

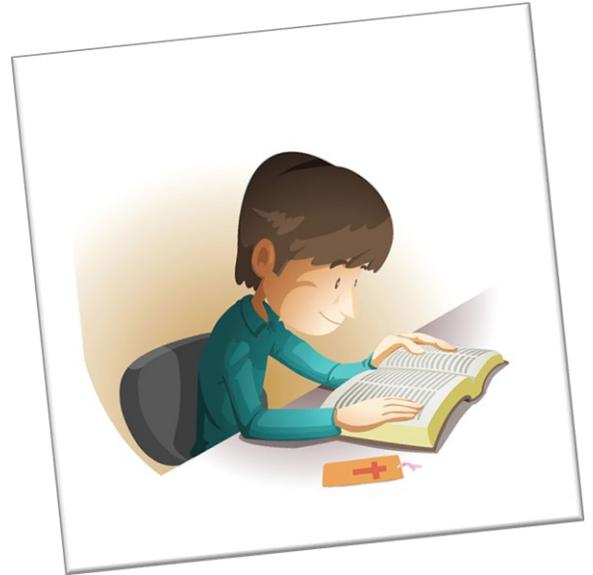
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# Wise Up!

Sunday School Lesson: 1 Kings 3:3-14; Eph. 5:15-21

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What is wisdom? How do we know what choices are best? Can we make ourselves wise? Young students may or may not have encountered such considerations in their lives, but they are worth discussion. Kids should understand what wisdom is and where it comes from. They can learn the importance of discernment, even at an early age. The story of King Solomon is a great opportunity to contemplate wisdom and recognize that it is a treasure from God.



**Lesson focus:** This lesson focuses on defining and describing wisdom. Children will explore the story of King Solomon and learn that wisdom comes from God. Students will discover that wisdom can be gained through prayer and Bible study, and can be used to make positive decisions and help others in need.

**Passage:** 1 Kings 3:3-14; Ephesians 5:15-21

**Target Audience:** Kindergarten-6<sup>th</sup> grade

**Materials Needed:** Construction paper, markers, stickers, paper cups, plastic bags, dry-erase markers, glue, scissors, pipe cleaners, shoeboxes, decorations, small treats (all optional, depending which activities you choose to use).

## More Teaching Ideas:

- Watch the video of this [children's sermon](#) and related [craft ideas](#) on our website
- Download the complete [Ephesians 5:15-21 Sunday School Lesson](#)
- Compare another [Sunday School Lesson from Ephesians 5](#)

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## Lesson Introduction and Game Activities

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**Lesson Opening:** This lesson discusses the meaning and importance of wisdom, and the story of King Solomon. Consider some activities involving choice or moral dilemma to introduce the topic. To get started, select from one of the following openers, or select another of your own choosing!

- Following instructions: wisdom comes from following God's instructions. Play a simple game like "Simon Says" or "Follow the Leader" to practice following directions.
- Have a "wise or foolish relay race." Provide children with several simple scenarios on slips of paper. Students will line up in teams and race to one side of the room, select a slip, and return. They will decide if the decision made was wise or foolish, and place their paper on a large chart with "wise" and "foolish" columns.
- Making wise choices can be like following traffic safety laws. Play "red light, green light" to recognize this.
- Show pictures or actual items that represent choices kids might have to make, such as healthier or not-so-healthy foods, toys versus books, etc. Have students vote for which item might be a more wise decision.
- Sometimes decisions are simple and spur of the moment...have a "rock, paper, scissors" tournament with students going up against one another to compete.
- Solid foundations...wisdom is needed to have a solid basis for what we do. Have students experiment with building Lego or block towers on various surfaces (hard table, lumpy pillow, etc.) to discuss the best solid foundations we have.
- Advice? Look at a newspaper advice column. Have older students write letters of "wisdom" to other people (younger students or friends).

Transition into the Scripture study component and discuss wisdom. Wisdom has to do with the choices we make and how we live our lives. True wisdom comes not from our understanding, but from prayer and Bible study.

**Ask:** Have you heard of wisdom? Who do you think of as wise?

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## Bible Lesson: 1 Kings 3:3-14; Ephesians 5:15-21

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Use whatever translation best suits you and your audience. This passage is one that could be acted out dramatically or simply read and described in turns. Most of the verses here are from the Old Testament, with a follow-up portion from Ephesians.

*Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father, only he sacrificed and made offerings at the high places. -1 Kings 3:3*

Set the stage by reminding students of who King David was, and explaining that his son Solomon had now taken over the throne. Solomon followed God for the most part, though he sometimes made mistakes...in this story, Solomon meets God.

**Ask:** If someone offered to give you something, anything in the whole world, what do you think you would ask for?

*And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place. Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. 5 At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I shall give you." -1 Kings 3:4-5*

Solomon provided God with offerings, meaning he gave part of what he had back to the Lord. God came to him in a dream and offered to grant him a request, anything that he wanted! Wow. I'll bet Solomon had to consider his answer a little, but he gave God a good one:

*And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant David my father, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you. And you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne this day. 7 And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. 8 And your servant is in the midst of your people whom you have chosen, a great people, too many to be numbered or counted for multitude. 9 Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?" -1 Kings 3:6-9*

Solomon knew that if he was to lead the people as God's servant, he would need to know how to choose right from wrong. He would need to make a lot of important decisions on behalf of the people and rule them well, and that would take wisdom. So he asked the Lord for wisdom and understanding.

