



# Course 3

## Teacher's Guide

### Do I Have to Make a Choice?

*This set contains . . .*

- ◆ Student Lesson Copy Masters
- ◆ Teacher's Guide
- ◆ CD with Student Lesson Copy Masters and Teacher's Guide in PDF and RTF files

**Lesson 1:** Making God-Pleasing Choices

**Lesson 2:** Choosing My Friends

**Lesson 3:** Choosing How to Use My Time

**Lesson 4:** Choosing How to Use the Money I Earn

**Lesson 5:** Choosing How to Use My Leisure Time

**Lesson 6:** Choices That Involve My Health

**Lesson 7:** Choices That Involve My Family

**Lesson 8:** Choices That Involve My Church Family

**Lesson 9:** Choices That Involve a Difference of Opinion

Suggested for Grade 9

Curriculum Developer: Prof. David Kuske  
Project Director: Gerald Kastens  
Writing/Editing Team: Rev. Lyle Albrecht, Laurie Biedenbender, Owen Dorn,  
Donald Helwig, Rev. John Miller, Rev. Randall Styx  
Design Team: NPH Design Services

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# Introductory Pages for Topical Courses

## TOPICAL COURSE FORMAT

Each course contains four to ten lessons on a specific theme, such as witnessing for Christ or making choices. You may spend as many days as you wish on each lesson.

## LESSON FORMAT

Each lesson contains four to ten copy masters for use with the students. These student copy masters may be reproduced. The teacher's guide contains copy master text, answers, and other instructions. Each student should have a three-ring binder to store and organize all the copy master sheets.

## Overview

This page contains the information the teacher needs to understand the lesson.

- **Lesson title**
- **Bible references**
- **Spiritual goals:** We pray that the Holy Spirit would help the students learn these spiritual truths and adopt these spiritual attitudes and habits.
- **Suggested memory treasures:** Assign these as you see fit. Be sure to discuss their relationship to the truths in the lesson. The students will have learned almost all the suggested memory treasures in their Christ-Light lessons at Lutheran elementary school or Sunday school. One asterisk designates those memory treasures that are part of the Sunday school core. Two asterisks designate what is additional core for Lutheran elementary schools.
- **Suggested commentary readings:** Read these to review Scripture or add depth to your instruction.
- **Introduction ideas:** Use these to interest the students and to help them see their need for what they will learn in the lesson.

## Copy Masters

- The **Bible lesson** guides the students in their study of specific portions of the Bible. It begins with an Aim question and ends with a Truth(s) that answers that question. Key Points are emphasized along the way. You may hand out the Bible lesson copy master and have the students fill it in as you teach the lesson, or you may have the students work in small groups to complete a portion of it before you discuss it. Please note that the student pages will lose their effectiveness if assigned as homework before class.

- The **Discuss This** sheet contains questions related to the Bible lesson directly preceding it. Each option is designated to the specific Key Point to which it is most closely connected. The discussion options require a variety of learning skills, such as analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and application. *At least some of these questions should always be used, because they help the students apply the lesson to their lives.* Plan in advance which questions you will use and where the questions fit best. Then vary your use of these questions:

- ~ Discuss some questions as a class.
- ~ Have students write answers first before discussing the questions as a class.
- ~ Have students discuss the questions in pairs or small groups before discussing them as a class.
- ~ Assign some questions as homework.

- The remaining sheets contain **activities** to help the students explore the topic and make applications to their lives. The sheets include additional Bible studies of many kinds, real-life situations, skits and roleplays, simple doctrinal studies, hymn and memory treasure studies, illustrations, writing activities, simple art activities, and so on. They may be done in class or outside of class, independently or in small groups. *Select those activities best suited to your class, and limit the number of activities to fit the time allotted. Plan in advance at what point in the lesson you can most appropriately and effectively use the selected activities.*

## Sample Lesson Plan

The following sample lesson plan is for Lesson 1: Making God-Pleasing Choices.

