have you ever heard a fire alarm? If so, what does it sound like?
- Why would someone pull a fire alarm?
- Are all fires bad?
- What kind of fire is a good fire? And a bad fire?
- How is anger like a fire?
- What is the best thing to do if you are angry?

### Key concepts

A fire alarm is designed to alert people to the danger of a fire in a building and to get help from the fire department. Some fires, like campfires, are safe and helpful fires, whereas wildfires are harmful and dangerous. Anger is like a fire because it can be helpful, letting us know that something is wrong.

Even Jesus experienced anger (see the story below). Anger in itself is not wrong; it's what we choose to do with our anger that makes it right or wrong. Anger, just like a fire, can cause great damage and harm if it is not kept under control. The Bible says, "In your anger do not sin," (Ephesians 4:26a). The Bible also tells us that anger does not bring about the righteous life God wants us to live (James 1:20).

### Making an anger alarm

Plan to make an "anger alarm" to serve as a tool to help your children manage their anger and solicit God's help. The idea is to provide your kids with a systematic and spiritual strategy to deal with their anger. Follow these instructions to make your "anger alarm."

- 1 Take a thick piece of cardboard measuring 15 cm x 20 cm (6" x 8") and cut a door in it measuring 5 cm x 10 cm (2" x 4"). Cut three sides only and leave one side attached as a hinge. You may wish to add hook and loop tape as a fastener to keep the door closed.
- 2 Paint or colour the cardboard red and write on the door "Pull in case of anger."
- 3 Inside your anger alarm, write these questions: "Would this make God mad too?" and "Do I have a righteous reason to be angry?" When a child pulls the alarm door open, read the questions aloud and use the definitions provided on the chart below to help your child determine if their anger is righteous anger or unrighteous anger. You may wish hang a copy of the chart beside your anger alarm. These two short stories help explain the difference between righteous anger and unrighteous anger:

Jonah 4:1-11 | Jonah is mad because God showed compassion on the city of Nineveh

Matthew 21:12-13 | Jesus was angry to find the money lenders' tables in the temple. Today, this would be a bit like regularly using your church sanctuary for a farmer's market or a garage sale. (If your child asks why Jesus was allowed to turn over tables when He was mad and they cannot, explain that Jesus was God and dealing with sin is His job, not ours.)

**4** Explain that even when we experience righteous anger, we need to leave our anger with God and ask Him to take care of the problem. Reiterate that it is God’s job to decide if a person has sinned and how to discipline those who have sinned. Tell your children that unrighteous anger also needs to be left with God in the form of confession. Once you have helped a child determine if their anger is righteous or unrighteous, you can help them take the problem to God in prayer. Sample prayers are provided at the bottom of the following chart.

### Relevant Scripture

Proverbs 6:16-20 “There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to Him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a person who stirs up conflict in the community.”

James 1:19-20 “My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.”

### Five-bell alarm chart

**Righteous anger is being angry about the things God detests (Proverbs 6:16-20)**

**Pride** or haughty eyes: When someone is not humble before God or refuses to admit sinfulness

**Injustice:** When people are mistreated or treated unfairly

**Idolatry:** When people honour things in a way that only God deserves to be honoured

**Greed:** When people do not follow God’s directions from the Bible and choose to do wrong instead

**Dishonesty** or a lying tongue: When people don’t tell the truth or deceive others

A heart that **plans wicked schemes:** When people plan to do wrong

Feet that are quick to **rush into evil:** When people are quick to choose to do wrong

**Stirring up conflict:** When people do things to cause others to fight

**Sample prayer when anger is righteous:**

“Dear God, Please help me to trust You with this problem instead of trying to take care of it myself. Please help me not to hold any bitterness or anger in my heart. I leave this problem with You, because I know it’s Your job to judge and not mine. Amen.”

**Unrighteous anger is based on sinful attitudes (James 3:14-18, James 1:19-20)**

**Self-pity:** Feeling angry because I am feeling sorry for myself

**Jealousy:** Feeling angry because someone has something I want

**Self-centredness:** Feeling angry because I don’t get my own way

**Impatience:** Feeling angry because I don’t want to wait for something

**Laziness:** Feeling angry because I have to do something when I’d rather just relax

**Selfishness:** Feeling angry because I don’t want to share

**Over-sensitivity:** Being angered by small or insignificant things

**Pride:** Anger due to an unwillingness to admit that I am wrong or at fault

**Sample prayer when anger is unrighteous:**

“Dear God, I am angry because \_\_\_\_\_. This is wrong and I confess my unrighteous anger to You. Please forgive me and take the angry attitude out of my heart. I leave this problem with You, because I know it’s Your job to judge and not mine. Amen.”

