



# Swamp Camp Services, Inc.

1380 Maxeys Road, Union Point, Georgia 30669

## 2017 Summer Camp Bible Classes

### **A word to teachers about Bible classes...**

This year's theme is *Choice. Chosen. Choose.* or, in short, *Choice*, and is accompanied with a study emanating from the book of Proverbs—God's reference manual to godly choices, the summation of which is a spiritual life; as you prepare to teach a Bible class, think deeply about your own choices and their fruit: your life. After all, it is your life to live, and your choices to make. Do you think that's why God, knowing us as he does, wrote Proverbs for us—or the Bible for that matter! Therefore, since it is your life, you are welcome to tailor any lesson by inserting your own experiences; all we ask is that you study it out and be ready to deliver a great Bible class—not necessarily in eloquence but in content. Get your own convictions and then teach them, while keeping to the lesson and the Spirit's intent. Pray and hunt (Proverbs 8:17) for wisdom as you prepare to lead your mind and the minds of young seekers this summer.

### **Monday – Choice of Answers – Younger (9-11)**

Hide a Swamp tee shirt or a \$5 bill in a moderately difficult location. Tell the campers they can have it if they find it. Give them 3 minutes to search.

- Why did you participate in the search?
- Describe how you felt (describe feelings not actions) during the search? {excited, energized, defeated, happy, sad}
- What choices did you make during the search?
- Lots of things to search for in life. What do people search for as they grow older?
- Lots of questions come up during our search. What are some of them?

Read Proverbs 2:1-8

- What does this passage tell us to search for? {wisdom and understanding}
- Why would this be more important than any other thing for which you might search?
- How do you know if something is wise? {Compare to Bible, look up Proverbs, ask questions, etc.}
- Questions are a part of searching for something. Do you agree?
- Why is this so?

Let's take a look at some questions asked in the Bible.



First two questions of the Bible:

1. Satan to Adam & Eve: "Did God really say, 'You must not eat of any tree in the Garden.!'?" Genesis 3:1
  - a. What was Satan trying to get Adam & Eve to do? {doubt God, doubt can lead to distrust which leads disobedience.}
2. God to Adam & Eve: "Where are you?" Genesis 3:9
  - a. In Aramaic, this question is not about location but about an expectation: *"I made you to be near me, where did you go?"*

What do these questions teach of us about life? {two paths: one of doubt and one of righteousness, always choices. Your answer at each choice point reveals your beliefs and character.}

How should you handle a time when you have a very important choice?

[Proverbs 2:4] Will you search for godly answers?

Who can you talk with to help you find godly answers?

Imagine the answers you will find if you search for them like you did the \$5 bill (or tee shirt).

Seek for wise answers with all your heart.

### **Monday – Choice of Answers – Middle (12-13)/Older (14+)**

Hide a Swamp tee shirt or a \$10 bill in a moderately difficult location. Tell the campers they can have it if they find it. Give them 3 minutes to search.

- Why did you participate in the search?
- Describe how you felt (describe feelings not actions) during the search?
- What choices did you make?
- What didn't you think about during the search? {Idea is to get them to understand what we block out when we focus.}

All of us want something out of life: happiness, success, acceptance, peace, husband/wife, family, etc.

The one thing we want during our search for those things is an answer to each of our questions.

Our life consists of the answers to a series of questions leading us to the thing(s) we want and/or need.

Read Proverbs 2

What happens 99.9% of the time when someone calls your name? {You turn your head towards the caller.}

Verse 1 Solomon says turn your ear [head] to wisdom.

How do you know if someone is wise? {Their answers. Is not an action an answer to a question?}

Socrates is considered to be a very wise man. In fact, there is a method of debate named after him called the Socratic Method, which is a form of cooperative dialogue between individuals based on asking and answering questions to stimulate thinking and draw out ideas.

Let's take a look at some questions asked in the Bible and see if it stimulates your thinking and/or draws out any ideas. Ready?