1. Introduce the lesson with the second Introduction option (*Tell about a good choice . . .*).
2. Hand out **Copy Master 1** (*Choices, Choices, Choices*). Read and discuss the first section, concluding with Key Point 1.
3. To apply Key Point 1, hand out **Copy Master 2** (*Choices, Choices, Choices*), the **Discuss This** page. Discuss applications 1 and 3.
4. Return to the lesson on **Copy Master 1**. Read and discuss the second section, concluding with Key Point 2.
5. To apply Key Point 2, discuss applications 5 and 6 on **Copy Master 2**.
6. Return to the lesson on **Copy Master 1**. Have the students work in pairs to complete the third section, concluding with Key Point 3. Then discuss the section briefly as a class.
7. To apply Key Point 3, discuss applications 8 and 9 on **Copy Master 2**.
8. Return to **Copy Master 1**. Answer the Aim question with the Truth of the lesson.
9. To further apply the lesson, use **Copy Master 3** (*Choices Are Opportunities*) or **Copy Master 4** (*Sinful Choices—Gracious God*). Assign passages to various groups of students. Then briefly discuss all the passages as a class.
10. To give the students an opportunity to practice making decisions, choose one or two situations from **Copy Master 6** (*Guarded and Guided*) to discuss as a class.
11. To help the students see how their decisions affect others, do **Copy Master 7** (*Whose Business?*) in class.
12. Assign **Copy Master 5** (*What's the Word on Making Choices?*) as homework.

## Characteristics of Ninth-Grade Students

### Spiritual Development

- They think more deeply about spiritual truths they have already learned
- They can understand the interrelatedness of Bible events.
- They want to know how to apply spiritual truths to their lives.
- They may need additional guidance if they do not come from homes that model Christian living.

### Emotional and Volitional Development

- They do not consider themselves children, and they are independent in their attitudes and habits.
- They are still greatly influenced by the actions and opinions of their peers.
- They are often governed by role models they have consciously or unconsciously chosen to follow.
- They are greatly influenced by television, movies, music, and magazines.

### Sexual Development

- Their sexuality is becoming an important aspect of their lives.

### Relationships with Parents

- They are in the process of leaving their parents in order to develop independent lives.
- They share less of their experiences with their parents.
- They are still influenced by their parents, especially if their parents respect their growing independence.

## Learning Style

- They can study one topic in depth over a number of class periods.
- They still enjoy a variety of learning experiences:
  - ~ working independently and in peer groups
  - ~ learning by listening and by doing
  - ~ learning by reading and by writing
  - ~ learning by answering questions and by asking questions
  - ~ analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating, and creating
- They question things they have previously accepted without question.

## Some Teaching Strategies

- **Meet the students where they are and then stretch them:** Recognize that your students have different levels of Bible knowledge and spiritual development, even when they might have received similar spiritual training in elementary school. Do not make assumptions about their previous learning. Start with the simple. Review the basics. Then move on to more complex concepts, deeper understandings, and applications of Bible truths relevant to their teenage years.
- **Create an open, responsive environment:** Recognize that as your students develop independent thinking skills, they may question things they previously accepted without question. Maintain a classroom in which it's good to ask questions, even spiritual questions. You are a spiritual leader. If they have questions, you want to give them truthful and appropriate answers. Encourage them to search the Scriptures not look to worldly "experts" for answers.
- **Allow them to work together on some exercises:** Occasional cooperative-learning activities yield many positive results. Your students may enjoy their work more when they do it with their peers. They may become accustomed to discussing spiritual issues with their peers—a skill we hope they take with them outside the classroom. And when they have already tried out their ideas on a small group of their peers, they may feel more confident discussing an issue in front of the whole class. To keep "chatty" students focused on the task at hand, give the students definite and fairly short time limits.



# Making God-Pleasing Choices

Genesis 3:6-13; 4:1,2,8; 6:5; Joshua 24:15-18; Psalm 119:9-16,32;  
Romans 7:18-20; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Philippians 2:13

## Goals

We pray that the student

### knows these spiritual truths:

- God’s Word motivates and guides us in making God-pleasing choices.
- Choices are opportunities God gives us to gratefully serve him.

### develops these spiritual attitudes and habits:

- I am grateful that God chose to forgive my sins in Jesus.
- I desire to make choices that are pleasing to God.
- I strive to apply God’s will in testing the choices I make.
- I understand God forgives sinful choices and can use them for my good.

## To Memorize

Joshua 24:15

Psalm 119:11

Psalm 119:32

\* Psalm 119:105

Romans 7:18,19

Philippians 2:13

## Suggested Commentary Readings

- Pages 46-51,58-62,73-76 in Jeske, *Genesis*, The People’s Bible series
- Pages 238-243 in Harstad, *Joshua*, The People’s Bible series
- Pages 191-198 in Brug, *Psalms*, Volume 2, The People’s Bible series
- Page 120 in Panning, *Romans*, The People’s Bible series
- Pages 89-91 in Valleskey, *2 Corinthians*, The People’s Bible series
- Pages 53-59 in Kuschel, *Philippians, Colossians, Philemon*, The People’s Bible series