**Sample prayer when it is hard to tell if the anger is righteous or unrighteous:**

“Dear God, I am angry and I don’t know if my anger is righteous or unrighteous, but You do! Please help me not to sin or to hold any bitterness or anger in my heart. I leave my anger and this problem with You, because I know it’s Your job to judge and not mine. Amen.”

James 3:14-18 “But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such ‘wisdom’ does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.”

## Learn like a dog

*any time*

Visit a dog-training facility, watch a DVD or search the Internet (using search terms like “dog training,” “pinch collar” or “prong collar”) to discover how dogs are taught to heel. Explain that dogs who learn to obey quickly can wear a soft collar or no collar at all. Other dogs have to wear a choke collar while they are being trained. This kind of collar pinches their neck a little when the owner pulls on it. Dogs who are stubborn and more difficult to train (or sometimes just have thicker fur), have to wear prong collars. These collars give a significant pinch when the owner pulls on the leash. (You may wish to visit a pet store to check out these types of collars.)

While you are out walking and driving, watch how different dogs walk on the leash. Some tug and pull, while others walk obediently beside their owners.

Read Psalm 32:8-9 and Isaiah 46:12-13 and use the discussion questions below to challenge your children to be someone who accepts instruction without needing the painful guidance of severe discipline.

### Questions for discussion

- How do dog handlers/trainers decide what kind of collar to use on a dog?
- If you were a dog, what kind of collar would you want to wear?
- What kind of discipline would be like a soft collar? How about a choke collar? And the pinch or prong collar?

- Of all of the disciplines Mom and Dad give out, which do you prefer?
- Can you think of a Bible story where God had to discipline someone who wasn't doing as God asked?
- What do you think God means when He refers to people as “stubborn hearted”?
- Do you want God to refer to you as “easy to train” or “stubborn hearted”?

### Key concepts

Dog handlers choose a collar based on the dog's level of obedience. Compliant dogs require only soft collars. Less cooperative dogs require some pain to help them learn. Similarly, God disciplines us according to the severity of our disobedience. The story of Jonah is an ideal example. Jonah disobeyed and was not doing what God asked him to do. God had to shake Jonah with a wild storm and a ride in the belly of a whale in order to get him to obey.

Jonah 3:1-2 says, “Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time: ‘Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you.’” It was as though God was telling Jonah, “Here is another chance to obey.” God uses the term “stubborn-hearted” to describe people who are “far from righteousness.” On the other hand, God compares some of His followers to sheep who listen to and follow His voice. These people are like the obedient dogs who do not need to wear a collar at all because they obey their master's voice.

As a parent, you can use the dog-training terms studied to remind your children of the dangers of being stubborn, thus requiring painful discipline. A question like, “What kind of dog are you being right now?” can help remind a child of the importance of obeying. You can also assure your child that your goal is to discipline like God does, with a heart of love. Remind them that you will be consulting God and asking His opinion to help you select appropriate disciplinary measures. Close by praying a simple prayer from Luke 11:28 with your children. For example, you might pray, “Dear God, thank You that You bless us when we hear Your Word and obey

it. Please send Your Holy Spirit to help us to have obedient hearts that choose to do the things that please You.”

### Relevant Scripture

Psalm 32:8-9 “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with My loving eye on you. Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you.”

Isaiah 46:12-13 “Listen to Me, you stubborn-hearted, you who are now far from My righteousness. I am bringing My righteousness near, it is not far away; and My salvation will not be delayed. I will grant salvation to Zion, My splendor to Israel.”

Deuteronomy 11:26-28 “See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse – the blessing if you obey the commands of the Lord your God that I am giving you today; the curse if you disobey the commands of the Lord your God and turn from the way that I command you today by following other gods, which you have not known.”

Luke 11:27-28 “As Jesus was saying these things, a woman in the crowd called out, “Blessed is the mother who gave You birth and nursed You.” He replied, “Blessed rather are those who hear the Word of God and obey it.”

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### Simon Says

*physical activity*

Play a game of Simon Says and then use the discussion questions and related Bible verses to help your children understand God’s willingness to help us say no to temptation.

### Questions for discussion

- Which of your five senses did you use during the game?
- Which of your five senses confused you?
- At times, did you find your body doing something even though, in your mind, you didn’t want to do it?

- How did you avoid being tricked when you were playing Simon Says?
- Which of our senses can Satan use to tempt us into not following God’s plan for our lives?
- Which body parts can be used to do wrong?
- How can we use our hands/feet/mouth/ears to do right?
- Do you have any weaknesses or ways in which Satan likes to tempt you to sin?
- How can we avoid temptation?
- When we have a hard time controlling our thoughts and actions, who can help us?

### Key concepts

In life there will be times when you will experience temptation to sin. You might see something that does not belong to you. You may be tempted to envy the person who has it or be tempted to use your hands to steal it. With your feet, you can be tempted to kick and hurt another child. You might also be tempted to think unkind thoughts.

