

Happy Life October 27, 2019

This week in JarKids we learned about how we can find happiness through making wise choices. However, as we discussed in class sometimes decision making isn't as easy as we think it should be which in return can hinder our decision-making skills.

Decision Making

It's Sunday and it's my meal planning time for the week. I sit at the kitchen table, sip my coffee, and ask myself "what should we have for dinner this week?" Often, I ask my family for input, but let's be honest, I get a lot of "pizza!" and "pasta!" answers.

Every day, we are faced with all sorts of decisions. Sometimes the decisions are small, like what to wear or what to eat. And sometimes the decisions are bigger, like where to live or where to send your children to school.

Decision making is not something that children get to practice all that frequently. It's good to allow your children the time to practice making small decisions now. They'll learn how it's done and have more practice going through the decision-making process. As they get older, the decisions they make have bigger consequences and you want them to have the skills in place to make good decisions.

Of course, right now they can't make huge decisions like where to live or where to go to school. But they can make decisions about other things, like:

- What to wear to school?
- What to have for dinner?
- Who to invite over for a play date?
- What after school activities they'd like to try?

Obviously, you can't do this every day, but try it out on days when you aren't rushed or pressured for time. What will be hard is letting them experience the consequences of their decisions. For instance, if they decide to wear shorts in 20-degree F weather, then not only do they experience cold legs, but potentially not being allowed to go outside for recess. That experience will probably stay with them more than if you just tell them to put on something warmer!

When you answer a question, you must choose one or the other, you can't pick a third option. You can always ask questions to get more information about the scenario to help you decide.

This is a great game for a play date, for car rides, while waiting in line, or at dinner too. We often play it at dinner time, with each of us taking a turn to make up a question.

Here are some would you rather questions to get you started!

- Would you rather...eat pizza or a hamburger?
- Would you rather...be a bird or a bat?
- Would you rather...explore the space or the ocean?
- Would you rather...have many good friends or one very best friend?
- Would you rather...be locked in an amusement park or a library?
- Would you rather...go without TV or junk food for the rest of your life?

Happy Days
November 3, 2019

This week in JarKids we learned about how we should be obedient to God and we can find happiness in doing things God's way.

Create a Family Covenant

To raise Christian kids in a secular world (and not lose your marbles), you need a set of hard-and-fast rules. You can do this "Moses style" and present these principles to your kids on stone tablets, or you can just gather at the kitchen table and pen an agreement there...(However, I think chiseled tablets would be way cool and would definitely get everyone's attention.)

I would like to challenge you this week to sit down with your children and make a family covenant. A list of expectations you would like to abide by as a family. Write it in your own handwriting, then each member sign it at the bottom, and then hang it in a public place such as the fridge as a constant reminder. Below are a few things to spark creativity and giving you a jumping off point.

- **Honesty.** We will believe you, and you can believe us. Trust is vital in our relationship, and to be clear, honesty includes full disclosure. Without honesty, the rest of the covenant falls apart. Should you lose our trust, its restoration will be hard-won. Our family is truthful with one another.
- **Acceptance.** We will not judge you. You can tell us anything, and we will listen. We will not interrupt. We will hear you out, and we will help you out. Likewise, you will hear us out, too, and accept that our counsel is always given from a place of protection and love. Our family loves unconditionally.
- **Available.** We will be present in one another's company. Conversation will trump any and all electronic devices, social networks, and TV. This includes work interruptions that distract us from you. Our family is present in the moment.
- **Supportive.** We will help one another. We will help you with your homework and school projects and drive you wherever you need to be; you will help with taking out the trash, making your bed, and doing your laundry. Our family takes care of one another.
- **Inclusion.** There are no cliques, favorites, or "sides" in our family. We are all for one and one for all. Everyone is treated equally, including each person having the opportunity to unload the dishwasher at least once a week. Our family is one unit (Note: This applies even, and especially, if you're a blended family).
- **Respect.** We will respect and reward your good decisions as you grow. You will respect our position of authority and our wisdom to discern your "next steps." Our family is respectful in tone, word, and deed.
- **Honor.** We are honored to have you as our child. You will honor your reputation, your body, and your Savior with your actions. When you do this, you also honor us. Our family honor will honor Christ.
- **Consequences.** If you break this covenant, you can count on a consequence. We love you that much. Our family upholds and defends our boundaries.

Happy Money
November 10, 2019

This week in JarKids we learned how about the Parable of the Rich Fool, and how we should use our money in a way to glorify God.

Needs vs. Wants

Today we talked about the difference between things we want and things we need. This can be a very difficult subject for some kids to grasp depending on their age. A fun activity you can do at home to discuss this topic further is to make a chart. All you need is a poster board, old magazines, glue, and a marker. Draw a line down the middle of the poster board and label one side 'NEEDS' and the other side 'WANTS'. Then take some time going through the magazines and cut out things you like. Then glue them into the proper sections of the poster board. Take the time to talk about what you put on the poster and why you put it where you did.

Happy Trails
November 17, 2019

This week in JarKids we learned how about the Good Shepherd and how we can find happiness through seeking God in all areas of our life.

Creating your own Sheep

Sometime as a family this week try making Marshmallow Sheep as your daytime or nighttime snack.

Marshmallow Sheep

1 bag of large marshmallows

1 bag of miniature marshmallows

1 box of pretzel sticks

Take one large marshmallow (body) and then each sheep needs 3 pretzel sticks. Break each pretzel stick in half. Put for halves in the bottom as the legs, one for the neck, and one for the tale. Then attach a mini marshmallow to each pretzel stick for the wool. Ask children to tell you about the story of The Good Shepherd and what they learned about in JarKids.

Make an Invite

Have the children write a note or draw a picture to be given to a child who they would like to invite to church. Have them invest time in this project by putting their memory verse on the card, or one reason why they love attending JarKids. Talk with them about what it means to invite someone to church. Remind them that even we when we ask people sometimes it take several asks. Then pray a prayer over your invite(s) together before handing them out.

Happy Together
November 24, 2019

This week in JarKids we learned how about the Fruits of the Spirit and how we can find happiness in giving ourselves away and truly embracing the fruits of the spirit.

Fruits of the Spirit Chart

During this week make each of your children a chart in which they can track if they use each of the Fruits of the Spirit throughout the day. Before bed each night look at your chart and ask your child to explain where they used each word in their day. A template of what your chart can look like is below.

Have them bring their chart back to JarKids after it's completed to receive a special treat!

Fruits of the Spirit

	Love	Joy	Peace	Faithfulness	Goodness	Gentleness	Patience	Self Control	Kindness
Sunday									
Monday									
Tuesday									
Wednesday									
Thursday									
Friday									
Saturday									

Child's Name: _____