First two questions of the Bible:

1. Satan to Adam & Eve: "Did God really say, 'You must not eat of any tree in the Garden.?' " Genesis 3:1
  - a. What was Satan trying to accomplish? {cause doubt, doubt often times leads to disobedience}
2. God to Adam & Eve: "Where are you?" Genesis 3:9
  - a. In Aramaic, this question is not about location but about an expectation: *"I made you to be near me, where did you go?"*

What do these questions teach of us about life? {two paths: one of doubt and one of righteousness, always choices. Your answer at each choice point reveals your beliefs and character.}

Let's look at Jesus' first questions and see what thinking or ideas we can stimulate and draw out:

- Matthew 5:46. *"If you love those who love you, what reward will you get?"*
- Mark 2:8. *"Why are you thinking these things?"*
- Luke 2:49. *"Why were you searching for me?"*
- John 1:38. *"What do you want?"*

These were the first questions on Jesus' mind and heart; what do the subject matter of these questions tell you about Jesus' desire concerning you?

God and Jesus want a relationship with you and want your life to be full and fulfilling and yet they chose to give you the choice to choose. What a risky move! Do you agree? Why or why not?

[Proverbs 2:4] Will you search for the godly answers?

Imagine the answers you will find if you search for them like you did the \$10 bill (or tee shirt)?

Seek for wise answers with all your heart.

## Tuesday – Choice of Friends – Younger

[Proverbs 12:26]

- Why are friends important?
- Why should you be careful in choosing a friend?
- What does righteous mean? {do the right thing because you are close to God}
- So, what happens to your choice of friends if you are not a person who does the right thing?

God doesn't want us to be alone. Genesis 2:18.

What kind of friends should we choose?

- Proverbs 18:24 - reliable ones. What does this mean?
- Proverbs 22:24 - gentle and not easily angered ones. Why not?
- Proverbs 13:20 - wise ones. How can you tell if someone is wise? {their actions, their friends, do obey parents, cause trouble, etc.}
- Proverbs 27:9 - ones who help you.

*During his days as president, Thomas Jefferson and a group of companions were traveling across the country on horseback. They came to a river which had left its banks because of a recent downpour. The swollen river had washed the bridge away. Each rider was forced to ford the river on horseback, fighting for his life against the rapid currents. The very real possibility of death threatened each rider, which caused a traveler who was not part of their group to step aside and watch. After several had plunged in and made it to the other side, the stranger asked President Jefferson if he would ferry him across the river. The president agreed without hesitation. The man climbed on, and shortly thereafter the two of them made it safely to the other side. As the stranger slid off the back of the saddle onto dry ground, one in the group asked him, "Tell me, why did you select the president to ask this favor of?" The man was shocked, admitting he had no idea it was the president who had helped him. "All I know," he said, "Is that on some of your faces was written the answer 'No,' and on some of them was the answer 'yes.' His was a 'Yes' face." - C. Swindol, [The Grace Awakening, Word, 1990](#), p. 6.*

Choose a friend who will you say yes to righteousness.

## Tuesday – Choice of Friends – Middle/Older

[Proverbs 12:26]

- Do you really need another person?
- Isn't a relationship with God just a thing between him and me and no one else?
- Why is church so important?

This study is about understanding that making the choice to have friends, godly friends, is key to not just a relationship with God but with really finding peace and happiness as you traverse the connections of life.

The theme of having relationships is present all throughout the Bible from Genesis to Revelation.

What does Bible tell us about relationships?