God promises to send His Holy Spirit to live in us to help with overcoming temptations that Satan sends our way. In life, just like in Simon Says, we need to listen carefully to God’s instructions so we can avoid being tricked by Satan. We use our ears wisely when we listen to God so that we can obey Him. We use our hands and feet for righteousness when we choose to do things that are kind, helpful and encouraging to others.”

### Relevant Scripture

Romans 8:26-27 “In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with wordless groans. And He who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God.”

Hebrews 4:15-16 “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but

we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet He did not sin. Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.”

Matthew 26:41 “Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

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## **I’m thirsty. I’m hungry**

*drive time or any time*

As parents, we so often hear our children ask for a drink of water or a snack. Use these requests as a cue to talk about “hungering and thirsting for righteousness.” Each time you serve a drink or a snack, use it as a reminder to ask God to put a hunger and thirst for righteousness in your hearts.

### **Questions for discussion**

- Who gives the plants a drink when they are thirsty?
- How does God water the plants?
- The Bible compares rain to God’s Word. How are they alike?
- Can righteousness really rain down from heaven?
- Does drinking rainwater make you righteous?
- Could you eat the pages out of a Bible to become righteous?
- Read Psalm 119:9-11. How can we make sure righteousness “grows” in our hearts?

### **Key concepts**

God provides water so thirsty plants can grow. God also gives us water and food to satisfy our physical needs, but He wants us to “thirst” or desire righteousness in the same way that we crave water when we are thirsty. God’s Word tells us that He will bless us and fill us when we hunger and thirst for righteousness. Reading the Bible is one way we can learn about avoiding sin. The other way we can become righteous is through confessing our sins and

asking God to send His Holy Spirit to live in us, to teach us to live righteously.

### **Relevant Scripture**

Psalm 135:6-7 “The Lord does whatever pleases Him, in the heavens and on the earth, in the seas and all their depths. He makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth; He sends lightning with the rain and brings out the wind from His storehouses.”

Isaiah 55:10-11 “As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is My Word that goes out from My mouth: It will not return to Me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.”

Isaiah 45:7-9 “I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I, the Lord, do all these things. You heavens above, rain down righteousness; let the clouds shower it down. Let the earth open wide, let salvation spring up, let righteousness flourish with it; I, the Lord, have created it.”

Psalm 119:9-11 “How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to Your Word. I seek You with all my heart; do not let me stray from Your commands. I have hidden Your Word in my heart that I might not sin against You.”

Matthew 5:6 “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.”

2 Corinthians 5:21 “God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.”

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## **The weight of sin**

*physical activity*

This activity introduces the idea that “carrying unconfessed sin around” is exhausting. You will need heavy backpacks, snacks and an enticing place to go for a walk.

Summer option: Go for a long walk in the heat of the day. Give each child a backpack to carry that has a reasonable weight in it for their age and stamina

(snacks and water work well). Walk for as long as you can without taking a break. It shouldn't be too long before your kids are asking for a rest. Find a place to sit down in the shade and read Psalm 32:4-5. Use the discussion questions to talk about how concealing sin is as tiring as walking in the summer sun.

Winter option: Fill a backpack with heavy items for each person to carry on a trip to the mall. Go shopping, visiting store after store until your kids are really tired. Plan to eventually sit down for a refreshing drink and/or a snack. (These items can be pre-packed and brought from home to add weight to the backpacks.) Read Psalm 32:3-5 and discuss how holding on to sin instead of confessing it saps a person's energy, just as walking around the mall carrying heavy packs does.

### Questions for discussion

- What happens to your strength when you are out in the hot summer sun?
- Why did we get tired of walking today?
- How do you feel if you have done something wrong and no one knows?
- How would you describe the way you feel when you are guilty?
- What happened to David when he sinned against God?
- What did David do then?
- Read Proverbs 28:13. What does God offer us when we confess our sins?

### Key concepts

If we sin but keep it a secret, we begin to feel just awful. We feel even worse than when we had to carry the weighty backpack for such a long time. Guilt is the heavy feeling we have when we hide our sins from God. Just knowing that we have done something wrong weighs heavy on our minds. In Psalm 32, David described his feelings of guilt. He said he felt as though his bones were wasting away and that God's hand was heavy on him – sapping his strength as in the heat of summer (Psalm 32:3-4). At the end

of Psalm 32, David spoke of the wonderful feeling of being forgiven (Psalm 32:11). We can experience God's forgiveness and mercy too. When we confess our sins, God forgives us. He lifts the heavy load of guilt off of us and we feel light-hearted and full of joy.

### Relevant Scripture

Psalm 32:3-4 “When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.”

Psalm 32:11 “Rejoice in the Lord and be glad, you righteous; sing, all you who are upright in heart!”

Proverbs 28:13 “Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy.”

