

Always Say a Prayer

By Anne Love

for use as
STEP 1

**Lesson 8****Focus:**

Praying can help me
make wise choices.

Lesson 8**Bible Basis:**

Mark 3:13-19a;
Luke 6:12-16

Lesson 8**Memory Verse:**

If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask
God, who give generously to all without
finding fault, and it will be given to you.
—James 1:5

Students will explore choices and discuss the impact of a pilot's request during a scary plane ride as they look at prayer as a path to wisdom.

Materials:

- Internet access
- Variety of small wrapped candies (1 piece per student plus extras; be aware of any dietary restrictions)
- Towel or other object to use as a cover
- Whiteboard and marker

Prior to class, purchase a variety of small wrapped candies; the more options the better! Before your preteens arrive, lay the candies out on a platter or a table, etc. where they can easily be viewed, but cover them up so that students cannot see them when they enter the classroom.

Begin the lesson by having your students divide into pairs. Each pair should choose one person to go stand in a designated place in the classroom (ensure that these initial volunteers are far enough away from their partners that they cannot communicate with their partner). Uncover the display of candy, and build excitement by showing the various kinds; assure your students that everyone is going to get a piece to enjoy.

Explain to the initial volunteers that they must choose a piece of candy for their partner, but they cannot talk with their partner before making their choice. They simply have to make the best choice possible. Have each of the initial partners make their choice, and instruct them to go back to their partner and give them the candy. Students receiving the candy should *not* eat it.

Once the first group of students has made their choices and are sitting with their partners, tell the second group of students that before they select a piece of candy for their partner, they should talk with their partner to find out what kind of candy to get. Have the second group of students make their choices based on the instruction they received from their partners and bring the candy back to their partner. Instruct all students *not* to eat their candy yet.

Raise your hand if you are happy with the candy that was chosen for you. (Allow students to respond.) **If you are unhappy with the candy you were given, raise your hand.** (Allow students to respond.)

➤ **Why is everyone who received their candy second happy with what was chosen for them?** (Because their partners knew exactly which candy to choose for them.)

➤ **Some of you who received your candy first are unhappy. Why?** (Answers may vary, but might include: my partner didn't know which candy to choose; I didn't get to tell my partner which candy I like best.)

➤ **What changed after the first group of students chose their candy?** (The second group knew exactly what to pick because they were able to talk with their partner. The first group didn't get to talk with their partner and just had to make their best guess.)

Being able to talk with your partner and get advice on which candy to pick seemed to be beneficial for some of you. Before you had to make your decision, you were able to get insight and direction to be sure that you made a wise choice.

If feasible, allow unhappy students to trade in their candy for something they'd prefer; invite students to enjoy their candy while you continue the lesson.

We make decisions all day long. Before you arrived at Sunday school this morning, you had already made a number of decisions—what to wear, what to eat for breakfast, what to bring with you to church, whether to wear a coat, which door to use to enter the building, where to sit when you arrived in the classroom. We make countless decisions all day long!

Many of the decisions we make are simple and are made quickly to allow us to move through our day; we are faced with a choice, and we can decide without needing to spend a lot of time in thought. We make a lot of our decisions on our own without needing to rely on others to help us figure out which choice to make.

There are also situations that we encounter that either benefit from or require advice or help from others. Some of those situations can be simple, like with our candy choice this morning—in order to get the right candy for your partner, many of you needed your partner to tell you which candy to choose.

But we can also encounter situations or decisions that are much more challenging than which candy to choose or what to wear. We can face situations that are uncertain, challenges that seem too hard to get through, or difficulties that are scary. It's in those moments that we find ourselves seeking help from others.

In the spring of 2017, a plane carrying over 300 passengers started having engine trouble as it traveled over the Indian Ocean from Australia to Malaysia. As you watch this news story, see if you can identify some of the things the passengers and crew did to get through an incredibly scary situation.

Share this video with your students [1:34].

Pilot of shaking plane asks passengers to pray

<https://vimeo.com/304901035>

➤ **What were some of the things the passengers and crew experienced during the flight?**
(Engine trouble, loud bangs, lots of shaking for long periods of time.)

