

# I Am Wise When I Choose the Right

Lesson  
**36**

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**Purpose** To help each child understand that we are wise when we obey the teachings of Jesus Christ.

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**Preparation**

1. Prayerfully study Matthew 7:24–27.
2. Prepare two signs, using folded pieces of paper as shown:



3. Prepare to sing or say the words to “The Wise Man and the Foolish Man” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 281) and “Choose the Right Way” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 160). The words to “Choose the Right Way” are included at the back of the manual.
4. Write some wise actions and some foolish actions on small pieces of paper. Use the actions below and add others that are appropriate for your class. Place the pieces of paper in a small container such as a box, bowl, or bag.  
  
Say your prayers.  
Obey your parents.  
Be reverent at Primary.  
Be kind to others.  
Share.  
Tell the truth.  
  
Quarrel.  
Say a bad word.  
Be selfish.  
Tell lies.  
Be unkind.
5. Materials needed:
  - a. A Bible.
  - b. A hat, a pair of gloves, and a pair of shoes (or three other articles of clothing the children in your class might wear).
  - c. CTR chart (see lesson 1).
6. Make the necessary preparations for any enrichment activities you want to use.

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**Suggested Lesson Development**

Invite a child to give the opening prayer.  
  
Follow up with the children if you encouraged them to do something during the week.

## **We Can Make Wise Decisions**

Attention activity

Display the gloves, hat, and shoes (adapt this activity as needed if you are using other articles of clothing). Put the gloves on top of your head.

- Is this how we should wear gloves? Why?
- What should we use gloves for?

Point out that it would be foolish to put gloves on your head because then they could not protect your hands.

Invite a child to demonstrate the wise way to wear gloves.

Put the hat on one of your feet.

- Is this how we should wear a hat? Why?
- What should we use hats for?

Point out that it would be foolish to put a hat on your foot because then it could not protect your head.

Invite another child to demonstrate the wise way to wear a hat.

Put the shoes on your hands.

- Is this how we should wear shoes? Why?
- What should we use shoes for?

Point out that it would be foolish to put shoes on your hands because then they could not protect your feet.

Invite another child to demonstrate the wise way to wear shoes.

Point out that few people would wear gloves, hats, or shoes on the wrong parts of their bodies. But choices about what to wear can also be wise or foolish. Briefly discuss with the children when it would be wise or foolish to wear different articles of clothing (for example, it would be wise to wear gloves when you are going outside in cold weather, but it would be foolish to wear shoes when you are taking a bath).

Explain that we make many choices each day. Foolish choices can harm us and make us unhappy. Wise choices help keep us safe and happy.

## **Jesus Christ Wants Us to Be Wise and Obey His Teachings**

Scripture story

Explain that Jesus Christ often used stories called parables to teach people. He told one parable about a man who made a foolish decision and a man who made a wise decision. Tell the children that you are going to read this parable from the Bible. Read aloud Matthew 7:24–27.

Discussion

- How do you think the man who built his house on the sand felt when the storm knocked his house down?
- How do you think the man who built his house on the rock felt when the storm did not hurt his house?

Explain that Jesus compared us to the men in the parable. If we follow Jesus' teachings, we are like the wise man who built his house on the rock. We will be happy. If we do not follow Jesus' teachings, we are like the foolish man who built his house on the sand. We will be unhappy.

## Song

Help the class sing or say the words to “The Wise Man and the Foolish Man,” using the actions indicated below:

The wise man built his house upon the rock (*plant right fist solidly in palm of left hand*),

The wise man built his house upon the rock (*plant right fist solidly in palm of left hand*),

The wise man built his house upon the rock (*plant right fist solidly in palm of left hand*),

And the rains came tumbling down (*raise hands high in the air; then bring them down, wiggling fingers*).

The rains came down, and the floods came up (*lower hands again; then raise them with palms up*),

The rains came down, and the floods came up (*lower hands again; then raise them with palms up*),

The rains came down, and the floods came up (*lower hands again; then raise them with palms up*),

And the house on the rock stood still (*plant right fist solidly in palm of left hand*).

The foolish man built his house upon the sand (*wiggle fingers and move arms back and forth in front of body*),

The foolish man built his house upon the sand (*wiggle fingers and move arms back and forth in front of body*),

The foolish man built his house upon the sand (*wiggle fingers and move arms back and forth in front of body*),

And the rains came tumbling down (*raise hands high in the air; then bring them down, wiggling fingers*).

The rains came down, and the floods came up (*lower hands again; then raise them with palms up*),

The rains came down, and the floods came up (*lower hands again; then raise them with palms up*),

The rains came down, and the floods came up (*lower hands again; then raise them with palms up*),

And the house on the sand washed away (*wiggle fingers and move arms out away from body*).

### **We Are Wise When We Choose the Right**

#### Story and discussion

Explain that everyone makes choices every day. We can make wise choices or we can make foolish ones. Tell in your own words the following story about B. H. (Harry) Roberts, who grew up to become a General Authority. Have the children decide whether Harry’s choices in the story are wise or foolish.

Harry was born in England a long time ago. His family was very poor, so Harry did not have a chance to go to school. He wanted very much to learn to read and write. He thought that if he could have a chance to learn he would not only read books but write them too.

When Harry was ten years old, he came to America and crossed the plains with his sister Polly and other pioneers.

Harry had many adventures. One day he heard that his group would be crossing a large river the next day. This sounded exciting, so Harry crept out of camp early the next morning and set out to see the river. This was against the camp rules.