1 John 1:9 “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

### Detecting temptation

*science with a twist*

For this activity, you will need a smoke detector with a functional battery, a dead battery for the smoke detector and a noisemaker such as a whistle, a squeaky rattle or a toy. The ideas presented here emphasize that God gives us a conscience to help us be aware of temptation and potential sin, just as a smoke detector warns people of smoke and fire.

Begin by showing your children a smoke detector. Explain that smoke detectors are sensitive to smoke and will sound an alarm if there is smoke nearby. Have one child try pressing the test button on the smoke detector, or light and extinguish a candle close by to set off the alarm. Explain that the purpose of the loud alarm is to warn people living in the house that there is smoke in the house and possibly a fire.

*This is an ideal time to discuss fire safety and review your planned exit routes in case of a house fire. See the “fire safety rules” activity in the hands-on options section of this lesson for some basic fire safety rules.*

### Questions for discussion

- Do you know what this is? (A smoke detector.)

- What is it used for?
- What do you think will happen if smoke gets near it?
- What should we do if the smoke detector goes off?
- How would you get out of the house if there was a fire?

Read 1 Peter 5:8, which says, “Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.” Explain how much Satan likes to make people sin. (Sin is doing anything that disobeys God’s rules outlined in the Bible.) Like a lion hunting, Satan waits until he sees an opportunity to tempt someone to do wrong. A lion loose in the house would be as dangerous as a fire. If we imagine Satan is a prowling lion, then whenever we think he is around, tempting us to sin, we need to go and sound off our “temptation detector” (our noisemaker) to warn everyone of the lurking danger of sin.

### Questions for discussion

- What is sin?
- Who wants us to sin?
- If Satan wanted to tempt you to sin, when would he be most likely to come prowling around?
- Which would be scarier, a lion wandering loose in the house or a fire?
- What should you do if you think Satan is trying to tempt you to sin?
- Do we have any loud noisemakers in the house that would be good to use as our “temptation detector”?
- How can you make Satan run away from you?

Discuss the concept of a conscience with your children. Explain that, just as we have smoke detectors in our homes, God gave every person an inner sense of right and wrong, which is called a

conscience. Just as smoke detectors warn us of fire, our consciences warn us when we are tempted to sin. Smoke detectors are very loud, but our conscience is very quiet. We need to listen carefully when we have an uncomfortable feeling inside us that’s telling us we shouldn’t do something.

To illustrate the next concept, remove the battery from the smoke detector and replace it with a dead battery. (Or simply remove the “good” battery.) Explain that sometimes people take the batteries out of their smoke detectors because they beep too often. Expose the smoke detector to some smoke again and see what happens.

### Questions for discussion

- How loud is a smoke detector?
- What does your conscience sound like?
- Why would someone take a battery out of a smoke detector?
- Why would a smoke detector stop working?
- If a “dead” battery causes the smoke detector to quit sounding an alarm, what could cause our consciences to quit warning us about sin?

When we are tempted to sin, we can ask God to help us choose to do right. The Bible says that if we go to God for help, asking God to give us a desire to do right, Satan will flee from us. The other choice we have is to ignore the warning of our conscience and decide to sin. If we ignore our conscience often enough, it becomes like a smoke detector with a dead battery – it no longer sounds the alarm to signal potential danger. A conscience that has been ignored is called a “dull” or “dead” conscience because it loses its effectiveness in warning a person about the dangers of sin.

Finish your time together by praying. Ask God to help each of you have a sensitive conscience that will warn you to do right, even when Satan is prowling around tempting you to sin.

## Relevant Scripture

James 4:7 “Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”

John 16:7-9 “But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. When He comes, He will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment . . .”

## Tug of War

*physical activity*

Arrange a game of Tug of War. One-on-one games of Tug of War work well if you use a bath towel or short rope. A longer rope or rolled up sheet is needed to play with more children. To play, use a line or a make a mark on the floor or ground to indicate a centre point. Have the competitors stand an equal distance from the centre line, holding the towel or rope. At the cry of “Go!” both teams try to pull the other team across the centre line.

Mix up the teams and play until the children are ready for a break. For the sake of your later discussion, during one of the competitions, join in and help one team, pulling hard enough to help your team win easily.

String licorice can be a fun snack to serve alongside this activity and can be given out as a reward for good sportsmanship.

## Questions for discussion

- How did you feel when your team was pulled over the line?
- What happened when I (the parent) helped one side?
- Have you ever experienced a strong pull or desire to do something wrong, even though you knew you shouldn't?
- Did you know that, in the Bible, Paul described having that same feeling?

Read Romans 7:15,18-19 and Galatians 5:16-17 (see “relevant Scripture”).

- According to Paul, what is it in us that makes us want to do wrong?
- What can we do about our sinful nature?

Read Galatians 5:22-26.

- How will we act when God's Spirit is controlling our lives?
- Who can help you say no to sin?

