

t_{he} Chalkboard

A Quarterly Publication of Children's Ministries
Zion Assembly Church of God



Making the Right Choices

Today's children are faced with great challenges and difficult decisions. I was shocked during a recent children's service. As I was teaching a lesson on making good choices, the children began to share some of their personal decisions. One young boy replied, "I had to choose whether to live with my mom or my dad." In a world of cell phones, fast-food, and entertainment, our children's lives have become more and more complicated. They are forced to make tough choices which would horrify most adults. At an early age, children are faced with unbelievable pressures to choose for or against drug use and sexual promiscuity.

As Children's Ministers, although it is uncomfortable to discuss these topics, we cannot bury our heads in the sand. We must discuss the issues with which our children are confronted to enable them to make good choices. They must know that we are prayerful, dependable, and confidential. We should never approach a serious issue haphazardly or with disdain. Always use the Bible as your rulebook. Search it out. What does God's Word say about this situation? Refer to the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20). Memorize them together. Consider using Biblical characters, such as Joshua and Elijah, who would not bow down to the idols of their day. Be sensitive! Pray for the Holy Spirit to lead your discussion. Always make it age appropriate. Never approach a subject which is too complicated for the age of the children you are teaching.

For a practical lesson on "Making the Right Choices," the teacher should describe real life scenarios which present opportunities for good or bad choices, and then assist the children in making right choices. You could purchase two gift bags. On one bag write "Good," and on the other "Bad." Write the real life scenarios on index cards. Read the cards one at a time, helping the children to sort them into the appropriate bag. With teacher discretion, headlines from your local newspaper could be used as examples. Puppets are a helpful resource when handling touchy subjects such as death, divorce, or drugs. They can alleviate the heaviness of the topic by using candor and humor.

In the Old Testament, Joshua gave a choice to the children of Israel. He rehearsed with them the miracles of

the Lord throughout their history. Joshua encouraged his people to "be courageous" in keeping the law (Joshua 23:6). Then in chapter 24, he gave them a choice. Joshua realized that he had led the Israelites faithfully, but now they had a decision to make. Would they continue to serve the Lord? He said in verse 15, "choose you this day whom ye will serve . . . but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." As Children's Ministers, we cannot make the decisions for the children we are training. But we can teach them the Word of God which will guide them to make *the right choice*.

Back to the Book

I have heard exciting comments from those who have started the Bible memorization challenge. If you have not already begun with your Children's Ministry, it is not too late. Sister Janie Clary from Bayou La Batre, AL shared some cute ideas. She purchased inflatable parrots from the dollar store. She asked the children, "What do parrots do?" They said, "Parrots repeat what you say." She explained to the children how they could learn Scriptures by repeating them, even if they were too young to read by themselves. She also suggested cutting foam pool noodles into pieces and writing the memory verse on them. The children scramble the pieces and then put them back together. These are easy-to-use ideas. Please email your creative ideas to youngdisciples@att.net.

Chalk Talk

Let's Talk! If we want Children's Ministry to be recognized as a viable church ministry, we need to be accountable. Every local Children's Director should report during your church's quarterly conference. Keep a record of your attendance in children's church and mid-week training. Tell how many workers you have enlisted. Report on spiritual experiences that the children have, such as: salvation, sanctification, and baptism with the Holy Ghost. Share about special activities you are conducting, such as: Vacation Bible School, Kids Crusade, and other ministry activities. Give an account of what you are studying with the children. Your work has eternal value!

Cheryl McDonald

Cheryl H. McDonald, International Children's Ministries Director

204 Circle Drive NE

Cleveland, TN 37312

423-473-1761

youngdisciples@att.net

