

discipleship essentials

Essentials for Christian Living
Study Guide

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORLDVIEW

LESSON 2: MAKING LIFE CHOICES

INTRODUCTION

This lesson is part of a Disciple Essentials module titled Christian Life and Worldview. This series of lessons examines the choices and practices that are essential for Christian living. To live as the Word of God teaches us means we understand that the choices we make each day affect our faith. It also means learning to pray, practising the commands of God and learning to serve others. These are important lessons for understanding the practice of Christianity and how to live out our faith within our Church community.

The Study Guide is intended for an individual to look deeper into a specific lesson on their own. The lessons can be used in conjunction with other Discipleship Essentials materials, such as the video and audio productions found on www.discipleshipessentials.org.

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CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORLDVIEW

LESSON 2: MAKING LIFE CHOICES

WHAT IS IT ABOUT?

Every day of our lives we make choices; some are small and some have tremendous consequences. This lesson looks at the power of our choices, and how to avoid making poor ones.

JUST SO YOU KNOW...

You are valuable to God! Did you know that? God loves you and wants you to have a life filled with the joy of knowing Him personally. God also values the people around you. When your choices harm you, you might think that no one else suffers – but that isn't always the case. Others are often hurt by our selfish actions. If you have made poor choices in the past, there is forgiveness in Jesus, and you can be made new by trusting Him. It is not healthy to dwell on past poor choices, but God can help us make better choices for our future. And we can be assured that we are of value to Him.

GETTING STARTED

1. What is the best choice you ever made? On what advice did you make that decision?

2. What factors contribute to a person making bad choices?



STUDY

- ❖ **MAKING GOOD CHOICES:** We make choices every day – some good, others poor. If a person has a good sense of self-worth and believes they deserve good things, they are more likely to choose well and seek the best for their future.
 - A strong identity enables self-control over emotional and confusing impulses. Those who avoid risky behaviour are able to invest in their future. They set high standards in order to excel and avoid anything that would get in the way of their goals.
- ❖ **MANAGING TEMPTATION:** Let’s look at some examples of temptations we face, and the consequences of both poor and wise choices.
 - What do the following verses tell you about making choices?

Proverbs 14:12	
Deuteronomy 30:9-10	
Proverbs 3:30-32	

- We are tempted with many things. Each time we face a temptation we can make either a poor and destructive choice or a wise one. Consider some of the following temptations. Add any other consequences you can think of to the chart.

Poor Choices/Consequences	TEMPTATION	Positive Choices/Consequences
Premarital sex with one or more partners could lead to AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases, and low self-esteem.	Desire for Sex	Abstinence until marriage will protect against diseases, feelings of jealousy, and not being satisfied with your partner.
Revenge can lead to damaging relationships because of a momentary feeling of anger.	Anger in Relationships	Choosing to forgive and reconcile with a friend creates the potential for a strengthened friendship.



Use of illicit drugs can lead to loss of money and bodily damage.	Drugs	Making a plan for your life, including your money, education and healthy lifestyle, will give your life purpose.
Lying to your boss about how much you worked can lead to consequences of getting caught, feelings of guilt, and loss of trust.	Cheating	Choosing to be truthful and working hard for your wages will give you a sense of accomplishment.
Shoplifting can lead to getting caught and being charged with a crime.	Coveting	Being satisfied with what you have and earning money to pay for your purchases will give a feeling of satisfaction.
Pornography gives a false idea about relationships, it degrades women, and can be addictive.	Lust	Guarding your eyes helps to protect your future relationships, so you will be able to love your spouse as God intended.

- What other poor choices do people around you make? How do these poor choices affect their ability to accomplish their dreams and ambitions?

❖ **WE ARE VALUABLE:** No other human who has ever lived is exactly like you or me! We are the only person like us in the entire world. Even twins have unique finger prints! No one has the exact thoughts and feelings of another person; no one else has their genetic code. Our experiences, talents, abilities, and personal preferences make us unique. Our laugh or our voice can be recognized from some distance – it is unique!



- Read through the following verses, and write down how they make you feel. Are you valuable to God?

Psalm 139:13-16	
Jeremiah 1:5	
Ephesians 2:10	
Matthew 6:25-35	

- Consider the way our body is put together. We have eyes that can see; we have a hand that is more useful than any tool ever made. Our minds can do complex calculations and process thoughts that no computer can match. Such an intricate creation must be very valuable!
- How should something so valuable be treated? Do you treat yourself as though you are valuable to God?

❖ **DETERMINING YOUR VALUE:** When we begin to see ourselves as precious creations of God, we will make better choices for ourselves and our future.

- Answer the following questions:

Does what you do or how you act determine your value?	
Does how well you perform in school, at home or in your workplace determine your value?	
Are some people more valuable than others because they perform better or make fewer mistakes?	



- Now read the following verses and write down what they say about your value.

John 3:16	
Matthew 10:29-31	
Jeremiah 29:11	

- If God values us very much – enough to sacrifice His Son to save us – our lives have great worth! The choices we make don't make us more or less special to God. They can, however, interfere with the perfect plans God has for us.

❖ **HUMAN BEINGS ARE NOT PERFECT:** No one is perfect – we all make mistakes. That is a natural part of being human. Check off any of the following that you have done at one time in your life:

- Told a lie
- Been unkind to a sibling or friend
- Disobeyed your parents
- Coveted something that was not yours
- Felt hatred towards someone
- Behaved dishonestly towards another person
- Acted selfishly
- Worried and failed to trust God

- Most of us will check off each one of those! We have failed, we have sinned, and we need God. We often make poor choices based on selfishness, and that can destroy our life. But there is good news!

❖ **WE ARE LOVED BY GOD:** Each of us is valuable because of who we are on the inside, and because of those special things within each of us that make us one-of-a-kind. And whether we are aware of it or not, we are all deeply loved by God. He is the one who loves us unconditionally and who created us unique and special.

- Making choices for God. In this lesson we have focussed on the impact of poor choices, but we have not yet looked at the importance of making choices with the view of becoming more like Christ. When you really love someone, you value their advice and would often be willing to follow them wherever they go. How much more should we love God who sent his Son to die for our sins? God did this for us as part of His master plan. We need to consider this when making choices. Before you make decisions, you should consider if they advance you in worldly ways or in the kingdom of God.



IN SUMMARY

- ❖ We make choices every day – some good and others poor. If a person has a good sense of self-worth and believes they deserve good things, they are more likely to choose well.
- ❖ We can make good choices even if we are faced with temptation.
- ❖ Knowing that God loves and values us helps us make better choices for our life.
- ❖ Poor choices have destructive consequences, and hurt not only ourselves but the people we love.
- ❖ We are not perfect, but God offers us forgiveness in Jesus!

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Have you made a choice to commit your life to following Jesus?

2. What might God's plan for you be? What are some positive choices you can make to direct your life according to God's desires?

3. Do you have difficulty believing you are valuable to God? What makes this difficult to believe?