## Key concepts

Sometimes, even though we know the right choice to make, we still choose to sin. As disappointing and discouraging as this is, we can be encouraged knowing that Paul, one of the greatest missionaries who ever served God, had the same problem.

Paul experienced a tug of war with sin and he wrote about how we can win in the war against sin. Paul discovered that the solution is to “live by the Spirit.” By this he means asking God to give you His desires in place of the sinful desires that we are all born with.

The best news is that because Jesus was tempted as Paul was – and as you and I are – Jesus knows how to help us stay strong against temptation if we pray and ask Him to win the “tug of war” for us. The power of the Holy Spirit is a bit like having the adult pulling on one side of the Tug of War rope. There was absolutely no way the other team had a chance when the adult pulled. In the same way, Satan doesn't stand a chance against the power of God.

## Relevant Scripture

Romans 7:15,18-19 “I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. . . . For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do – this I keep on doing.”

Galatians 5:16-17 “So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with

each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.”

Galatians 5:22-26 “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.”

Hebrews 2:18 “Because He himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted.”

## **Thermometer fun**

*science with a twist*

Use a candy thermometer to teach your child how temperature rises. (Alternatively, you can use a mercury-based medical thermometer, but do not leave it unattended.) Show your child that the red liquid inside rises when the thermometer is placed in warm or hot water. Similarly, demonstrate how the mercury falls when the thermometer is placed in cool water.

Use the discussion questions to help your children talk about their emotions. As a parent, you can then remind your child about the thermometer when you see that they are having a difficult moment. You may even wish to think up a fun code phrase to remind them to go to God for help in “cooling off.” Here are some ideas:

Time to find some ice!

Who needs to go for a polar bear swim?

Shall we throw some cold water on this situation?

Let’s ask God to help us stay cool.

## **Questions for discussion**

- What happens when I put the thermometer in hot water? How about cold water?
- How are our emotions like the water?

- What situations make you feel “heated up”?
- Have you ever heard the expressions, “cool as a cucumber” or “hotheaded”? What do you think they mean?
- How can you stay “cool” when something makes you feel heated up?

## **Key concepts**

Our emotions are like the water. Satan likes to put us in situations where our emotions get heated. He then uses these “heated” times to tempt us to sin. The good news is that God’s Holy Spirit is like the cool water; He will help us keep our emotions under control.

Some examples of heated situations might include another child taking your favourite toy away from you without asking, a sibling who calls you a name, or when you see something in a store that you want, but you cannot have it. At these times, we need to go to God and ask Him to help us keep our emotions “cool” so that we do not give in to the temptation to sin.

## **Relevant Scripture**

Ephesians 4:26 “‘In your anger do not sin’: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry . . .”

Proverbs 25:28 “Like a city whose walls are broken through is a person who lacks self-control.”

1 Corinthians 10:13 “No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.”

James 1:12-14 “Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love Him. When tempted, no one should say, ‘God is tempting me.’ For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He tempt anyone; but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed.”

James 1:19-20 “My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow

to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.”

## Fire safety rules

science with a twist

This activity compares fire safety rules with “sin safety rules.” It can be used alone, or in conjunction with three other **hands-on options**: “firefighting,” “five-bell alarm” and “detecting temptation.” As you engage your children in this activity, ensure that they understand that playing with fire is very dangerous and that they are never to try any of these activities without parental permission and supervision.

Plan to go camping, or stay outdoors until late evening, and have a campfire or a bonfire. Alternatively, simply use a candle and extinguish the flame with a small cup of water or a spray bottle. Review some basic fire safety rules as you travel to the location where you will build a fire, or as you set up your candle. As you discuss these rules, invite your children to think of similar rules for dealing with sin – the “sin safety rules.” Explain that sin, like fire, is dangerous. Just as rules help us stay safe around fire, other rules can keep us safe when we are around sin and temptation. (Sample ideas for “sin safety rules” are provided in the chart that follows.)

As you start your campfire, have your children consider what a fire needs in order to burn. First, explain that all fires need oxygen (from the air) and fuel. Then have your kids identify potential sources of fuel. Typically, wood is used to fuel a fire, but candles use a wick and wax as fuel. Over the course of your fireside time, show your children how the fire goes out if the air or fuel is removed. (For example, watch how the fire dies down if it isn’t fed, or snuff out your candle, then eventually dump water on the fire or spray your candle with water to put it out.) Use these questions to discuss the danger of sin and fire:

### Questions for discussion

- How do you stop a fire from burning?
- If your clothes catch on fire, how could you put the fire out?
- How is sin like fire?

- How does temptation turn into sin?
- Can you fight small temptations using your own strength?
- How could Satan trick you into thinking you are strong enough to fight all temptation on your own?
- If you feel tempted to sin, what is the best way to snuff out the temptation?
- What needs to be present in order for a person to sin?
- When you have anger that is burning like a fire, how can you stop it from causing you to sin?