- What does God say?
  - Genesis 2:18
    - First human crisis: It is not good for man to be alone.
    - This is before sin. God is in full communion with Adam and yet still not good for him to be alone.
    - American Culture: "All I need is Jesus." "I can serve God alone."
    - Even then God knew we needed people in our lives
  - Leviticus 26:3, 6, 14 & 17
    - If you follow my decrees, then...no one will make you afraid
    - Direct connection with following God's commands with peace and relationships
    - If you will not follow, then...you will be afraid even if no-one is chasing you.
- What about other parts of the Bible?
  - Psalm 133
    - Blessings come from where? Where brothers live together in unity. Relationships set us apart.
  - Micah 6:8
    - Question in verse 6. What are your expectations of me?
    - Is any of this not relational?
- What does Jesus say?
  - John 3:16. Love one another
  - John 17. My prayer is not for them alone but all who believe in my message so that the world will know you sent me. How does world know? By how we treat each other, by our relationships.
- What does Paul and New Testament say?
  - Romans 13:8-10, let no debt remain outstanding except the continuing debt to love another.
    - Live in the 10 Commandments, 613 Torah commands...ALL summed up in Love your neighbor as yourself.
      - No other Gods - summed up in Love your neighbor as yourself.
      - Remember your neighbor
      - Don't take the Lord's name in vain. - no cussing but wearing his Name
  - Galatians 5:22-23
    - Fruit of the Spirit.
      - Fruit not fruitS. Evidence of these in your life: any of those not relational?

- All relational, evidence is that we are better in our relationships when guided by the Spirit
  - Not change in temperament, i.e. introvert to extrovert, but better in our functioning as a community
- I John 1:5-7
    - Fellowship
    - God is light in him there is no darkness. Walk as he is in the light, we have fellowship with another.
    - Fellowship: means understanding a person's story, not just saying hi, how are you? Fine. You? What's up.
    - NO, it's so much more, so much deeper and we can get there, walk with each other because of Jesus.

Now, what do you say?

- Do you need another person in your life?
- Would godly friends help you be closer to God?
- Would these friends help you find peace and happiness?
- Would the church be a logical place to find these friends?

You choose! **JUST NOTE:** Your choice of friends may reveal your level of righteousness because (Prov. 12:26) the righteous choose carefully. Just sayin'.

### Wednesday – The Power of Words – Younger

What are ways we can make our friends or people mad? {with words}

What are some words that can be harmful?

What are some words that can be helpful?

Study these proverbs and lead a discussion around their meaning and application for this age group.

Be sure to explain any words they may not understand. Don't have to use all of them. You choose.

- Proverbs 12:18
- Proverbs 15:4
- Proverbs 16:23-24
- Proverbs 18:21
- Proverbs 21:23
- Proverbs 29:20

*If your lips would keep you from slips,  
Five things to observe with care:  
To Whom you speak,  
Of Whom you speak,  
And how, when, and where.  
- William Norris*



### **Wednesday – What’s in a Proverb? - Middle/Older**

{Teachers Note: The point of this Bible Class is to see how the book of Proverbs is a manual and source of advice and direction for all areas of life.}

What are some major areas of life where some guidance would be helpful and/or needed?

Split into teams of 5 or 6 and have each team find specific verses in Proverbs, which their team likes the most using the following themes and chapter references listed below. (See Mr. Jeff for a handout of this for each team.)

Each team is to produce a list of 10 verses representing five or more chapters (i.e. can’t have 10 verses from two chapters.) from each theme for a total of 40 proverbs. Have each team pick one verse that is their favorite in each theme and be prepared to say why it is their favorite.

- Wisdom vs. Foolishness: Proverbs 3, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15
- Hard Work vs. Sluggard: Proverbs 6, 10, 12, 13, 15, 21
- Healing Words vs. Hurtful Words: Proverbs 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18
- Godly vs. Wicked: Proverbs 4, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 21, 28, 29

Discuss favorite verses picking one team per theme to share why they picked their verse.

Once completed, ask the campers how would they rate Proverbs in its ability to help their lives. {Reinforce purpose of Proverbs and Bible in their lives—words to live by, literally.}

Finish by explaining that Proverbs and the Bible is what helps us to be Image-Seekers instead of Sin-Managers, i.e. become more like Jesus and God’s character—the image they intended—and less about a life of do’s and don’ts. Think on this so you can explain. (BTW, this is a hint into a possible theme for 2018.)