- Do you think Harry’s decision to sneak out of camp was wise or foolish?

The river was farther away than Harry thought, and he was tired when he finally got there. He lay down and fell sound asleep among some willows.

When Harry woke up, all the wagons had crossed the river. He ran to the riverbank and shouted to get someone’s attention. He was told to swim across, so he took off his coat and shoes and jumped into the river. He almost made it across the river, but he became too tired, and the captain of the company had to bring him the rest of the way on his horse. Harry was happy to be safe, but there was no way to get his coat and shoes back. Every night he wished he still had his coat, and every day he wished he still had his shoes.

Harry had to walk nine hundred miles barefoot. This made his feet very sore. Prickly cactus grew near the trail, and Harry was so hungry that he often gathered it for food. The sharp spines stuck in his sore feet. Polly pulled the spines out while they both cried. Harry cried because his feet hurt, and Polly cried because she felt sorry for Harry.

- Why was Harry’s choice to sneak out of camp a foolish choice?
- How did Harry feel about his choice afterward?

After Harry arrived in Salt Lake City, he finally had an opportunity to go to school. When he was eleven years old, a teacher took him into her school and taught him the alphabet. The only book Harry had was the Bible, and he read it over and over. He studied hard in school and became a very good student.

- What choices did Harry make? (He chose to learn to read, and he chose to study the scriptures.)
- Were these choices wise or foolish?

When Harry grew up, he became a wise and important man in the Church. He loved to read and enjoyed reading the scriptures. He also wrote many books about the Church. Many people have read his books and learned more about the Church. (See *Church News*, 19 July 1980, pp. 8–9; and Truman G. Madsen, *Defender of the Faith: The B. H. Roberts Story* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980], pp. 19–21, 37–40, 56–57.)

CTR chart

Display the CTR chart and have the children repeat the words with you: “I will choose the right.” Explain to the children that when we choose the right we are making wise decisions.

### Summary

Activity

Display the signs labeled “wise” and “foolish” on the floor or table. Have the children say with you the word on each sign. Point out that the “wise” sign has a happy face on it because being wise makes us happy. Point out that the “foolish” sign has a sad face on it because being foolish makes us unhappy.

Show the container with the small pieces of paper and invite the children to take turns choosing a paper from the container. As each child chooses a paper, read or have the child read the action written on it. Have the child decide whether the action is wise or foolish and place the paper by the appropriate sign.

Encourage the children to do the actions they identified as wise choices.

Review discussion

- What kind of choices make us happy?
- In order to be wise and happy, whose teachings should we follow?
- Why is it foolish to disobey Jesus Christ and do wrong?

Testimony

Testify to the children that we will be happy when we make wise choices. Express your appreciation for Jesus Christ and the things he taught that help us be happy.

Encourage the children to make a special effort this week to think about their decisions and try to make wise choices.

Song

Sing or say the words to “Choose the Right Way” with the children.

Invite a child to give the closing prayer. Ask the child to pray that each class member will be wise and choose the right.

### Enrichment Activities

Choose from the following activities those that will work best for the children in your class. You can use them in the lesson itself or as a review or summary. For additional guidance, see “Class Time” in “Helps for the Teacher.”

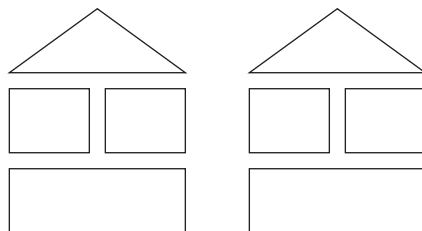
1. Show picture 2-7, The Wise Men, and have the children tell you about the picture. Remind the children that the Wise Men came looking for Jesus after he was born (see Matthew 2:1–12). Explain that these men were wise not only because they had great knowledge but also because they sought and worshiped Jesus Christ. They made wise choices to follow Jesus.

You may want to have the children role-play the story of the Wise Men seeking Jesus.

2. Ask each child to tell you about a wise choice he or she has made recently (give suggestions if necessary). Write each child’s response on a separate piece of paper and have the children draw pictures of themselves on their papers. Remind the children to put smiles on the faces of their drawings because making wise choices helps us be happy.
3. Demonstrate the following object lesson (practice this demonstration at home before trying it in class).

Materials needed:

- a. Eight or ten children’s play blocks to build two simple identical houses, as shown:



- b. Two deep pans the same size.
- c. A large flat rock to put in one of the pans.
- d. A mound of sand to put in the other pan.
- e. Water in a watering can or pitcher.

Pour the sand into a mound in one pan, and flatten the mound. Put the flat rock in the other pan.

Show the blocks and explain that you will use them to build two houses. One house will be built on the sand and the other on the rock.

You may wish to ask the children to help build the house on the rock. The house should be similar to the house you build on the sand.

After the houses are built, have the children imagine that a storm comes and beats upon the houses. It rains hard and the winds blow.

- What do you think a storm would do to these two houses?

After the children have given their ideas, do not comment. Carefully sprinkle or pour water on the house built on sand until the sand slides away and the house falls down. Put the same amount of water on the house built on the rock, and let the children observe that the house does not fall.

Help the children determine that building a house on sand was foolish, while building a house on the rock was wise.

Read aloud the first part of Helaman 5:12 (through *foundation*). Point out that this scripture compares Jesus Christ to a rock. Remind the children that following the teachings of Jesus is like building a house on a rock. It is wise.