### Key concepts

Sin is a lot like fire, because the more we “play” with it, the more we can get hurt. Explain to your children that you can blow on a candle and remove enough heat to end the fire. You can also put a small cup upside down over a candle to make it go out quite easily. A candle is like “a little bit of temptation;” Satan can fool us into thinking that we are stronger than sin or fire and able to deal with it in our own strength. However, if we were to try to blow or snuff out a large fire, we would soon realize that the fire is much stronger than we are.

Just as fire safety rules help us stay safe around fire, God gives us the Holy Spirit and the Bible to help us avoid the dangers of sin. God is way more powerful than Satan and when we pray and ask for help, God is always there to “provide a way out” and rescue us.

### Relevant Scripture

Romans 6:16,23 “Don’t you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey – whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? . . . For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

1 Corinthians 10:13 “No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what

you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.”

2 Peter 1:3 “His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness. Through these He has given us His very great and precious promises, so that through them you may

participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.”

James 1:13-15 “When tempted, no one should say, ‘God is tempting me.’ For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He tempt anyone; but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has

### Fire safety rules

Don’t play with matches and lighters. If you see matches or a lighter where you can reach it, don’t touch it. Go tell a grown-up right away.

Ask your parents to install smoke detectors on every floor and in the sleeping areas of your home. Smoke detectors can save lives. Ask your parents to show you where each one is located.

Remind your parents to test your smoke detectors every month. Everyone in your family should be familiar with its piercing sound. This sound means danger, and that you must escape quickly.

When your parents change the time on your clocks for Daylight Saving Time, ask them to change your smoke alarm batteries. With fresh batteries, your smoke alarm will stay awake and watch for fire while you are sleeping.

In case of fire, don’t hide! Go outside! Fires are scary, but you should never hide in closets or under beds when there is a fire.

To escape during a fire, fall and crawl. It’s easier to breathe in a fire if you stay low while getting out. Use the back of your hand to test if a door is hot before you open it. If it is hot, try another way out.

If your clothes are on fire, stop, drop and roll until the fire is out. Shout for help, but don’t run. Running makes fire burn faster.

Have an escape plan and practice it with your family. Find two ways out of every room in case one way is blocked by fire or smoke. Practice escaping by both routes to be sure windows are not stuck and that screens can be removed quickly.

Choose a meeting place outside so you will know that everyone has exited safely. Never go back into a burning building for any reason. If someone is missing, tell the firefighters. They have the equipment to safely rescue people.

This is the local emergency number: \_\_\_\_\_. Put this phone number on your refrigerator and on every telephone in the house. If there is a fire at your house, choose one family member to call the fire department from a neighbour’s phone.

### Sin safety rules

If something is tempting you to sin, ask an adult to help. For example, if you see cookies left out on the kitchen counter after snack time is over, ask an adult to put the cookies away so you are not tempted to take one and disobey your parent’s rule: “Ask before you eat a sweet treat.”

Remind your parents to pray with every day, asking the Holy Spirit to help you recognize or “detect” temptation.

When your conscience makes you aware that there is temptation close by, pray as soon as possible to escape the danger of being lured into sin.

Listen to your conscience. Don’t let your conscience become “dead” like a smoke detector with a worn-out battery or no battery at all, because you have told it to be quiet too often.

Just because you are tempted to sin, doesn’t mean that you are bad! Don’t hide; go find Mom or Dad or ask Jesus for help!

To escape from the power of sin, get on your knees! Be humble and pray, asking God for help!

If you know you have sinned, God will forgive you and help you out of it! Stop sinning, drop to your knees in prayer.

Know your sin tendencies or weak areas and have an escape plan set up for when Satan tempts you to sin. A great “escape plan” is to have a Bible verse memorized that you can say when Satan comes prowling around.

Just as you’d never try to put out a fire or enter a burning building to rescue someone on your own, never try to fight temptation and sin without God’s help. God is the one who has power over Satan and sin. He will rescue us from sin when we ask.

Know that you have a direct line to Jesus any time you need to call. You don’t need to have memorized an emergency number to get in touch with God!

conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.”

## **Natural consequences**

### *getting into nature*

Play this game of “What Would Happen?” with your kids while you are driving or taking a walk outside. Introduce the game by telling your children that all nature “obeys” God and listens to His directions. Begin by using any of the first six discussion questions to stimulate thought and provide examples as to how the game is played. Take turns asking questions and providing answers. After everyone has had sufficient turns, use the remaining questions to promote further conversation.

### **Questions for discussion**

- What would happen to a caterpillar if it didn’t listen to God and form a cocoon before winter?
- What would happen if a flower didn’t bloom as God planned?
- What would happen if the bees didn’t bother to store up honey?
- If a beaver didn’t build a dam, what would happen?
- If a coyote chose to sleep all day and night instead of hunting, what would happen to it?
- What would happen to a bird that chose not to fly south for the winter?
- Do you think God gives animals and plants a choice about following His will?
- What do you think having “free will” means?
- Did you know that people are the only creations that God gave a “free will”?
- What actions in life might seem “right” to us, but God would consider wrong?