## Introduction Ideas

- Discuss: “Life is a series of choices.” What you do and say in any given moment is a matter of choice. Even when things that are outside your control happen to you, how you respond to those things is also a matter of choice. For instance, the time you got up this morning was a matter of choice. You chose to eat or not to eat breakfast. You chose what to wear and where to go. Even if someone ordered you to do certain things today, you had a choice whether to obey them or not. You make choices all the time—some trivial, some important. This lesson is about making such choices—making choices in regard to our friends and families, our health, our time, and our money.
- Tell about a good choice or decision you made recently. What made it a good choice? Tell about a bad or questionable choice or decision you made recently. What made it a bad one? (Most students usually think that if something negative or unpleasant happened as a result of a choice they made, it was a bad choice.) This lesson is about making choices—in matters of our friends and families, our health, our time, and our money. The lesson will show us that God’s will is the standard for measuring whether choices are good or bad.

# Choices, Choices, Choices

Genesis 3:6-13; 4:1,2,8; 6:5; Joshua 24:15-18; Psalm 119:9-16,32; Romans 7:18-20;  
2 Corinthians 5:17; Philippians 2:13



## How can I make God-pleasing choices?

When God created Adam and Eve, they had the ability to make choices. He did not make them robots that could do nothing but say yes to him. They had free wills. This means that they could choose to obey God or to disobey God. One day, they made a fateful choice—they chose to disobey God. And the choice they made has affected every human choice since.

### Ge 3:6-13

- a. What sinful choice did Adam and Eve make? *They chose to eat from the tree God had forbidden them to eat from. Eve chose to give in to the temptation of the devil, and Adam chose to eat the fruit Eve offered to him. Both chose to disobey.*
- b. What were the immediate consequences of this choice? *Sin destroyed their perfect relationship with God and their perfect relationship with each other. In their shame they covered themselves with fig leaves and tried to hide from God. They offered excuses and tried to blame others for their wrong choice rather than confess their sin.*

### Ge 4:1,2,8; 6:5

- c. What were the long-term consequences of Adam and Eve's choice to sin? *Wickedness ruined the earth and everything that lived upon it. Adam and Eve's sin was passed along to every descendant, and it continues to corrupt every succeeding generation. Every person born since that time has original sin—an inborn inclination to sin, to make choices that do not please God. To this day everyone is by nature totally corrupt in God's eyes, unable to please him.*

### Ro 7:18-20

- d. How did original sin affect the choices the apostle Paul made? *The sin "living" in the apostle Paul led him to choose sinful words and actions over God-pleasing words and actions—despite the fact that he wanted to do what was right in God's eyes.*

## KEY POINT 1

**What hinders me from making God-pleasing choices?** *My sinful nature hinders me from making God-pleasing choices.*

The ultimate problem with human beings is not a choice problem—it is a heart problem. Since human hearts by nature are inclined toward evil, they make evil choices. In order to make God-pleasing choices, human hearts need to be changed.

### Php 2:13

- a. Who alone can produce the desire to act according to God's good purpose? *Only God himself can produce in people the desire to act according to God's good purpose.*

### 2 Co 5:17

- b. How does God produce this change of heart? *By faith God makes us a new creation.*

### Ps 119:32

- c. The psalmist says he wants to obey God—to “run in the path of [God's] commands”—because God has set his heart free. How did God set our hearts free? *Through Jesus' work, God has freed us from sin, from the power of the devil, and from the lasting effects of death. (Recall Jesus' words in John 8:31-36.)*

### Jos 24:15-18

- d. Before Joshua died, he presented the Israelites with a choice: they could serve false gods, as their new neighbors the Canaanites did, or they could serve the Lord. What reason did God's people express for choosing to serve the Lord, as Joshua and his family did? *They said the Lord, the Savior-God, had freed them from slavery in Egypt. They were his chosen people. Because the Savior-God loved them, they wanted to serve him.*

### KEY POINT 2

**What enables me to make God-pleasing choices?** *Faith in Jesus as my Savior and gratitude to him for saving me are the only things that enable me to make God-pleasing choices.*

How do we know which choices are God pleasing? Merely *wanting* to make the right choices is no assurance that we will do so. Many times we think we have made the right choice only to discover later that was not the case. If only God had given us a guidebook for making choices. Good news—he has!

#### Ps 119:9-16

- a. Find the words and expressions that show the psalmist *wants* to make God-pleasing choices. *He says he seeks God with all his heart (verse 10), he rejoices in following the Lord's statutes (verse 14), and he delights in God's decrees, promising not to neglect God's Word (verse 16).*
- b. The psalmist wants to make God-pleasing choices. And he knows what God-pleasing choices are. Find the words and expressions that show what the

psalmist bases his choices on. *He bases his choices on God's law, which he calls God's "word" (verse 9), God's "commands" (verse 10), God's "decrees" (verse 12), "laws" that have come from God's own mouth (verse 13), "statutes" (verse 14), and "precepts" (verse 15).*

- c. How does Psalm 119:105 summarize these verses? *"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path."*

### KEY POINT 3

**What is my guide in making God-pleasing choices?** *God's holy law is my guide in making God-pleasing choices.*



#### How can I make God-pleasing choices?

*I can make God-pleasing choices in life when by faith in my Savior and in gratitude to God for saving me, I apply God's law to every situation and decision I face.*

1. **KEY POINT 1:** Agree/disagree: Even unbelievers can choose to do God-pleasing things.

*Agree: Outwardly, unbelievers can appear to do God-pleasing things. In fact, on occasion their lives might appear more godly than some believers' lives. Even unbelievers have the natural law written in their hearts, attested to by the voice of conscience that tells them when they are doing wrong. Disagree: Without faith in Christ, unbelievers remain in their sins. "Without faith it is impossible to please God" (Hebrews 11:6). Their reasons for doing good cannot flow from their love and gratitude to God. Their good deeds are filthy rags in God's sight (Isaiah 64:6).*

2. **KEY POINT 1:** Agree/disagree: Any person has a free will through which he or she can choose or reject God.
- Disagree: People lost this ability to choose God in the fall. Yet we often hear false notions about free will—for example, people speak about making decisions for Christ. The fact is that, if through the gospel, the Holy Spirit has awakened in them the desire to "decide" for Christ and "invite" him into their hearts, then he is already there. Without the Holy Spirit working through the Word, all people are spiritually dead and enemies of God, inclined only to evil.*

3. **KEY POINT 1:** (Illustration) By nature every person is like a rotten oak tree leaning at a 45-degree angle in a fierce windstorm. Explain.

*By nature every person is inclined toward sin, that is, toward making wrong choices in every area of life. All people are destined to choose evil that will lead them to hell whether they are aware of it or not.*

4. **KEY POINT 2:** Discuss the title of this course, "Do I Have to Make a Choice?" Do Christians make God-pleasing choices because they have to or because they want to?

*Christians make God-pleasing choices because they want to, not because they have to. However, it wouldn't be wrong to say we simply have to do the right thing out of love and gratitude toward God. Consider Old Testament Joseph, who said, "How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?" (Genesis 39:9) and Paul, who said, "Christ's love compels [forces, coerces] us" (2 Corinthians 5:14).*

5. **KEY POINT 2:** Mike said, "Sometimes it seems that doing what God wants takes all the fun out of life." Comment.

*Obeying God is drudgery to the sinful flesh. But our new man—the one created through faith in Christ—trusts that God has given his commands for our good. Knowing God's love in Jesus makes it a joy to walk according to his will.*

6. **KEY POINT 2:** Martha can't see how her faith in Jesus can help her choose what courses to take in school next year or where to apply for a summer job. Can you help her?

*When Martha truly understands what it means to be a redeemed child of God, she will have a greater desire to serve the Lord in every area of her life. In choosing courses she will want to take those that give her an opportunity to develop and use her God-given gifts. She might ask herself how she could best serve the Lord after high school and then choose courses that would lead her to reach that goal. In choosing where to apply for a job, she might consider whether a job offers a good opportunity to use her God-given talents or to let her light shine as a Christian. Surely she would bring these decisions to the Lord's throne in prayer.*

7. **KEY POINT 2:** (Illustration) A person living a Christian life might be compared to a train rolling along through the countryside of life. What is the engine that empowers us? What is the track that we travel on?

*God's love in Jesus (the gospel) is the engine that empowers us to live for him. God's commandments (the law) serve as the track we travel on, guiding us in the decisions and choices we make day by day.*

8. **KEY POINT 3:** Abby said, "Making choices guided by God's Word is difficult because there's so much to take into consideration." Lisa disagreed: "Actually, it's simple: just ten little commandments to follow." Who is right? Why?

*Both Abby and Lisa state elements of truth. God has given us his Word to guide us, not confuse us. The Ten Commandments are a summary of God's moral law, not an exhaustive treatment. For a deeper understanding of God's will, we study all of his Word. Also, at times*