**Ask:** Where do you think wisdom comes from? How is it different than just being smart or knowing things?

*It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. 11 And God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, 12 behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you. 13 I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days. 14 And if you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days." -1 Kings 3:10-14*

Describe how wisdom comes from God. We might think we are wise, but in our own eyes that just amounts to pride. True wisdom comes when we ask God for it, and He is happy to grant that request! God wants us to want wisdom. When we pray, listen to God, and study His word of truth (the Bible), we'll know more about making positive choices and doing things that will be a blessing to ourselves and others.

Turn attention to another passage that reminds us of the importance of wisdom. Remind students that Ephesians is an "epistle" or letter, and that Paul is writing a letter here to remind people to be wise rather than foolish, and live for God and for others, celebrating what Christ has done...

*Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, 19 addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, 20 giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 21 submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.*  
-Ephesians 5:15-21

**Ask:** What do these verses say about being wise? How does our wisdom influence others?

Explain how foolishness is sort of like being goofy and reckless, and it's the opposite of being wise.

Wisdom comes from paying attention to God and thinking of His will. When we do that, we will treat others with love and kindness, rather than lashing out at them in foolishness.

If time allows, describe other Biblical figures who exemplified wisdom, such as Daniel, David, Peter (he had to learn it after being so impetuous), Paul, and of course, Jesus!

**Craft Suggestions:** Consider a variety of wisdom-focused crafts, including, but not limited to:

-“Wise Owl” puppet with wisdom-seeking tools

-“Decision in a bag” write and erase option tool

-“Wisdom treasure box” reminder of the importance of wisdom

**Pray:** Say a prayer of thanksgiving to God for HIS wisdom and might. Ask for help in making decisions and doing what's best.

**Bible Verses or Craft Captions to Consider... (Main Text: 1 Kings 3:3-14; Ephesians 5:15-21)**

- *Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. -Ephesians 5:15-17*
- *behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you. 13 I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days. 14 And if you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days.” -1 Kings 3:12-14*
- *Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?” 10 It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this -1 Kings 3:9-10*
- *TRUE treasure is.... WISDOM! Trust in the Lord....*

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## Craft one: “Decision in a Bag” Tool

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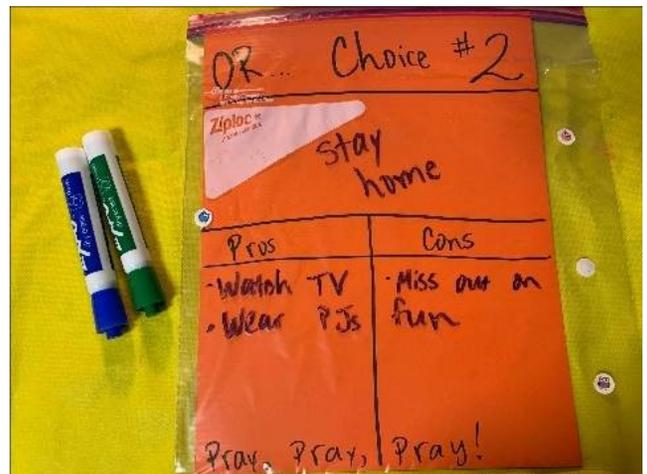
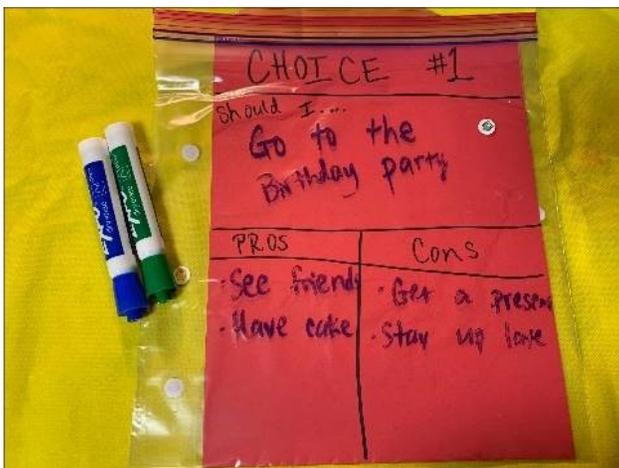
### You will need:

- Plastic bag (gallon Ziploc)
- Dry erase markers
- Markers or crayons
- Scissors
- Markers, crayons, etc.
- Other decorations (jewels, stickers, etc.)



### Procedure:

1. Create a chart on cardstock or construction paper, with spaces for “choice”, “pros”, and “cons.” Consider using two colors or pieces of paper.
2. Add decorations to the Ziploc bag, such as jewels or stickers.
3. Attach additional verses or captions as desired.
4. Slide the paper(s) into the bag. Use the dry-erase markers to make notes on the outside of the bag, allowing thoughts that can later be erased and re-written. Use the bag to consider elements of each side when making decisions.