### **Thursday – God & Jesus Make a Choice – 9-12 year olds**

Overview of the cross and what happened. God thought you worthy enough to give his best. This is Real Love. This is a real choice—the choice to choose you; you are chosen to receive his gift of love.

### **Thursday – God’s Choice I Peter 1:20 – Ages 13+ with Mr. Jeff**

### **Friday – Teacher's Choice – Younger/Middle/Older**

- This class is taught by a counselor or guest teacher.
- Choose 1-5 proverbs and teach them using relatable illustrations and anecdotes from your own life.
- Each proverb can represent one point creating a set of tools for each campers' toolbox to carry home with

them to build a godly life with the framework of choices life will present them, or the collection of proverbs can represent one theme for the campers to use as a guiding principle.

- Your choice.

### Friday Devo - Choice of Greatness

How many desire to be great? Define great?

Name some great people in the Bible. {Noah, Joseph, Ruth, David, Joseph--Jesus' step dad, Paul}

Let's examine some of their lives and see what made them great.

#### NOAH

- Known for being chosen by God to constructing a never-before-made boat and before God flooded even though it had never before rain.
- Gen 5:32-6:1-9
  - Noah lived 500 years. What was society like? {so wicked God regretted making man}
  - Yet how did Noah live? {v. 9}
- Would God choose you to build a modern-day ark based on your recent choices?
- What made Noah great was the choices he made even in spite of a wicked public environment, i.e. your school, neighborhood, situation!

#### DAVID

- Known for being the greatest king in Israel's history; a warrior poet who led righteously and justly. {Ever wonder if he was the model for the Samurai? Hmmm.}
- I Samuel:
  - 16:11: Only thought of after all the older boys; the youngest sent out to tend the sheep.
  - 16:23: Began his career as a warrior as a musician. How are people of the arts typically stereotyped?
  - 17:33: Was told he was only a young boy and couldn't do it.
  - 17:34-37: But David acted with honor while no one was watching. He fought the private battles while he was along tending the sheep forgotten by all but God who remembered him and his words of praise (How many Psalms could he have offered God on those beautiful starlight-devotional nights in the wilderness?) and his acts of courage when no one else would.
- Would God choose you to fight his battles based on your private choices?
- What made David great was his choices when no one but God was looking!

#### JOSHUA & CALEB

- They were two of 12 spies sent to see promised land. (Numbers 13)
- Came back with favorable report but overruled by the other 10.
- People condemned to waste away in the desert such that anyone over 20 would die.



- Joshua trained under Moses how to be a leader and saw God in the tent of meeting. (Exodus 33:11)
  - Caleb stayed in the desert (Numbers 14)
  - What did Caleb do in the desert all those years? I think he held camps and taught the next generation about the promised land, about God and devotion.
  - After all it was the next generation who took the promised land.
  - So, on the day Joshua renewed the covenant with the people and their God (Joshua 24), he called them to a choice: whom will you serve? (Joshua 24:14-15)
  - They people said we will serve the Lord. (Joshua 24:16-18)
  - Joshua said no you won't. You are on a camp high. (Joshua 24:19-20)
  - The people said yes, we will serve the Lord! (Joshua 24:21)
  - And so, Joshua had a large stone set up under the oak tree as a witness. (Joshua 24:26-27)
  - The rock at camp says on it in Hebrew: *"We will serve the Lord."* It has served as a witness to all you have done and said and chose here at camp.
  - If you want to serve the Lord and you want to sign the rock, then do so perhaps when you bring your children to camp in years to come, you will say to them: *"Son, you are here because I made a choice back in the summer of 2017 to serve the Lord."*
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- Make godly choices no matter the density of wickedness surrounding you to win the public battle
  - Make godly choices when you are alone to win the private battle
  - Choose today to serve the Lord and not bow down to the worldly idols which daily try to seduce you into their following.
  - When you make these choices, imagine the legacy of greatness which your child will see.