### **Key concepts**

If animals and plants did not do what God designed them to do, they would die. In a physical sense, we

all eat and drink and sleep in order to live, just as the animals do. People are different than animals though, because God gave people a spirit and we can choose to live or die in a spiritual sense. The only creature in nature to have a “free will” is man. Free will means that people are free to choose to live life in their own way or free to choose to live life as God wants us to live.

Choosing to follow God’s way means that we accept God’s plan for our lives. God’s plan includes believing that Jesus is the Son of God. It also means admitting that we are sinful and believing that, through Jesus’ death on the cross, we can have forgiveness of sin. When we ask God to forgive our sins and be the leader of our lives, we give up our right to be the boss of our own lives. If we say we don’t need God to forgive our sins and choose to please ourselves rather than God, we are choosing spiritual death. On the other hand, accepting God’s gift of forgiveness and choosing to live to honour Him, through obeying His commands, is choosing life.

### **Relevant Scripture**

Psalm 104:10-14 “He makes springs pour water into the ravines; it flows between the mountains. They give water to all the beasts of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst. The birds of the sky nest by the waters; they sing among the branches. He waters the mountains from His upper chambers; the land is satisfied by the fruit of His work. He makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for people to cultivate – bringing forth food from the earth . . .”

Romans 6:23 “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

2 Peter 3:9 “The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness. Instead He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”

Proverbs 12:28 “In the way of righteousness there is life; along that path is immortality.”

Proverbs 16:25 “There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death.”

Deuteronomy 30:15-16,19-20 “See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. For I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in obedience to Him, and to keep His commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess. . . . This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to His voice, and hold fast to Him. For the Lord is your life, and He will give you many years in the land He swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.”

### **Firm footing**

*physical activity*

While you are hiking or walking, take note of the different ground under foot. Use the following questions to guide your discussion. (You can also have this conversation while biking or in-line skating.)

#### **Questions for discussion**

- When is it most difficult to hike or climb?
- Is it easier to slip on a muddy path or a dry path?
- What kind of things can cause you to trip and fall?
- In life, when do you find it hard to obey God?
- While you are hiking, how can you prevent yourself from falling?
- How can God prevent us from being tripped up by Satan in life?

#### **Key concepts**

It's hard to climb or hike when the slope is steep and slippery. Even on flat terrain, a muddy path, rocks, uneven ground and logs can cause a person to slip or stumble. We can compare life to a hike. Tripping or falling is like sinning. There are times when it is easier to sin than at other times. Many people find it easy to sin when they feel strong emotions like anger, jealousy or self-pity. When we hike through difficult or dangerous territory, we can hold on to a

rope or someone's hand for assistance. In life, when we are going through a hard time, we can ask God for support.

#### **Relevant Scripture**

Psalm 17:3-6 “Though You probe my heart, though You examine me at night and test me, You will find that I have planned no evil; my mouth has not transgressed. Though people tried to bribe me, I have kept myself from the ways of the violent through what Your lips have commanded. My steps have held to Your paths; my feet have not stumbled. I call on you, my God, for You will answer me; turn Your ear to me and hear my prayer.”

Psalm 18:32-33 “It is God who arms me with strength and keeps my way secure. He makes my feet like the feet of a deer; He causes me to stand on the heights.”

Psalm 91:11 “He will command His angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways . . .”

Psalm 139:9-10 “If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there Your hand will guide me, Your right hand will hold me fast.”

### **We must confess, dirty clothes make a mess!**

*other*

This activity is best done just before laundry day in your home so there will be plenty of dirty clothes to use as props. Begin by asking your children to go to their bedrooms and hide all their dirty clothing inside the clothes they are wearing. Alternatively, you can ask them to hide all their laundry somewhere in the house. Use the discussion questions to help your children understand the correlation between the mess that dirty clothes create, and the “mess” of sin in our hearts.

#### **Questions for discussion**

- What would happen if we never washed our clothing?
- How would our home smell if we never washed our clothes?
- Would leaving all of our laundry dirty cause any other problems?

- If you visited someone’s house and it smelled of dirty laundry, would you want to visit there again?
- Read *Isaiah 1:16-18*. What can we compare our dirty clothing to?
- Do you think God is more concerned about your bedroom being clean or your heart being clean?
- Read *1 John 1:9*. How can you get the sin washed out of your heart?
- Whose job is it to pick up dirty clothes and put them in the hamper?
- Who washes the clothing?
- Who should confess their sin?
- Who washes the sin out of our lives?