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## Craft Two: “Treasured Wisdom Box”

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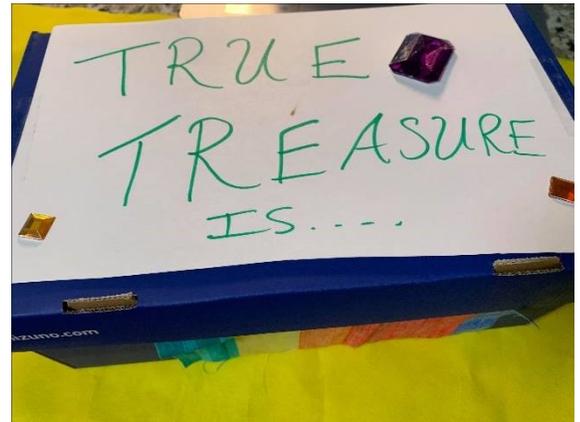
### You will need:

- Box/container
- Fabric (optional)
- Stickers/decorations
- Markers/crayons (fabric markers advised)
- Cardstock/paper
- Glue
- Scissors
- Captions/verses



### Procedure:

1. Decorate the outside of the box: you may wish to wrap in fabric or paper, or simply adorn with stickers, jewels, or markers.
2. Inside the box, line with paper or fabric. Add extra decorations as desired.
3. Inside the box, use paper “coins” or other pieces to brainstorm methods of acquiring wisdom.
4. Attach extra verses or captions, if desired.
5. Use your treasure box as a reminder that wisdom is better than earthly riches or treasure!



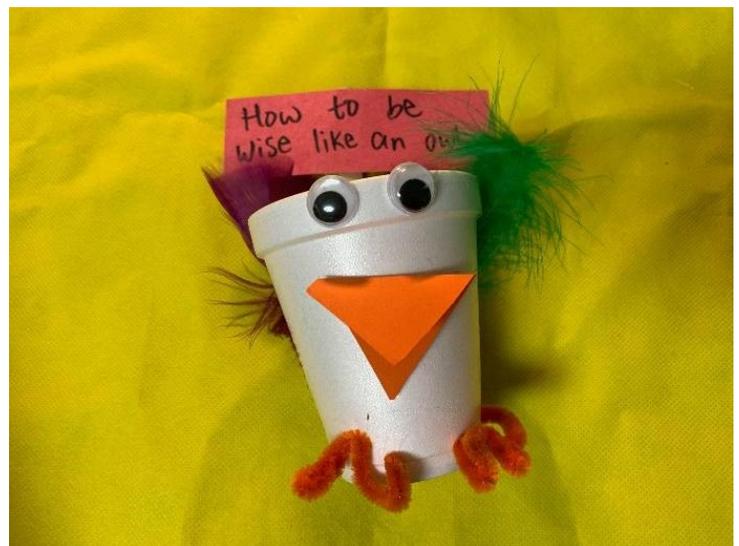
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## Craft Three: “Wise Owl Puppet”

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### You will need:

- Paper or Styrofoam cups
- Googly eyes
- Stickers/decorations
- Markers/crayons
- Glue or tape
- Construction paper/cardstock
- Scissors
- Captions/verses
- Pipe cleaners
- Feathers (optional)



### Procedure:

1. Decorate the cup to serve as an “owl.” Decide whether to face the cup upside down or with the opening up (opening up allows room to place suggestions).
2. Cut paper “feet” or use pipe cleaners for feet. Attach to the bottom of the owl.
3. Glue or draw eyes near the top.
4. Add a paper “beak” and feathers or paper wings, if desired.
5. Add extra verses or decorations. If you choose to use the owl as a puppet, consider mounting on a stick. If the decoration will house methods of gaining wisdom, write those ideas on paper slips and place within the cup or on popsicle sticks inside the cup.



Thank you for downloading these free materials. Our team is grateful for your trust and pray that God will bless your ministry.

This resource was prepared by [Kristin Schmidt](#) (pictured right). She serves at the Epiphany Lutheran Church in Castle Rock, CO. She has shared her teaching gifts through *Ministry-To-Children* since 2014 and now serves as our lead curriculum writer.



Every week she writes new [Sunday School lessons](#), [Bible crafts](#), and [children's sermons](#).

Kristin has a professional background in elementary and pre-school education. A graduate of Biola University, she holds a Master of Education and will receive the Master of Theology degree from Concordia University, Irvine, California, in May 2020. Kristin grew up in southern California and lived the past 10 years in Georgia. She is a long-distance runner and voracious reader.

My name is Tony Kummer (pictured below). I started Ministry-To-Children.com in 2007 as a free resource for anyone sharing Jesus with kids. It is my personal honor to share these resources with churches around the world.



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If you enjoy our material, be sure to [sign-up for my free email newsletter](#) called "Sunday School Works!" Every Tuesday, I send the latest new lessons, crafts, and coloring pages in print-friendly format to make your lesson planning easy.

May God continue to bless your ministry!

*Tony Kummer*