➤ **The video doesn't tell us, but it's safe to assume that as things became scary on the flight, a lot of questions were being asked. What kinds of questions might a passenger or crew member on this flight have asked?** (Answers might include: What's going on? Why are we shaking so badly? What was that noise? Are we in danger? How do I stay safe?)

➤ **What did the news story say that the pilot did twice? Why do you think the pilot asked for prayer? What might the passengers and crew have prayed for?** (Answers will vary.)

Again, we don't know for sure, but we can be pretty sure that one of the many requests that was prayed for during this scary flight was that God would give the pilot the strength and wisdom to know what to do to land the plane safely. The pilot was most likely seeking advice and help from his copilot to fly the plane, from the flight attendants who were taking care of the passengers, and from the air controllers who help guide planes during their flights. The pilot had an incredibly tough situation to get through, and he knew prayer was important.

While He was on earth, Jesus faced situations in which He had to make choices that would impact His ministry. Let's look at what He did to work through a challenging situation.

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher's guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

Lesson 8 / January 20, 2019

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for use as
STEP 4 

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Lesson 8**Memory Verse:**

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Materials:

- Internet access
- Whiteboard and markers
- “In Need of Wisdom?” worksheet printouts (1 per student; [template found here](#)) **Ashley, the pdf for this template is in the file on Box**
- Pens/pencils/markers

Before class, print out enough In Need of Wisdom worksheets so that each student has a copy. [The template can be found here.](#)

Our lesson today allowed us to see Jesus as He wrestled with the huge task of choosing His disciples. Jesus wanted wisdom and direction from God so much that He spent an entire night in prayer. Jesus’ example is one we should always strive to follow; He showed how immensely important it is for us to always seek wisdom and direction from our Heavenly Father.

Use the following link to display today’s memory verse and ask a volunteer to read it aloud.
<https://dailyverses.net/2018/4/12>

How incredible is that? God isn’t stingy in giving wisdom to people who ask Him how they can make the best choices. Our verse tells us that God gives wisdom “without finding fault.” He doesn’t look at our past mistakes—foolish choices we’ve made previously—before He decides whether or not we deserve to receive wisdom from Him. What an encouraging promise!

When life feels easy and worry-free, it can be easy to say, “I’ll always remember to pray when I find myself in a challenging situation.” However, when those challenging moments hit and we find ourselves struggling to know what to do, we may forget our commitment to pray. It can be helpful to have an easy way to remind ourselves what we should do when we need wisdom.

Distribute the “In Need of Wisdom?” worksheets, pencils/pens, and/or markers. You may want to use the [link to the template](#) to display the worksheet on an overhead screen so all your students can see what you are referring to as you point it out to them.

An acronym uses letters to help us remember a phrase or idea in a simple, easy way. You are probably familiar with the acronym ASAP, which commonly stands for “As soon as possible.” To help us remember the importance of prayer when facing a challenge, we can use ASAP to help us remember to “Always Say a Prayer.”

Point out to your students where the words “Always Say a Prayer” should be written on their worksheet. Give the students time to reflect on their own lives and whether they are facing a challenging decision for which they need wisdom and direction from God. Instruct students to use the box at the bottom of their worksheet to write a prayer to God, asking Him to generously give the wisdom He promises.

While students are working, the following music video may be played [4:58]:

Wisdom Song – Laura Woodley Osman (Story of All Stories Official Lyric Video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tMnIVe4-QUY>

When students have finished their prayers, come back together as a group to close in prayer:
Father God, You take such good care of us! You know us so well, and You know that when we have tough choices to make and hard challenges to work through, we need Your help. Thank You for the promise of wisdom; thank You for giving it to us when we ask. Thank You for not holding our past mistakes and poor decisions against us! Your wisdom is a generous gift that we desperately need. Help us to follow Jesus’ example in remembering to always pray and lean on You as we walk through the choices and decisions that come our way. Thank You for loving us, for caring for us, and for knowing our needs. We love You, Lord. Amen.

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