### Key concepts

If our laundry was left unwashed, the whole house would eventually begin to smell. Wearing dirty clothing can also cause a person to smell. Dirty laundry is like having sin in our hearts that we have not confessed. To God, that sin stinks.

Just as it was impossible to hide the smell of your dirty clothes by stuffing them under your shirt or somewhere else in the house, it is impossible to hide our sins from God. And just as it is our responsibility to pick up our own soiled clothing, so it is each person’s responsibility to tell God he or she is sorry for the sin he/she has done. A parent can wash clothing, but they can’t wash a child’s heart. Washing our sin away is something only God can do. The Bible tells us that when we confess our sins, God will forgive our wrongdoing and will purify us (that is, get rid of any unrighteousness in us). God loves us so much that He gets rid of our sins completely when we confess them.

### Relevant Scripture

*Isaiah 1:16-18* “Wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of My sight; stop doing wrong. Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead

the case of the widow. Come now, let us settle the matter,” says the Lord. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.”

*Proverbs 28:13* “Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy.”

*Psalm 103:11-12* “For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His love for those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.”

*1 John 1:9* “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

### Wise choices

*fun with food*

This activity makes a simple addition to mealtime or snack time. In addition to your regular food, you will need some mouldy food or something equally unappealing. (Meticulous housekeepers may need to plan ahead and grow some mould, while the rest of us can just reach to the back of our refrigerators to find a prop.) The goal is to offer your child a choice between eating rotten food and fresh food to illustrate how important it is to choose friends wisely.

Place a plate full of rotten food on the table along with your regular meal or snacks. Pass it around as you would any of the other food. Expect to hear comments like, “Yuck! What is that?” Or, “Do we have to have some of that that?” Or maybe, “Eww! I don’t want that sitting beside me!” After everyone has had a chance to decline the rotten food, discuss why no one chose the bad food.

### Questions for discussion

- Why didn’t anyone take any of the \_\_\_\_\_ (list the rotten food)?
- Normally, to avoid offending the hostess, you take a small serving of everything that is passed to you. Why didn’t you do that today?
- What does the word “contaminate” mean?

- How could the rotten food have polluted the good food?
- What are some ways that you can “pollute” or “contaminate” your mind?
- If being pure means you are choosing righteousness, what does “impure” mean?
- We all made sure we avoided the rotten food. How can we be as sure to avoid sin?

### Key concepts

Nobody likes to have rotten food placed on the serving table, let alone on their plates. The Canadian Oxford Dictionary says the word “contaminate” means to “make impure by contact or mixture” or to “pollute.” No one wanted the rotten food anywhere near the food they were going to eat for fear that the mould or yucky stuff would “pollute” the food they were going to eat, making it “impure.”

Just as contact would have made the good food impure, there are ways we can “pollute” our minds. We can expose ourselves to potentially rotten influences by watching certain television programs, cartoons and movies, and even through reading certain books. We can also be influenced to do wrong by spending time with people who choose to sin. It’s important that we take just as much care in avoiding sinful influences as we did in avoiding the rotten food. The Bible tells us that seeking God with our whole heart and living our lives based on what it says in God’s Word is the way a young man (or woman) can stay pure.

### Relevant Scripture

Proverbs 22:24-25 “Do not make friends with a hot-tempered person, do not associate with one easily angered, or you may learn their ways and get yourself ensnared.”

1 Corinthians 15:33 “Do not be misled: ‘Bad company corrupts good character.’”

Psalm 1:1-6 “Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates

on His law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither – whatever they do prospers. Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.”

Psalm 119:9-10 “How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to Your Word. I seek You with all my heart; do not let me stray from Your commands.”

### Recommended resources

For a list of children’s stories that reinforce the theme of this lesson, consult the home page for the **righteousness** lesson at [Kidsofintegrity.com](http://Kidsofintegrity.com).

# Planning card for righteousness

point form

## God's way

### I am demonstrating godly character when:

- I obey my parents and God's rules in the Bible
- I listen to my conscience
- I take my concerns and feelings of anger, jealousy or self-pity to God

## My way

### When I am tempted to:

- disobey my parents or God's rules in the Bible
- ignore my conscience
- sin because I am angry, jealous or feeling sorry for myself

## And God is pleased!

## I know that I need to go to God for help.

*This week, we will focus on learning about righteousness by:*

**Date complete:**


**Daily reminders:** PRAY! | Speak words of blessing and affirmation | Review memory verse

**Memory verse:**

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# Planning card for righteousness

calendar form

## God's way

### I am demonstrating godly character when:

- I obey my parents and God's rules in the Bible
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### When I am tempted to:

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- sin because I am angry, jealous or feeling sorry for myself

## And God is pleased!

## I know that I need to go to God for help.

### This week, we will focus on learning about righteousness by:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

Daily reminders: **PRAY!** | Speak words of blessing and affirmation | Review memory verse

Memory verse: