



LESSONS 196-208

GROWING GOD'S WAY

THE
Answer

www.apostolicfaith.org

A Bible study resource for use at home and church.

The Answer is a Bible study course for fourth grade through junior-high level. Bible references are taken from the King James version of the Bible. A Teacher's Guide accompanies this series and is available online, on our app, and in print.

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GROWING GOD'S WAY

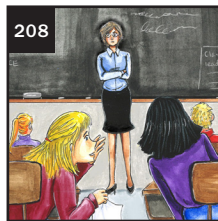
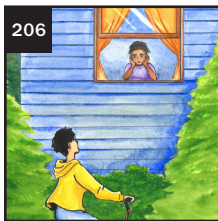
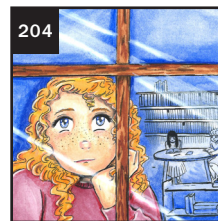
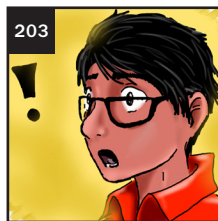
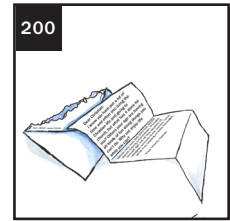
“**W**hy don't you grow up?” How many times have you heard that phrase? Usually it's said when someone doesn't like the way you have acted or reacted. When it is said directly to you, there is a feeling of being “put down.” In our society we are expected to grow mentally and physically. In fact, so much attention has been placed on these two growing processes that the spiritual part of life has many times been forgotten—yet it's the most important!

*This quarter will focus on how you can grow spiritually. Trusting Christ, submitting to Him as Lord and Savior comes first. In so doing you may be surprised at how much this will affect your entire outlook on life. How can we grow as Christ wants us to grow? Study with us this quarter to find *The Answer*.*

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THE Answer

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JESUS IS ALWAYS WITH US

LESSON 196 → John 15:1-9; Ephesians 3:14-21

The canned food drive had given Ariana a chance to tell Vicki about answered prayers.



“Whew, what a day!” Ariana flopped down on the family room floor and closed her eyes.

“Did you get many cans for the canned food drive?” Mrs. Torres asked as she looked at her daughter with concern. “You look pretty tired.” Ariana opened her eyes. “Yeah, I’m tired—but it was a great day!” We did collect a lot of cans,

and people gave us other foods, too, like boxes of cereal and bags of rice.” Ariana got up slowly and walked to the kitchen sink to wash her hands. As she was drying them she turned to her mother who was busily making a potato salad. “Mom, you know that new girl, Vicki, who just moved in on the next block? Well, she was my partner this afternoon. We had a chance to talk while we were walking from house to house.



KEY VERSE

JESUS IS ALWAYS WITH ME!

Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. — Matthew 28:20

“She doesn’t think there is a God. She thinks that our lives are run by chance, and even if there is a God, He’s not interested in us as individuals. So there’s really no use to pray! At least, that’s what she said when we started talking.” Ariana stopped and grinned at her mother. *“I think she may have changed her mind though. I’m glad you’ve told us kids about prayers that you know God has answered. It’s helped me understand how He has taken care of our family since Dad died. I had a lot to tell her.”*

“While we were collecting cans, Vicki started telling me what she thought of God. She said Jesus was just a good teacher and that He was human like the rest of us. I guess her father doesn’t believe there is a God. She says he’s an atheist, and she goes along with what he says. At first I just let her talk. When the truck was full enough, the driver had to take the cans to school. The other kids went along to unload while Vicki and I stayed to sort and stack the rest. We had some time to talk before the truck came back.”

“Pretty soon I guess she realized I wasn’t saying much, so she asked, ‘What’s the matter? Don’t you have any opinion about things like this?’ I said, ‘Sure, but I didn’t want to interrupt you. I’d like to tell you what Jesus has done for our family.’ She kind of sputtered and I thought she was going to get mad. But she just said, ‘Okay, I guess I’ve been talking a lot. It’s your turn. What has Jesus done for your family?’”

“So I started by telling her about the time our family moved from California to Oregon when we were still little kids. Dad went on to his new job and we had to stay behind for a while until the house was sold. I told her how you cried after Dad left, and said you didn’t know how we’d ever make it, because Dad’s salary was only going to be half what he had been making. Then I told her how God gave you those Scriptures.”

Mrs. Torres repeated the words God had given her. “My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus,” and He ‘is able to do exceeding abundantly above

all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.”

“Vicki started to laugh when I said that, Mom. Then I told her how Dad’s new company promoted him twice in three months, and how our house was sold by that time. When I told her that his beginning salary had been almost doubled, she didn’t know what to say. Finally she said, ‘Well, that’s just coincidence. I thought you said your father was dead. How do you fit that into God’s taking care of your family?’”

“I didn’t really know how to answer her, so I said, ‘I don’t understand why my father died, but I do understand how God has taken care of our family since he’s been gone.’ I told her about the time the taxes were due and the car needed a new transmission, and we didn’t have the money. Then, after we’d prayed, someone put exactly that much money into the tithe box with our name on it, and a little note that said, ‘Jesus loves you and we do too.’ Vicki couldn’t believe anybody would give away all that money and not tell anyone they did it.”

“Just then, the truck returned, and we had to work really hard to get the rest of the cans back to school on time. But we talked again while we walked home. That’s when I told her about your praying for a plant to hang on the front porch. She started to giggle, and said, ‘You really think God would hear that kind of prayer?’ So I told her how the kids in our choir at church, not knowing about your prayer, had put their money together and bought a big plant and left it on our front porch when we weren’t home. We were coming up to the house right then, so I pointed to the hanging basket on the front porch, and said, ‘That’s the plant.’”

“You should have seen her eyes! At first she just stood there and looked. But before she started for home she said, ‘Ariana, you’re the first person I’ve met who could show me an answer to prayer. I’d like to talk to you again sometime.’ Mom, I’m so glad I could tell her that God is really alive and that He takes care of us all the time.”

IS HE WITH YOU?

Knowing that Jesus is with you all the time is a real comfort. Your key verse is a promise that He is with those who love Him. Write the key verse on the lines provided below. Then try to find it in the maze. The letters of the first three words have been circled for you. Just follow the verse through and mark it the same way, circling the letters of each word.



GROW AS A CHRISTIAN

LESSON 197 → 2 Peter 1:1-11, 3:17-18

I knew I would have to forgive.

“**W**ell, I said I was sorry!” my little brother George repeated, looking at me fearfully, and then glancing back at the broken pieces of glass on the floor. My doll—my beautiful Korean doll—was smashed.

“Sorry doesn’t fix my doll!”

I cried, a huge lump forming in my throat as I knelt down and picked up a couple of the pieces. “Go on, get out of my room! And never come back in here again!”

When George was gone, I sat down on the floor and picked up a piece of the doll. I could feel my eyes fill with tears. The doll was ruined. No way could it ever be put back together; there were little pieces all over the floor.

Mom came in and asked, “What was that all about, Hazel? George just came through the kitchen looking as though he had lost his last friend.” She stopped as she spotted the wreckage on the floor. “Oh, Hazel! Not your beautiful doll from Grandpa! How on earth did that happen?”

My anguish boiled over into furious words. “George—he did it! He came in here with that stupid ball of his, wanting me to go out and play with him. He tossed it





I WANT TO GROW IN JESUS.

But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
— Peter 3:18

to me before I even figured out what he wanted, and of course I didn't have time to catch it. It smashed into my bookcase and the doll fell off. And now look, Mom. It's ruined! And it's all his fault! I'll never forgive him!"

Mom put an arm around my shoulders. "Hazel, Dear, I know you feel badly about this. I do too, but I really don't think George meant to break it."

I hardly even heard her. "He's not supposed to come into my room without knocking. And then to throw a ball at me too! I'll never forgive him!" I repeated.

But even as I said it, I knew I was wrong. And I knew Jesus wasn't pleased with my attitude.

Dinnertime that night was not much fun. George was quiet and I couldn't look at him. I didn't feel much like eating and I guess George didn't either. He didn't even eat one bread roll, and usually I have to fight him for the last one.

Later, as I was helping Mom put the dishes in the dishwasher, she said something that didn't seem to have anything to do with my problem—until afterward, when I got to my room. She said, "Hazel, have you worked on that project for your Sunday school class yet?"

Maybe I should explain about my Sunday school class. My teacher likes us to figure out ways our lessons apply to our lives, so each week we have a project or assignment to bring back to class the next Sunday. This week our project was to write down one time during the week when we were faced with a situation giving us a chance to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Well, like I said, I went up to my room after finishing in the kitchen. When I walked in and saw the broken pieces of my doll lying on the shelf, suddenly the words "grow in grace" came to my mind.

I sat down on the side of my bed and thought about it. I knew Jesus had said we should forgive

others when they did something bad against us or something that hurt us. I hadn't really had many chances to do that. Maybe this was one opportunity, but it wasn't going to be easy. My doll couldn't be fixed, I'd never have another one like it. Still, I knew I would have to forgive if I were going to grow as a Christian the way God wanted me to.

I closed my eyes. "Jesus," I prayed, "help me forgive George. Help me to grow in Your grace and learn to be the kind of Christian You want me to be."

I opened my eyes and thought about it some more. I don't believe George meant to break my doll. He just wanted to play, and he forgot about knocking. I really do love my little brother, even if he is a pest at times. And I could see he really was sorry about it at dinner tonight.

Just then a light knock sounded on my door. "Yeah . . . come in," I said, looking up.

It was George. "Hazel . . ." he said hesitantly, "Here." He came over to my bed and laid in my lap a silver dollar—the silver dollar Uncle Jim had given him a few months ago, and which had been his priceless possession ever since.

"George! What's this for?" I questioned him.

"I'm sorry I broke your doll. I didn't mean to. Maybe you can buy another one with this dollar."

"Oh, George." A lump came up in my throat again, but this time it wasn't caused by anger. "George, you don't have to give me your dollar. I know you didn't mean to break my doll. I forgive you."

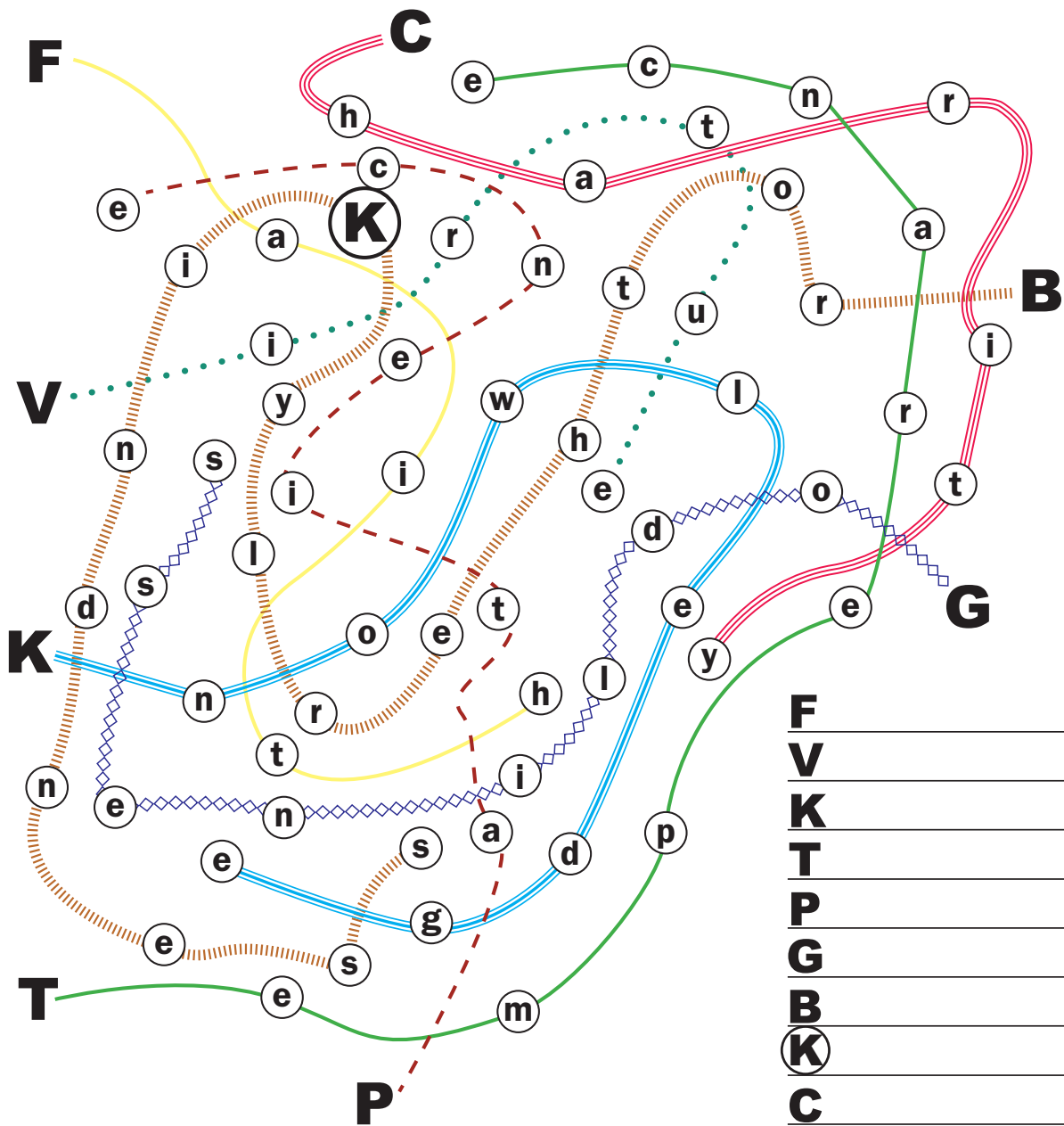
The light came back into his brown eyes, and a grin chased across his little face. "Do you mean it, Hazel?" He grabbed my hand. "Goody! Then will you come play ball with me now?"

When I stood up to go outside with him, I felt as though I had grown several inches. No, I really wasn't any taller, but I had grown in the grace and knowledge we learned about in Sunday school. I could feel it!

**ADD THESE
AND GROW!**

God wants you to gain strength in your Christian life. Below are some things that, if added to your life, will help you grow into the kind of person God can use. There are eight different types of

paths below. Each one contains a word of something you need. Start with the bold letter and follow through the line to find the word. Write the words on the lines provided.



GOOD SUCCESS

LESSON 198 → 2 Chronicles 26:1-15; Psalm 37:3-11

The school paper listed students “most likely to succeed.”

There it was . . . the list they'd all been waiting to see was printed on the front page of the Liberty High News. Each year the graduating class put together a list of students “most likely to succeed.” The list this year contained six names.

Jordan Wallace — Sales

Grace Hawkins — Writer

Autumn Brooks — Singer

Damian Cruz — Programmer

Derek Johnson — Preacher


Miranda Nguyen — President

I can't believe it! Derek thought, scanning the article as he left the school building. Guess I'll have to wait and see about that. He glanced up and saw a white Subaru across the street. “Hey, Jordan, wait up,” he yelled as he ran to Jordan's car.

“Best in sales,” Derek laughed, “Give me your best sales pitch!”

“Well, Preacher, I'll tell ya . . .” Jordan began with mock seriousness. Then, laughing, he said, “Get in, I'll give you a lift home.”

As they turned the first corner Derek said, “I can see how you got on the list but I'm really having a hard time believing I made it.”



Jordan Wallace — Sales
Grace Hawkins — Writer
Autumn Brooks — Singer
Damian Cruz — Programmer
Derek Johnson — Preacher
Miranda Nguyen — President



REAL SUCCESS IS DOING THINGS GOD'S WAY.

*For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?
— Matthew 16:26*

"Why?" asked Jordan. "Everyone likes you . . . well, almost everyone," he teased. "And you are going to be a preacher, aren't you? I mean, you are a Christian."

"A Christian, yes. A preacher . . . ? Well, that depends on God. That's a special calling," Derek replied. "You know this success list should make us think. I wonder what success means to some people, anyway? Grace is a great writer of short stories, essays, and such. I suppose success for her will be when she publishes her first book."

"Yeah, and for Autumn," Jordan said, "it will probably be her first hit record."

"And what about Miranda for president? She's great at school politics, but . . . oh well, at least we can always say 'We knew her when . . .'" laughed Derek. "And you! You can sell anything to anyone. Don't try to sell the Eiffel Tower, though. That's already been done!"

"Nah, I'll sell the Statue of Liberty back to France," Jordan joked. "I'll let Damian set up the sale. He's got a brain like a computer."

"Yeah, he's smart all right but he told me that when school's over he doesn't want to do anything. His parents have a college fund for him, but he said he doesn't want to go to college. When we were voting, he asked me what I thought success was. Has he ever talked to you about it?" Derek inquired.

"As a matter of fact, he talked to me last night," Jordan answered. "It seems, now that he is graduating, his folks are getting a divorce. I guess they've been planning it, but wanted Damian to finish high school first so he wouldn't have to study and worry at the same time.

"He knew last night that his name was on the success list and just laughed about it. He said his dad is considered a great success—he has a new house, new car, 'loving family'—but look at him!"

Jordan continued, "I know it's hard on Damian but he can't drop out of life because of his dad. So I told him he should look for someone else to use as a success model. Guess who he chose."

"The president?" Derek asked.

"No," Jordan replied, "he chose you! Evidently when he talked to you a couple of days ago you gave him your formula for success. After our conversation, Damian left. He said he had some important business to 'compute.' It was like he finally decided to do something about what you had said. What did you tell him, anyway?"

"It was just something Coach Shaw told me once. He was speaking of sports and business, but my answers had to do with something else," Derek replied. "He had four steps to success.

"First: know what you want. I want, more than anything else, to be a Christian.

"Second: know why you want it. When all is said and done, I want to make my final home in Heaven.

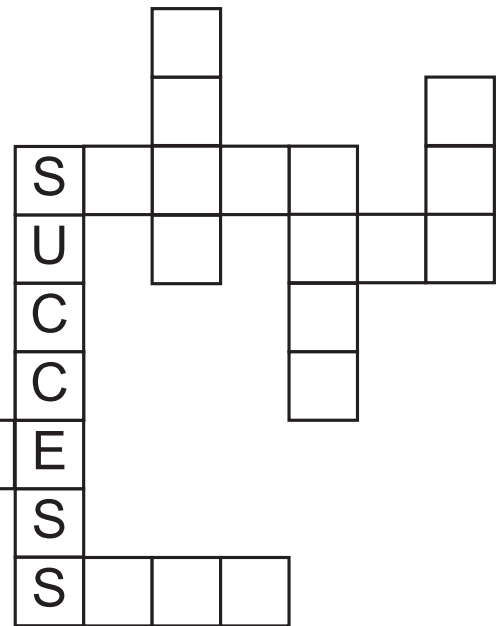
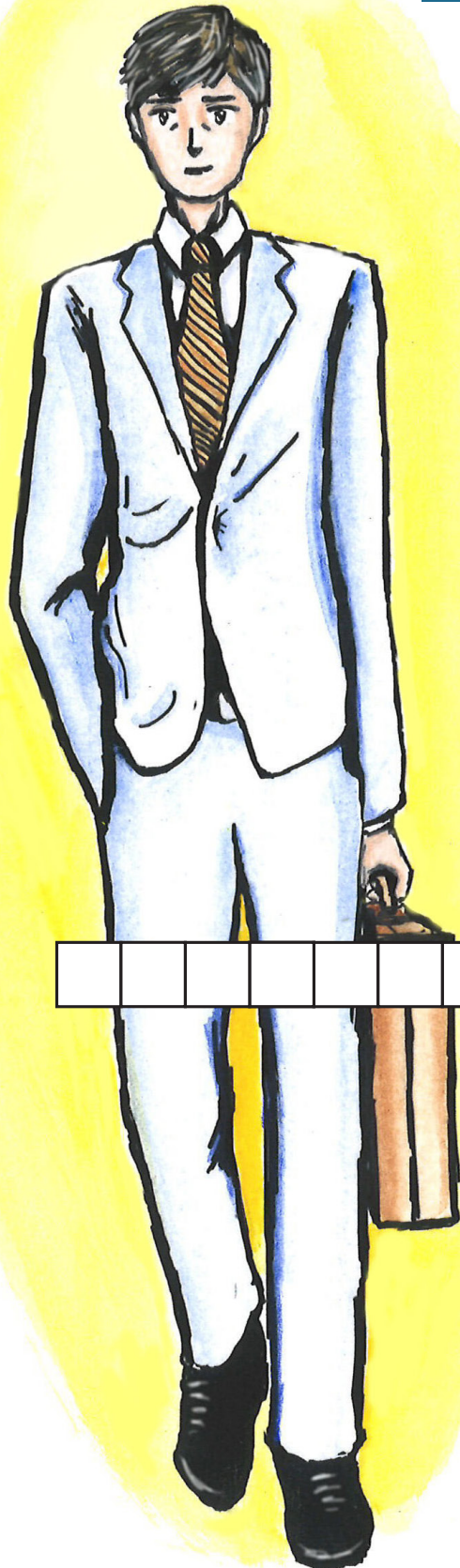
"Third: know what it will do for you. God promised that if I obey His Word I will have 'good success.' Through example and experience, I know this is true. Look at my parents. Look at the happiness they have. That's success!

"Fourth: know what you can do to get it. Like I just said, obey. Salvation and obedience are a winning team. One won't work without the other.

"This formula may work for writers, singers, and even salesmen," Derek continued, "but, seriously, if you want good success, God has to be first."

SWEET SUCCESS

Success comes when we trust God and do what is right in His sight. Without looking up the key verse, see if you can complete the verse in the briefcase at the bottom of the page, using the words from the list given. Then write them in the correct places in the crossword.



A CHOICE FOR GOD

LESSON 199 → Judges 6:11-40

What kind of decision would Oscar make?



Oscar jumped off the Sunday school van, and Marcus, Kingston, and Tanner followed. “Race you to the door,” Oscar shouted, dashing for the entrance to the church. Tanner ran after him, but Marcus and Kingston hung back.

“C’mon, you guys!” Oscar shouted over his shoulder. “It’s almost 9:30.” Tanner went on inside, but the other two boys were still in the

parking lot. Finally Oscar walked back over to his friends. “C’mon,” he repeated. “It’s almost time for Sunday school to start. Why aren’t you guys coming in?”

Marcus dug into his pocket and pulled out a few dollar bills. “Kingston and I don’t really want to go today. I’ve got money, and we thought we’d walk over to the store and get a Slurpee. Wanna come?”



I'M ON GOD'S SIDE!

Who is on the LORD's side? let him come unto me. — Exodus 32:26

For a minute Oscar didn't answer. He really liked Marcus and Kingston, and he liked to be with them. But after a moment, he shook his head. "Nah . . . I'm going inside." In his mind he thought, You guys know that when we come on the van, we're supposed to go to Sunday school.

It almost seemed like Marcus read his mind, because he gave an insulting look and said, "Who cares about their old rules. I don't feel like Sunday school today." He hesitated, and then added by way of excuse, "I don't really like our new teacher."

"You're kidding," Oscar looked at him in surprise. "I thought he was pretty nice. Sure, it's only been two Sundays since we were promoted into his class, but he seems like an okay guy to me."

"Well, I don't like him," Marcus repeated. "And Kingston doesn't either. Right, Kingston?" He went on without giving the other boy a chance to answer. "So we're skipping. Don't worry, we'll be back before the van leaves to go home. The driver will never know we weren't in Sunday school." And with that, the two boys turned and sauntered out of the parking lot.

Oscar turned and headed back toward the church door, a troubled frown creasing his normally cheerful face. He walked slowly into church and into his department. Tanner met him just inside the door. "Hurry up, Oscar, it's almost time to start. If you want to say your verse to the secretary and get your points, you'd better do it quickly."

Oscar opened his Answer for a quick glance at the verse. He'd learned it last night, but his mind was suddenly blank. Oh, yes. "Who is on the LORD's side? let him come unto me." That was an easy one. He went over to the verse chart where the secretary was standing.

"Hi, Oscar," she greeted him warmly. "Know that verse today?" Nodding, he said it to her and she marked a check beside his name. "Good work. You haven't missed knowing your verse for

three months. You're right up there at the top of the list."

Oscar hardly absorbed what she was saying. He was thinking about Marcus and Kingston. And he was also thinking about the words he had just said, "Who is on the LORD's side?" All through the singing time, those words kept echoing through Oscar's mind. He had read them before. He knew they were Moses' words to the Children of Israel, so he had never thought they had much, if anything, to do with him. But the incident in the parking lot this morning had started him thinking. He knew that for a moment he had been tempted to go with his two friends.

His mind went back over the past few months at Sunday school. Marcus and Kingston really hadn't seemed interested in anything that went on. They were always the last ones into class. And sometimes they had been kind of rude to the teacher, Oscar remembered. Oh, nothing really terrible. Just some talking during class, stupid remarks behind their hands, and things like that. Sometimes Oscar had even joined in. Now he wondered if that was part of making a choice about whose side they would be on.

As Oscar listened to his teacher talk about Gideon in their Bible story for the week, something else caught his attention. When Gideon sent messengers to the tribes of Israel, many men from there joined him. He influenced them to have courage and fight for the Lord too.

By the time class was over, Oscar had made his decision. He was going to do what he knew was right. He wasn't sure how Marcus and Kingston would respond. But who could tell? If he set the example, maybe they would make the right choice too.

WHAT'S YOUR CHOICE?

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Decisions, decisions, decisions!
What should I do? Where
should I go? You'll have many
decisions to make during your
lifetime and if you let God help
you, you'll know you've made a
right choice. On the directional

signs are a challenge and right
decision. To find out what they
are, connect the + signs but
don't cross over any - signs.
(The first letter has been
done for you.) What will your
decisions be?

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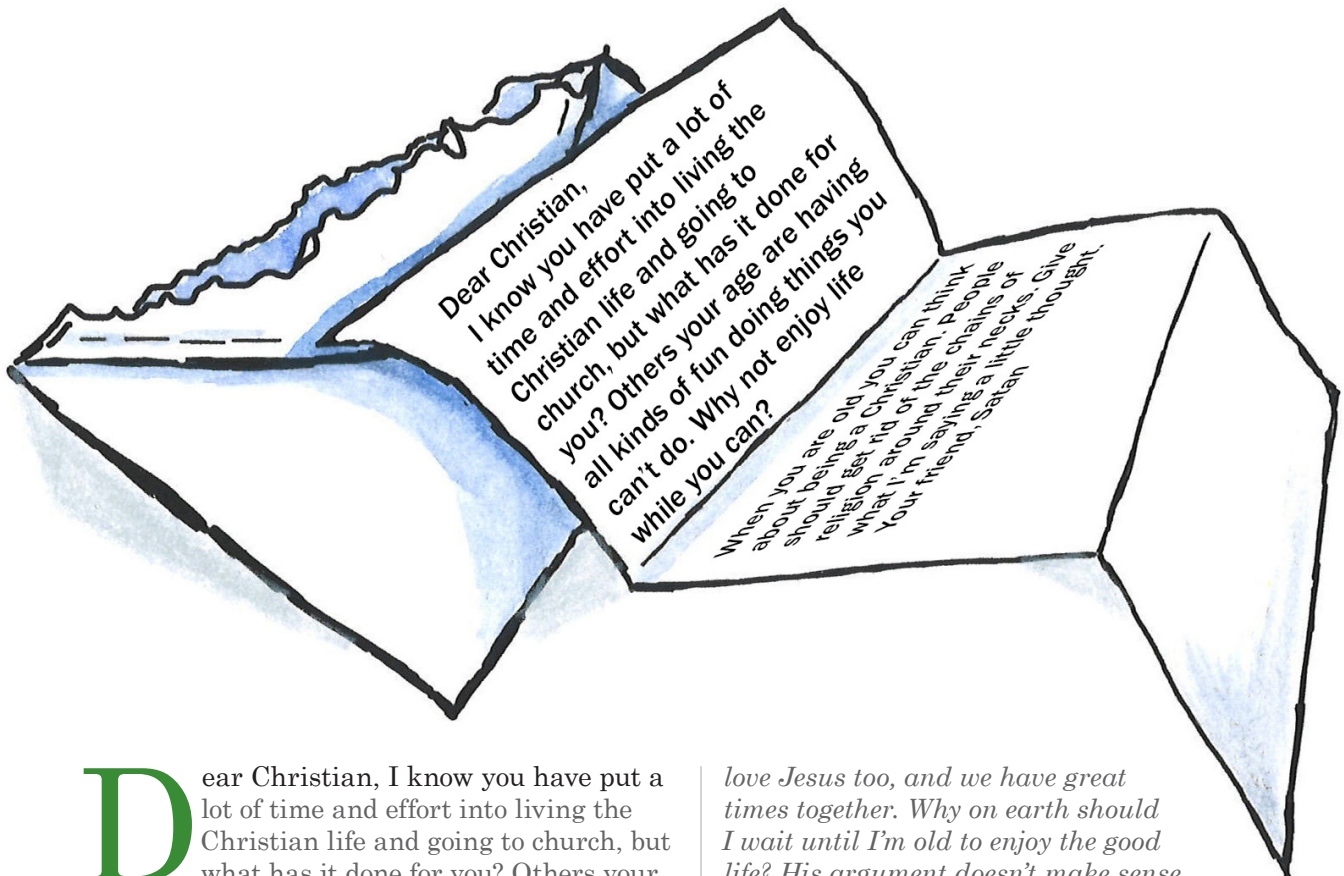
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“DEAR CHRISTIAN, . . .”

LESSON 200 → 2 Timothy 2:19-26; Psalm 15:1-5

You won't get notes like these from Satan, but he might whisper these lies in your ears. Here are some tips on how to respond.



Dear Christian, I know you have put a lot of time and effort into living the Christian life and going to church, but what has it done for you? Others your age are having all kinds of fun doing things you can't do. Why not enjoy life while you can? When you are old you can think about being a Christian. People should get rid of the chains of religion around their necks. Give what I'm saying a little thought. Your friend, Satan

Dear Diary, I can't imagine where Satan got the idea that I'm not having fun. Since I gave my heart to Jesus, I've enjoyed life a whole lot more than I ever did before! I happen to love going to church. I have a lot of good friends there who

love Jesus too, and we have great times together. Why on earth should I wait until I'm old to enjoy the good life? His argument doesn't make sense. And I certainly don't intend to give it another thought. Christian

Dear Christian, I'm concerned about your attitude. I want you to see my viewpoint, so I have another pointer. You must stop spending time with your nose in the Bible. Do you think that ancient Book can help you in this day and age? Get in touch with what's going on in the real world! There are literally thousands of books, magazines, and websites that I would much



I WANT A PURE HEART.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. — Matthew 5:8

rather see you spend your time reading. From them you will learn about things that delight my followers. Still your friend, Satan

Dear Diary, Satan will never get anywhere with this suggestion! Yes, that “ancient Book” can help me in this day and age. It helps me to understand more about my best friend, Jesus. I’m sure there are lots of ungodly books, gossip magazines, and inappropriate websites he could recommend, but they would fill my mind with his kind of garbage, and I’m not interested in garbage. And this is settled: I have no desire to learn about things that delight his followers. I would rather find out what delights my God.

Dear Christian, I must mention that I am very concerned about the amount of time you spend in prayer. In the mornings, I would advise you to sleep in a little more. Young people need their rest! When you do get up, start right out thinking about what you want to do and where you want to go. It’s your life, and you need to be your own person, do your own thing! Believe me, I only have your best interests at heart. As ever, Satan

He may as well give up on the subject of prayer, because I’m not going to give up praying! I love to start each day talking to Jesus, and I wouldn’t miss it for anything. It gives me a good feeling to know that we’ve talked over my day before I ever get going. He’s right about one thing, though—it is my life. My choice is to live it for Jesus, and that means staying in close touch with Him.

Dear Christian, I’m really bothered by the music you’ve been listening to. You need to develop a liking for something with a little more life in it. Turn on a rock station and before you know it, you’ll get a taste for the kind of music I’m talking about. It will loosen you up a little! Your friend, Satan

Diary, I am very careful about what I put into my mind. I don’t want to have anything to do with that filthy stuff the devil’s followers call music.

I want to listen to something uplifting, inspiring, and encouraging. I don’t want to fill my thoughts with violence and bad language. As far as listening to something with a little more “life” in it, Jesus is my life.

Dear Christian, I seem to be losing the battle, but I haven’t given up. I believe my suggestions could be helpful if you’d just pay attention. I want you to spend time watching television. Now that is something that really grows on you. The people you see there are my kind of people. The commercials show the things you’re missing out on, and will make you want more, more, more. Why don’t you get with it? A daily dose of television would lead you a long way in the right direction. Still on your trail, Satan

Why should I be interested in watching Satan’s “kind of people”? They aren’t my kind! Why should I learn to want more, more, more? Jesus teaches me to be content with what I have. Programming today is filled with violence and sin, and I don’t want any part of that. It’s about time Satan got the message. I’m not going to take his suggestions. I am going to live for Jesus. Why doesn’t he just give up?

WE CAN WIN

Victory over the devil! That's what we want. Jesus has given us a way to have this victory. To find out what it is, cross out all the letters in the banner that are found in the verse below. The first word is done for you. Circle the eight letters that are left over. Then unscramble them and place them in the lines provided at the bottom of the page (two words). This is what gives us victory over the devil. If you need a clue read Revelation 12:11.

VERSE

The Lord shall deliver me
from every evil work, and will preserve me unto
his heavenly kingdom.

- 2 Timothy 4:18



A K N E R Y H I E V O E
M H E O D M H R B L R Y L M
E A H E O O D M H R D I S E E
R U E V I O R I L I N M L O
S T H V V I T R W S O W
R L N E L V A E V D K F

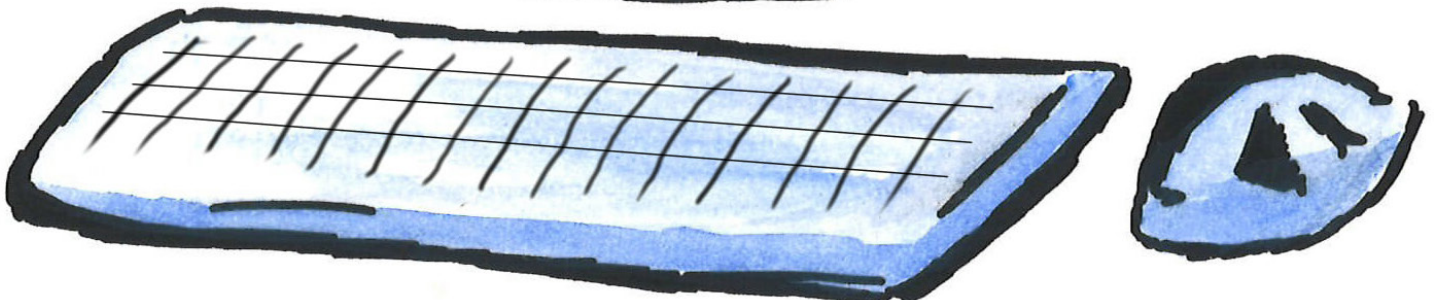
VICTORY!

CONGRATULATIONS TO A WINNER

LESSON 201 → Matthew 4:1-11



*You can succeed in your
fight against the devil.*





JESUS GIVES ME VICTORY.

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life. — James 1:12

Dear Christian,
Hurray for you! Since you gave your
heart to Me, I'm happy to see how much progress you've made in your spiritual walk. I know the devil has really been on your case recently. He wants to steal your soul. And he has lots of tricks that he's sure will work, but those who trust in Me find I am able to defeat him.

You can be sure I will always be with you, so you
can call on Me anytime. Besides, I have a few hints that can help you when the old fellow makes his next attack.

First, remember the basics! When I was on earth,
I was tempted also. Do you remember what I did? I quoted God's Word to the devil. Try it! You'll find it will work for you too. Recite as many key verses and Scriptures as you can remember—see how long you can do it. Oh, how the enemy hates My Word!

A month ago you won a round with the devil
when that after-school job offer came up, the one that would have taken you out of church. One of the devil's favorite tricks is to tell you, "Nobody else ever had a problem like this one." You found out what a liar he is. When you talked to the youth pastor, he told you how he'd faced that very same decision. It's a wise thing to find a spiritually-minded person to talk with when you're having a trial.

Do you remember last week, when you were in the
grocery store, and you noticed some offensive magazines on display? The devil would have liked for you to stop and read them. I was really proud of you when, instead, you quickly turned the other direction and started humming a Christian song in your mind. Excellent! The enemy was hopping mad!

I know you were feeling a little depressed when
you went to bed last night. The enemy was really trying to discourage you. But you pulled

out one of the best tools available. You started thinking about the last victory we'd won. Then you thought about the prayer meeting when you got sanctified. Next, you remembered the verse you'd just read from the Bible. You went to sleep feeling better, didn't you?

Here's another hint—say "No!" I've promised that
if you resist the devil, he will flee from you. If you do this in My name, he has to go on the run.

One more thing—sometimes you'll be in
situations where you just don't know what is right. Stop and think for a second about what I would do. If I were in your shoes, what action would I take? If you do what I would, you will never lose.

You're doing great! Keep it up and someday we'll
walk together where there is no temptation or test. Remember that I love you more than anyone else does.

With my love,

Jesus Christ

WHAT ARE YOU LIKE?

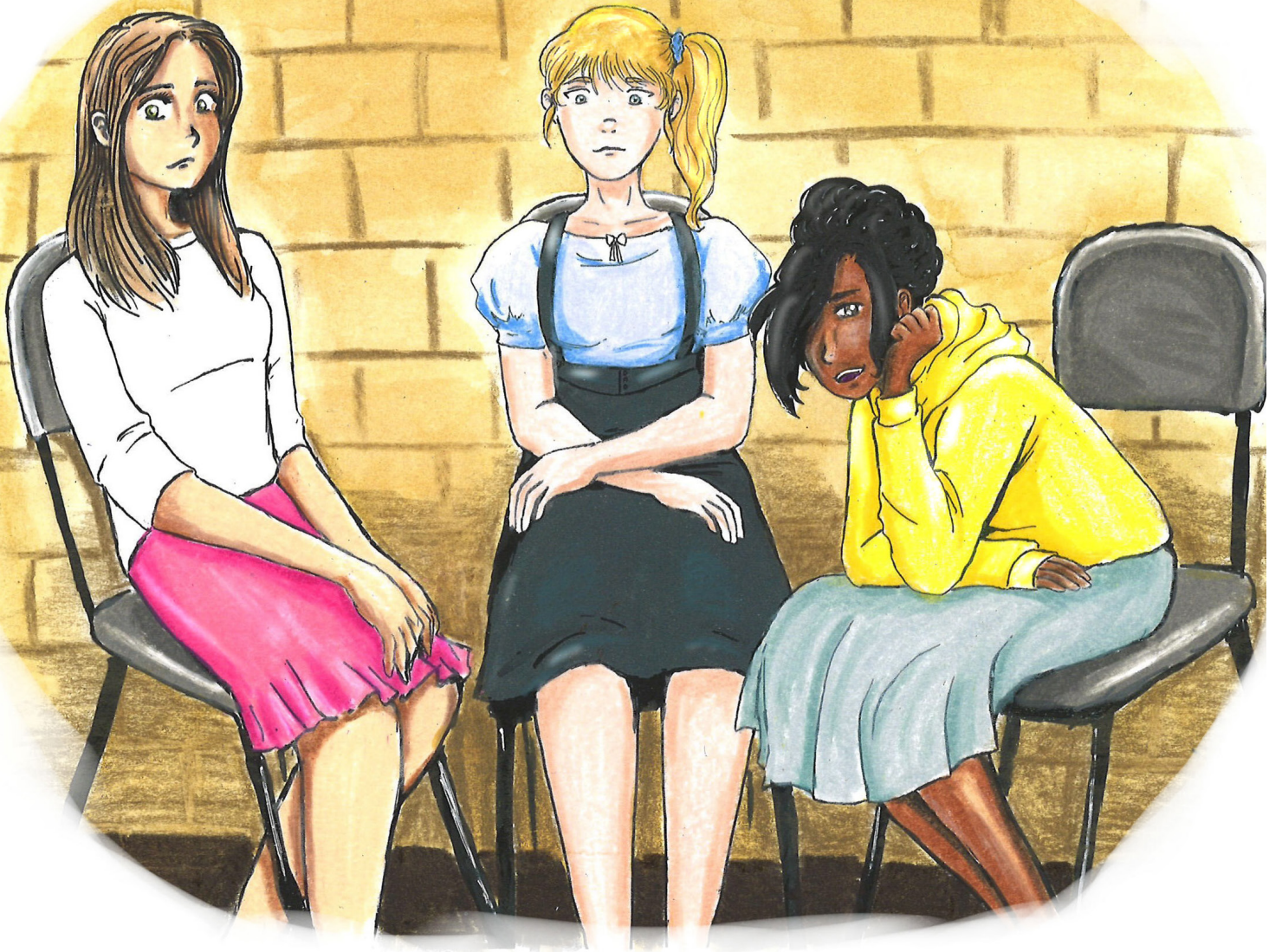
A Christian will have all the character qualities listed below. You'll have a hard time reading them as they are, so take the letters from the Key Word and fit them where they belong in each word. Cross out each letter as you use it because you can only use it once!



DIFFERENT FROM THE CROWD

LESSON 202 → Numbers 13:17-33; 14:22-24

Kennedy learned the importance of taking a stand for Christ.



Kennedy could feel the butterflies fluttering around in her stomach as she waited, wondering if she would be called on to give her testimony tonight. It was an old familiar feeling. Would she ever outgrow it? Somehow it always sneaked up on her in new situations, especially when she was

taking a stand for Christ. She chuckled to herself as she remembered the first time . . .

On that day there was the usual bustle and noise of a busy school cafeteria. She picked up her food and moved across the room to her small group of school friends. She had always done whatever



KEY VERSE

I'LL FOLLOW JESUS.

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. — 1 John 2:15

it took to fit in with the crowd, but she knew that this day would be different. Just the night before she had given her heart to Christ at a youth focus. She sat down and gathered all the courage she had and then bowed her head to pray. Oh, how the butterflies in her stomach fluttered. As she finished praying she couldn't help noticing how quiet it was around her.

Since that day she had always been different from the rest of the crowd. At times she remembered hearing a few snickers during her lunch time prayers. But, in general she had gained the respect of her peers, much to her amazement. They often came to her when they had problems, hoping she could help. One day, as she was hurrying down a hall at school, a boy who was quite popular stopped her. She smiled now as she remembered. He had wanted to tell her how much he respected her . . . that he noticed she was different—in a good way. He liked the fact that she always wore modest clothing instead of what most other girls wore. Kennedy had never forgotten that. It had really encouraged her.

Even now it encouraged her as she sat in the juvenile detention center with some other Christian kids and watched the young women file in. Soon they were all sitting together in a big circle.

Now settle down, Kennedy said to herself . . . especially to her stomach. She had never been here before and it had to be the scariest thing yet. She wondered what she would say if she were called on to testify. She was almost too nervous to think. One by one the Christian young people shared what Christ had done for them. Kennedy noticed some of the young women who were listening had tears in their eyes. Later, she was startled when one of them spoke to her.

"Kennedy, don't you know who I am? I went to school with you. Remember?"

Kennedy was shocked. It was Chloe Pierson, one of her ex-schoolmates. "Yes, of course I remember," she answered.

"I always knew you had something real, Kennedy," Chloe said, trying to choke back the tears. "I watched you almost every day. I became so curious about you that I began to watch your brother and sister too. I knew you had a real Christian family. I wish I could have had that kind of family too. But now I'm in a real mess, as you can see. I'd like to ask you a question, if it's okay?"

"Sure," Kennedy answered, hoping she could help Chloe.

"What did you do when things were hard? How did you cope with the problems of life?"

Kennedy hesitated. She had not expected this. Lord, help me now, she prayed. She knew how much Chloe needed Jesus in her life.

"Chloe, I prayed. Every time a hard situation arose, I prayed—I turned to the Lord and asked Him to help me. I could never have been a Christian if I had tried to do it on my own. But Jesus helps me every day."

"Kennedy, I want what you have. I've always wanted it but never knew where to find it. Is it too late?"

"No, Chloe. That's why we came here tonight. We can pray with you, and Christ can make a real change in your life too."

Kennedy realized now that the Christian life she had lived at school was really paying off. Here was someone who had been directly touched by her life for Christ. And now she would have the wonderful privilege to pray with her. Her heart felt like one big, beautiful butterfly, soaring very, very high. And she knew whatever happened, however she felt inside, it really did pay to take her stand for Jesus Christ.

FREE TO BE CLEAN

Air pollution happens when things get mixed with our air and make it dirty. People have a hard time seeing and breathing. It makes life unpleasant. There are many things that can pollute

our spiritual lives, but we can be free of them if we keep our minds on the things of God. The words in the list below are things that will keep our lives clean and pleasant. Find them in the wordfind.

A	C	X	G	A	P	B	A	P	C	T	O	B	M	M	X	U	I	G	Z
T	E	S	O	H	W	U	N	Z	H	J	U	S	T	J	K	I	O	V	X
A	W	V	O	N	C	P	R	A	I	S	E	R	C	B	D	F	L	I	B
I	N	F	D	X	L	A	J	E	F	L	U	D	I	E	U	Y	H	R	R
B	O	Y	R	A	O	A	E	A	Y	E	B	J	V	W	L	O	N	T	S
E	C	A	E	P	W	P	I	T	Y	O	G	M	T	E	F	M	T	U	U
I	R	G	P	E	E	T	A	M	M	R	C	F	V	S	U	E	S	E	R
B	U	E	O	N	H	L	N	G	S	O	A	O	T	W	T	L	E	F	E
T	B	G	R	Q	Z	H	T	H	T	I	L	J	D	Z	D	R	N	A	W
Y	C	Y	T	A	T	W	B	N	T	Y	T	I	R	A	H	C	O	N	D
L	K	R	J	C	T	U	T	H	E	T	H	O	H	V	V	D	H	N	S
J	F	I	J	T	C	T	F	Y	P	G	N	Z	T	D	D	M	K	V	G
O	Y	D	M	F	O	U	S	S	X	O	O	W	U	J	Z	I	M	S	L
Q	V	C	B	O	L	X	T	B	H	D	X	U	R	T	X	M	S	O	A
M	U	L	K	P	Z	F	B	Z	D	K	Z	Y	T	A	G	L	F	Z	Z

JUST
PURE
SURE
TRUE

FAITH
PEACE
TEACH
TRUTH

GENTLE
HONEST
HONOR
LOVELY

PRAISE
STRONG
VIRTUE
CHARITY

FAITHFUL
GOOD REPORT

WILLING TO GO

LESSON 203 → Acts 26:1-20

Henry had a choice to make when God called his family to serve in a foreign country.



Surely this is all just a bad dream, Henry thought. He looked from his dad to his mom. Soon someone will laugh and say it is all a big joke. But no one did. Instead, they just looked at him with the same earnest expression.

Suddenly his little sister burst into tears. “I don’t want to go. I’m scared to move away to another country,” she cried, pulling her doll closer. Henry felt a bit that way too. He had expected to come home from school, have a snack, and go to play basketball with his friends. But now this! It was as if someone had dropped a ton of bricks on him!

“We have done a lot of praying about this. We are sure that it is God’s will for us to move. God has shown us that the world is His harvest field and He has a





HELP ME TO BE WILLING.

Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. — Isaiah 6:8

special place for us to work. We must be willing to go where God sends us. He has promised to be with us and help us, and we believe He will.”

Henry heard his father’s words but they seemed to come from far away. This whole thing just did not seem real. How could God do this to him? A moment ago he had felt safe and secure, but now his whole world seemed to have turned upside down. He felt torn inside between the life he knew and the one his parents wanted to venture into.

“We feel, in all fairness, Henry,” his father continued, “that you should choose for yourself. We can make arrangements for you to live here with a family from the church until you graduate, or you can come with us now. Of course, we’d like to have you with us, but that might be selfish on our part.” He paused for a moment. “Henry, would you like to talk about this now, or would you like a little time to think it over?”

Henry hesitated. His feelings were almost too jumbled to sort out. He recognized a few of them . . . a sadness that threatened to swallow him, a fear of the unknown, and yet a kind of thrill of excitement too. He did not feel sure that he should trust any of these. But how could he know what was the right thing to do?

“What about all the other things we’re doing for God? Can’t we just be happy living here, and continue serving God as we have in the past?”

“Yes, Henry. We could, if God wanted that. But He seems to have other plans for our lives now.”

“Why do I have to make a choice like this?” Henry asked, troubled.

“Sometimes the choices we have to make are difficult, even painful. But if we are going to serve God then we must expect to make some hard choices. We know this is not easy for you, but we also know that God will help you make the right decision.”

“I need some time to think about this,” Henry said. He stood up and walked to his bedroom.

Henry wished he knew the answer. He remembered stories he had heard about Christian missionaries who were martyred for Christ . . . it made him shudder. But Jesus had been willing to die for him. He remembered the day he had really believed that truth. He had felt the love of Jesus reaching down through time from Mount Calvary to his heart.

Now, as he prayed about his decision, he became aware of that same love reaching beyond him to others in faraway places. He knew it was the love of Jesus. In a moment, one very special moment, he knew. That moment became crystallized in time. It was a moment of decision . . . of knowing . . . of willingness to fit into God’s design.

“Well, when do we pack?” he asked that night at the dinner table.

“Just as simple as that?” his father laughed, leaning back in his chair and relaxing a little.

“Well, it wasn’t so simple, but I do know I want to go with you!”

“Are you sure, Henry?” his mother asked calmly. “We want you to be sure.”

“I’m sure, Mom. I know. It just feels right inside. I’m already excited about making the trip!”

“I can guarantee it will be exciting,” his dad promised. “And we’ll be looking forward to it even more, knowing you’ll be there with us.”

CAN JESUS USE ME?

Serving Jesus makes a person feel good. Are you willing to work for Him? Below are sentences and questions with some letters missing. The sets of vowels that are listed will complete them. Use one set of vowels per sentence or question.

What are your answers to the questions?

W■rk f■r the L■rd.

Be w■ll■ng to serve H■m.

S■rv■ J■sus.

Do you c■re wh■t h■ppens?

Can Jes■s ■se yo■?

aaa eee iii ooo uuu



GOD'S SOLUTION

LESSON 204 → Genesis 37:3-36; Psalm 105:16-22; 1 Peter 4:12-19

Olive had almost given up on finding an answer to her problem.

Olive stared out the window of the school library, unaware of the students settling into chairs around her and opening their books. The few hurried words Jordyn had just shared with her out in the hall rang again through her mind. "Did you hear about Isaiah?" Jordyn had asked. "They found his cap down in the Science lab where somebody

broke in and messed things up over the weekend. He got called to the principal's office during last period. I bet he did it. And I hope he really gets in trouble. He sure has it coming!"

This news, along with what she had heard from several other students, troubled her. Isaiah was the tough kid who'd made life so miserable for her



KEY VERSE

JESUS HAS THE ANSWER TO MY PROBLEMS.

Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all. — Psalm 34:19

ever since the beginning of the school year. Olive thought back to the quiz Mr. Larsen had given just a week or so after school began. Isaiah had scribbled down a couple of answers for one of his buddies across the aisle and tried to get Olive to pass it to him. Olive had just shaken her head and looked back down at her own work, but Isaiah had persisted. Then Mr. Larsen looked up, and Isaiah was in trouble. Ever since then, he'd had it in for Olive.

He made fun of her answers in class. He lunged against her in the hall, making her lose her balance. He poked her books out from under her arm. He whispered behind his hand to his friends whenever she walked past, causing them to laugh.

Olive had tried being friendly but that had just brought a lot of sneering remarks. She'd tried ignoring him. She talked to her Mom about what to do. She'd even discussed the problem with her counselor. But nothing seemed to work.

Just last week, Olive had almost given up in despair. Isaiah and a group of his buddies had been lounging by the school fence when she headed for home after school. He'd stuck his foot out when she walked by, and laughed uproariously when she stumbled, trying to avoid falling. She remembered how the tears had stung behind her eyelids, but she had blinked them back, determined not to give him the satisfaction of seeing her cry.

That night she'd prayed about the problem. "God, I've always been taught that You have the grace and answer for every situation. Please help me with this problem I have with Isaiah."

Somehow, after she had prayed about it, the problem didn't seem so huge anymore. God had really given her peace of mind about the whole situation. She was just sure He was going to take care of it.

Could it be that this was God's solution? Isaiah had been accused of breaking into the school and

wrecking the Science room. Maybe he would be expelled. If he weren't around he couldn't bother her anymore.

For some reason, though, Olive didn't think that was God's way. Somehow she knew! She knew that Isaiah wasn't the one who had broken into the Science room.

The whole school had been buzzing with the details all morning. And one of the details Olive had picked up was that it had all happened about 5:30 on Saturday evening. Someone had noticed a kid climbing out a window and had called the police.

Isaiah had been over at South Sound Shopping Mall at 5:30. Olive had seen him there.

Suddenly Olive gathered her books together and stood up. Moving over to the desk, she quietly asked the library attendant for permission to go down to the office. She knew what she had to do.

That was God's solution. Olive spoke to the principal, and Isaiah was dismissed to go back to his classroom.

After school, Isaiah was lounging by the fence again. As Olive approached, she had a feeling he'd been watching for her, and she was right. But this time he didn't stop her by putting a foot out. He put a hand out instead.

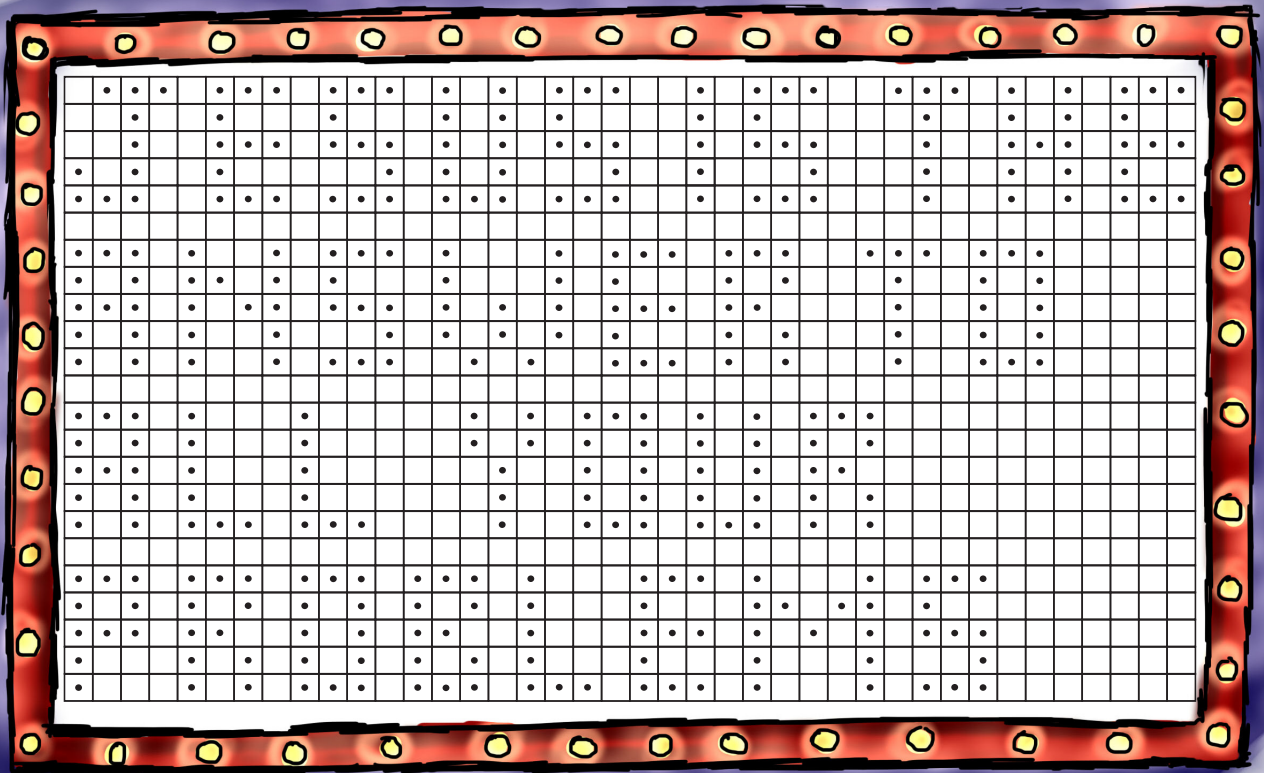
"Stop, Olive." He hesitated a moment, and then went on. "I just want to say thanks."

"That's okay, Isaiah. I didn't want you to get blamed when I knew you didn't do it."

As she headed on down the sidewalk, she knew that she'd never have a problem with Isaiah again.

WHAT'S THE ANSWER?

In the puzzle below, color in the squares that have dots in them. Remember what it says, and whenever you have a problem you'll know where to go for help.



ANSWER TO STRESS

LESSON 205 → 1 Kings 18:17-46

Dylan dreaded P.E. class, and especially the annual fitness test.

Dylan felt a familiar knot in his stomach. Ten more minutes until time for P.E. I hate that class, he thought. Every day I drag in there, dreading the next hour.

He knew how it would go. When they played basketball he was always the last one chosen for the team. He didn't blame anyone for not

wanting him on a team because he could never make a basket. He couldn't even dribble the ball the way they did. Baseball was no better. Try as he would, it seemed he could never connect the bat with the ball.

Today would be even worse than usual. He'd wished he could be sick enough to stay home, but he woke up feeling fine. This was the big day





GOD MAKES ME STRONG.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. — Psalm 46:1

when all three P.E. classes met for the fitness test. Today, the eyes of everyone in those three classes would be watching him.

As Dylan put his hand on the gym door, he wished for the thousandth time that he were somewhere else. But there was nothing to do but go in. Eventually, he managed to arrive at the track in his gym clothes, and with the knot in his stomach tighter than ever.

The teacher blew the whistle and announced they would begin with the 400-meter dash. The gun sounded. Dylan started around the track. Before he was halfway his sides ached and his breath cut his chest like a knife.

By the time he came to the last quarter of the race he saw that practically everyone else was finished. As he willed himself to put one foot in front of the other someone else slowly pulled up beside him. Glancing to his right, he saw Chase Turner. Chase must be having as much trouble as I am, he thought. They finished together as the three classes clapped for them. How embarrassing! Dylan walked away with his head hanging. But Chase managed a laugh, and gasped out, “Last but not least!”

Dylan was amazed. He’d always admired Chase because he had so many friends. He seemed to be having a good time whenever Dylan saw him in the halls or after school. Dylan always just assumed that Chase was good at everything. But here in P.E. Chase didn’t seem to be any better than he was.

As the afternoon wore on and the fitness tests were completed one by one, Dylan saw that Chase was, indeed, no better than he was. The two of them seemed to finish everything last. Even so, Chase never lost his smile or his ability to laugh. As they sat and waited for the final event of the day, Dylan asked him, “How can you always laugh even when we’re last? I hate every minute of this class. I don’t even feel like smiling, much less laughing!”

Chase grinned at Dylan and said, “I have a couple of secrets. Want to hear what they are?”

“Sure, I’ll listen to anything that will help,”
Dylan answered.

“I always remember one thing during P.E.—I’m not going to be in this class forever. And when I graduate, what difference will it make if I was always last in P.E.?”

Dylan mumbled, “Well, yeah . . . I guess you’re right there. What’s your other secret?”

Chase looked a little more serious as he said, “I have Jesus Christ in my heart. I know He can help me do whatever I have to do. ‘I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.’ I might not be able to do all things the most quickly, but with the Lord’s help I can get through them.”

Just then it was their turn to go, and for the final time that day, the two boys endured one more event.

As Dylan walked back to the locker room, he thought about what Chase had said. Who would have ever thought religion would help in a P.E. class? But it just might make some sense. Chase seemed to be happy in any situation. Maybe, just maybe, I should learn a little bit more about Chase’s second secret.

**KEEP YOUR
COOL!**

God's promises help Christians to keep "cool" in the heat. Find the promises listed below by reading the verses given and writing the word from each verse that will fit into the puzzle.

   **C**  (*Psalm 29:11*)

(*Isaiah 51:11*)  **O** 

    **O**   (*Isaiah 66:13*)

(*Psalm 91:15*)   **L**    

USED OF GOD

LESSON 206 → Luke 19:12-28



Staring gloomily out the bedroom window, Yasmeen watched her friend Brendan riding toward her house on his bike.

“Hey, Yasmeen! Why so bummed out?” he called.

With her head in her hands, Yasmeen said slowly, “Oh, everything’s just going wrong, Brendan.”

Brendan parked his bike, then said with a look of mock seriousness, “Tell me, Miss Jafry, when did the problems that led to this dreadful moment in your young life first begin?”

Unable to keep from smiling, Yasmeen grabbed a nearby pillow and acted like she was going to throw it out the window at him. “You sure know how to ruin my bad moods, Brendan Marshall! But I still won’t be able to be in the Young People’s concert this weekend.”

“What are you talking about? Did you forget how to play your cello or something?”

“No, dummy. I accidentally broke it yesterday. When Mom took it into the repair shop this morning they said they couldn’t have it fixed before the concert.”

“Well, at least you’ll be able to sing with the choir.”

“It doesn’t look like it. I woke up with a really sore throat this morning. So you guys have a

Her cello was broken, and she had a sore throat, but there was still something she could do.



good time without me, okay? I’m not much use to the Lord right now.”

“Hey, don’t talk like that! The Lord has given you more to serve Him with than just singing and playing your cello!”

“Like what?”

Brendan thought for a moment and said, “Well . . . you could . . . uh . . . there must be something. After all, you are the pastor’s daughter.”

“What does that have to do with it? Maybe I’m just a two-talent

Christian, and both of them are broken.”

Brendan hopped on his bike. “Well, I’ve got to be going, but keep your chin up, Yasmeen. I think the Lord can use you even when you’re broken!” He headed off with a smile, shouting back, “I’ll pray for you!”

Yasmeen turned away from the window thinking. If this sore throat goes away at least I’ll be able to sing. Surely the Lord wants me to sing for Him.



I'LL USE MY TALENTS FOR THE LORD.

Keep that which is committed to thy trust. — 1 Timothy 6:20

Kneeling by her bed, Yasmeen began to pray that Jesus would heal her. When she finished, her throat still hurt, but she figured that maybe by morning it would be better.

The next afternoon Brendan called Yasmeen and asked her how she was feeling.

"Worse. Mom thinks I may have strep throat."

"You're kidding! Now there's no way you'll be in the concert!"

"Thanks for the encouragement, Brendan. Remember me between notes while you're playing your trumpet."

"I'm not trying to make you feel bad, Yasmeen, but I've been thinking about it and I'm sure the Lord can still use you somehow even if you are sick in bed."

"I'd like to believe you, but it doesn't look too promising."

Concert night came and the Jafry household was bustling with activity as all the family was getting ready—all except one, that is. Yasmeen was feeling better, but not well enough to go out.

"Are you sure you'll be all right by yourself tonight, Yasmeen?"

"Don't worry about me, Mom. I'm seventeen years old, I'll be fine! Plus, I have my phone right by my bed and I can always call if I need you. Have a good time."

The family car headed down the street, and the house was very still except for the old grandfather clock ticking slowly in the living room. Yasmeen wondered to herself why the Lord had let all this happen. She also thought of Brendan's comment about her having other talents besides music. Lord, she prayed, is there something else You've given me that I can use for You? If there is, help me to be faithful. A few moments later she drifted off to sleep.

The ringing of the parsonage telephone jarred her suddenly from her nap. Yasmeen answered the phone. "Hello, this is the Jafry residence."

"Is Pastor Jafry in?"

"No, I'm sorry. He's away from home for the evening. Would you like to leave a message?"

There was a moment's hesitation. "No . . . I really need to talk to a minister." The woman's voice broke.

Yasmeen's thoughts raced and fear gripped her. Could this woman be thinking of suicide? "I'm really sorry that my father is not home, but maybe I could . . ."

"Oh, never mind," the woman interrupted. "It probably wouldn't do any good anyhow. Sorry to bother you."

"Wait! Don't hang up! Maybe I could help. Do you want to talk about it?"

There was a long silence. Then the woman said, "Yes, maybe it would help to talk to someone."

Little by little her story came out, a story of sorrow and desperation that had driven her to consider taking her own life. The two of them talked for quite some time, and Yasmeen was surprised at the words the Lord gave her to speak in answer to the woman's questions. Finally she asked the woman if she wanted to pray.

"You mean right here over the phone?"

"I don't know why not," Yasmeen said. "Jesus can answer prayer wherever we are. I believe He will hear us right now!"

There were tears shed on both ends of the phone line that evening. But Yasmeen felt that God had brought real victory when the woman promised to come to church the next evening and talk to her father there.

"I won't think again of taking my life, Yasmeen. I want to thank you for praying with me. I feel so much better now."

When they finally hung up, Yasmeen felt thankful and happy! The Lord had proved that He could use her.

USING WHAT HE GAVE ME

If we are going to be good helpers for Jesus we must use what He has given us. He has given us the ability to do all the things listed below plus many more. Match each of the actions with the Scripture that tells about it. The first is done for you.



A. Sing Praise to God



B. Love the Lord Very Much



C. Read the Bible Often



D. Pray Every Day



E. Seek Wisdom of God



F. Do Good Deeds



G. Learn the Scriptures



H. Tell Others about Jesus

___ James 4:7

___ Luke 18:1

___ Ephesians 5:19

___ Psalm 34:14

___ Proverbs 3:13

___ 2 Timothy 2:15

C 1 Timothy 4:13

___ Hebrews 10:25

___ Acts 22:15

___ Matthew 22:37



I. Go to Church



J. Resist the Devil

WIN THE RACE!

LESSON 207 → Philippians 3:7-15

Self-discipline helps this runner.

He poised himself, ready to spring forward at the sound of the starting gun. Every muscle was in readiness. The long hours of training and discipline were behind him. Would this bring him first place in the race?

Concentrating on the track stretched out like a ribbon ahead of him, he was unaware of the noise from the spectators in the stands to his right. Through his mind flashed a replay of the

hours spent in preparation for this moment. He had run mile after mile every day, rain or shine. He had eaten the restricted meals that were part of his high-protein diet—no chocolate cake or glazed donuts! He had headed for bed at nine o'clock every night. He had done his exercising—lots of it. And, of course, all good runners must stay away from cigarettes, alcohol, and drugs.

It hadn't always been easy. An early bedtime didn't lend itself to going to the mall and





JESUS CAN HELP ME DO WHAT I SHOULD.

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. — Romans 6:12

hanging out with the “in” crowd. And instead of standing in the halls after school, talking to the girls, he had to head right out to the track and run several miles before going home.

Had these sacrifices been worth it?

The starting gun sounded, and a split second later he was in motion. Disciplined muscles responded without hesitation. Months of rigorous training had prepared him for this effort, and within seconds his strides achieved a rhythm that he would maintain throughout the race.

Minutes later, the months of preparation proved out. Along with a few others he slowly began to pull ahead of the rest. Instinct urged him to strain to get in front of the runners near him. But, knowing that his strength would be needed later, he paced himself, purposefully conserving his energy.

He shut out all distractions—the crowd, the buildings, the other runners. He knew he had to concentrate on running this race and running it right. Time seemed to slip by quickly. He was still breathing evenly as he approached the final stretch.

Almost there! His training had prepared him for a powerful kick, the last burst of speed. One foot in front of the other, stride after stride—the finish line was just ahead! And there was no one in front of him!

Exhilaration swept over him as he realized the race was his. A split second later he leaned into the tape as it broke across his chest. The roar from the crowd echoed around him. He had done it! He had won the race!

Can you look back through our story and pick out one of the things which helped the runner most to win the race? He was self-disciplined.

Though his training had been rigorous and had required exercising restraint over things he might have wanted to do, he had put those

things aside because he had a goal in view—winning the race.

As Christians, we also have a goal in view—Heaven! And in order to be “winners,” we must exercise self-discipline.

How?

We must concentrate on what it means to be a fully-dedicated Christian. Everything we think and everything we do should agree with the Word of God. Our “training” will include daily Bible study and prayer, consecration, denying ourselves things that would distract us from living for the Lord. It might not always be easy, just as training wasn’t always easy for the runner. But if we do make that effort, we will be winners too!

TAKE CONTROL!

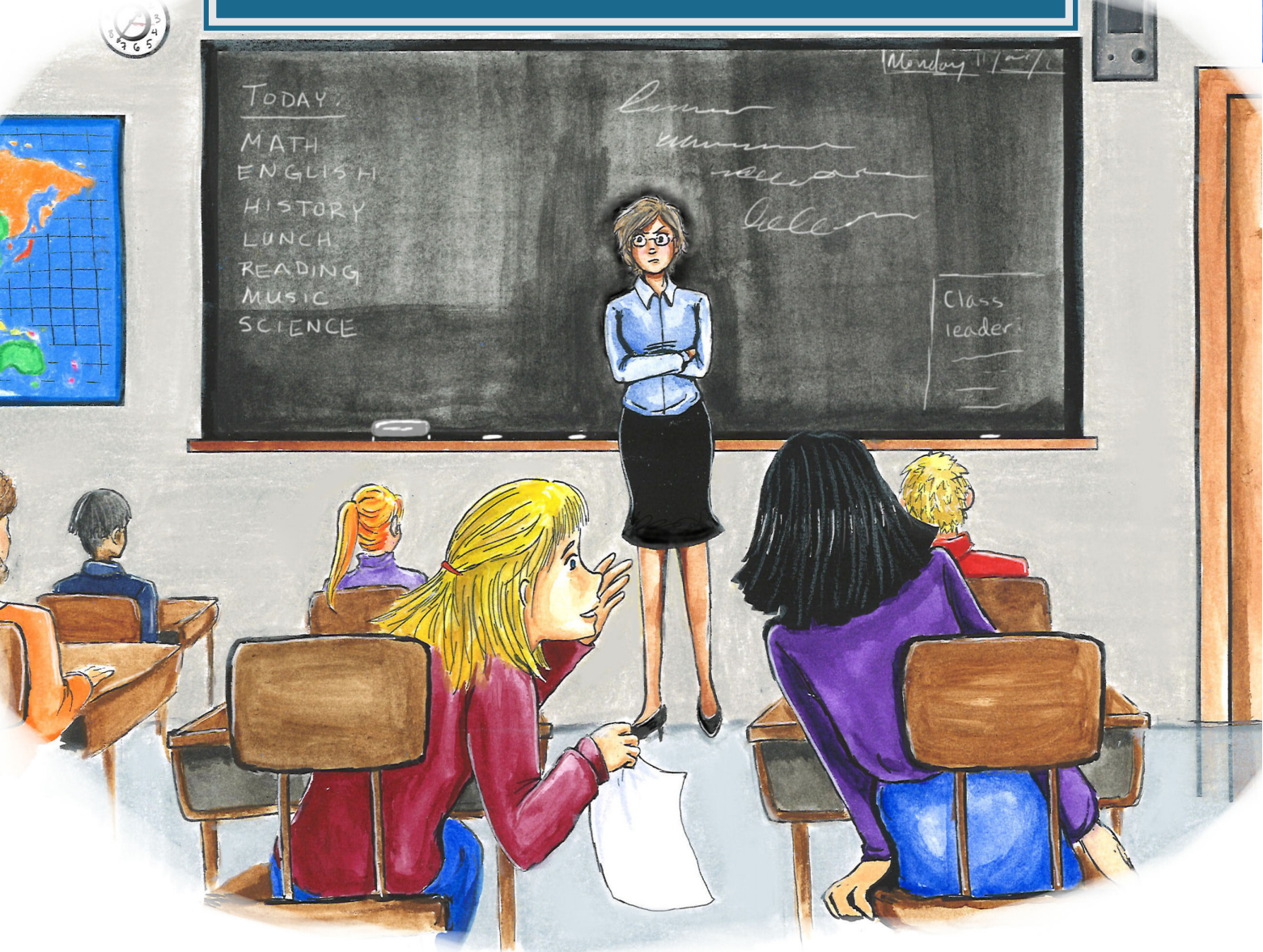
Have you ever visited a ghost town? That's about all it's good for . . . visiting, looking it over and seeing what was and what could have been. The verse below compares a city to a person's spirit. Use the code to fill in the verse. If you don't want a "ghost town spirit" you had better have some self-control!



25:28

RIGHT IN GOD'S SIGHT

LESSON 208 → Colossians 3:17-25; Romans 14:21; 1 Corinthians 6:12, 10:31;
2 Corinthians 5:10, 6:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:22; James 4:15



Harper wanted to win, but not at any cost.

I just can't do it," Harper whispered across the aisle to Scarlett.

"C'mon, Harper!" Scarlett whispered back, stooping to pick up a paper she had dropped so she could lean closer to her friend. "It's absolutely your best chance for winning."

Miss Carson's warning glance brought the girls' conversation to a halt, but they quickly

resumed the discussion as soon as the lunch bell rang.

"You've got to do it," Scarlett urged, as they walked together to the lunchroom. "How do you expect to make class president unless you do?"

"But it's just not right," Harper said again. "Nora is a nice girl, even if she is running against me. I don't have anything against her. Why should I put her down?"



I'M ON THE RIGHT PATH WITH GOD'S WORD.

Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. — Psalm 119:11

Scarlett gave her an exasperated look. “Believe me, Harper, everybody does it when they’re running for office! Candidates always split their time between talking about how good they are and how bad their opponents are. Besides, it’s not like you’d be spreading lies about Nora. She did flunk fifth grade, and her grades weren’t tops last year either.”

Harper opened her lunch sack and bowed her head to say grace while Scarlett waited impatiently. As soon as she opened her eyes, Scarlett had another argument ready. “Listen, Harper. Nora is going to be a tough opponent. She’s pretty, and most everyone likes her. Besides, she knows way more kids than you do since you’ve only been at our school for a year.”

Harper stared meditatively at her cheese sandwich. “I know you’re right. Nora really is popular, and winning this election isn’t going to be easy . . .”

Scarlett nodded, sensing Harper was weakening. After a moment, she pressed on. “I’ve got it all figured out. We’ll wait until two days before the election. That way Nora won’t have time to come up with anything about you in return. I know just the kids to tell. If we say something to a couple of them, you can be sure it will spread!”

Harper could hardly keep her mind on her classes the rest of the afternoon. Her heart felt heavy whenever she thought about the lunchtime conversation. It’s not really wrong, she told herself. After all, what Scarlett said is true. And the kids should know about Nora’s grades if they’re going to vote for her. But her feeling of uneasiness persisted.

The evening seemed to drag by for Harper. After dinner she went to her room and flopped on her bed to review a chapter of algebra, but her mind kept drifting to the conversation with Scarlett. Harper wanted to win that election. School government interested her, and she knew she would find the experience challenging. Besides,

it would be kind of embarrassing to run and not win.

Finally, she shut her algebra book with a thud and stared at the ceiling while her thoughts raced this way and that. Is trying to give Nora a bad name really the only way to win? And is winning the election worth it?

Glancing at the clock on her night stand, she reached for her Bible and the Sunday school book beneath it. Maybe she’d read part of her lesson tonight. They had been studying Christian growth for the past few Sundays, and Harper had really enjoyed the lessons. She knew she had some growing to do in her spiritual life, and little by little God had been showing her ways she could measure up.

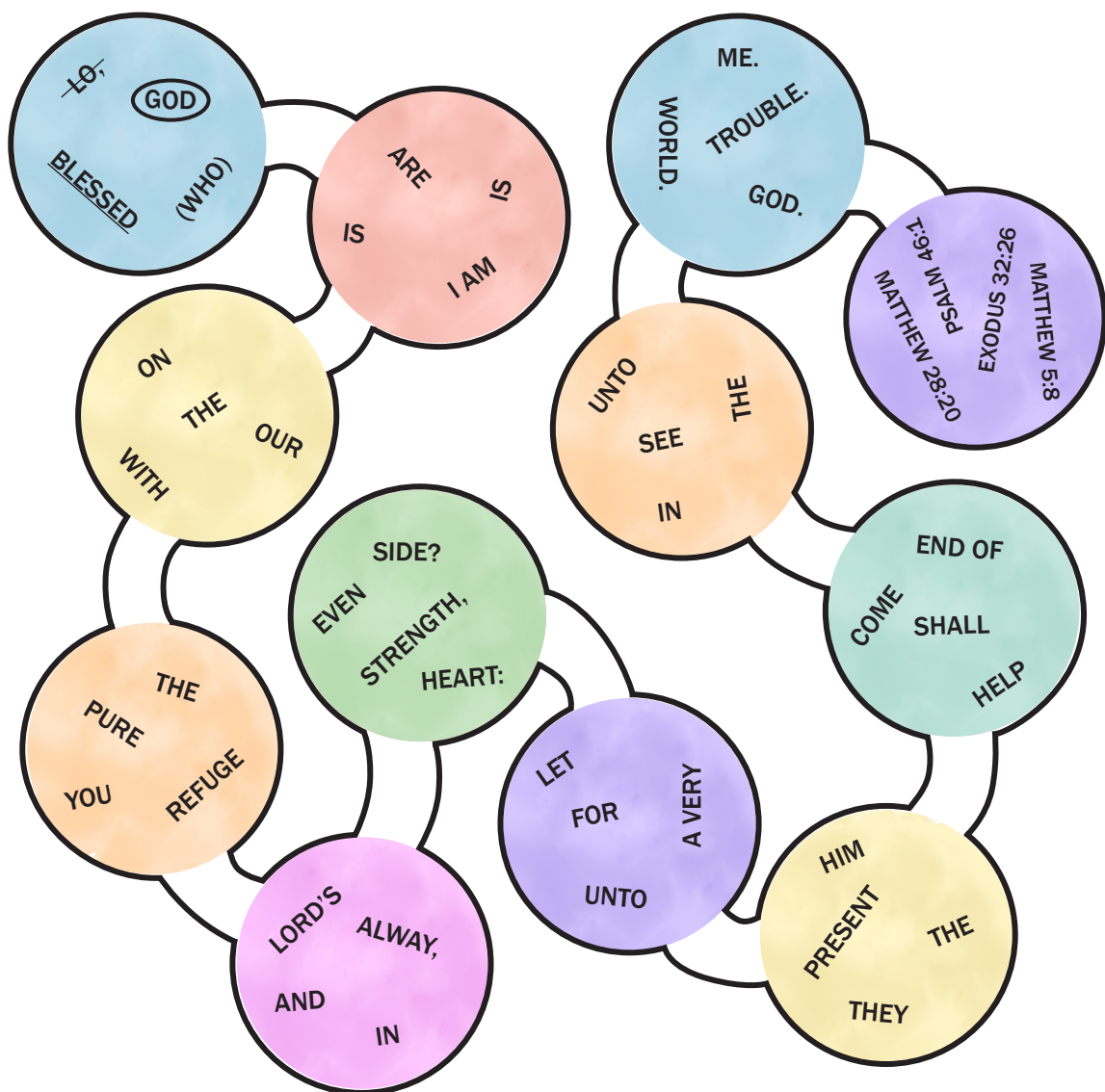
As she opened the Bible, her eyes fell on the verse in Deuteronomy 6:18. She read, “And thou shalt do that which is right and good in the sight of the LORD: that it may be well with thee . . .” She started to read on, but what she had just read caught her attention. She went back and read again, “. . . right and good in the sight of the Lord . . .” Suddenly the words seemed to be a yardstick held up next to her conversation with Scarlett. How would Scarlett’s suggestion look in the sight of God?

Harper thought about the uneasy feeling that had troubled her ever since lunch. Could that have been God trying to point out that Scarlett’s idea wasn’t the right way for a Christian to act? What would the outcome be if she went ahead with Scarlett’s plan? Even if she won the election, would she feel good about it?

Harper knew the answer. And all at once the decision was made. She’d talk to Scarlett tomorrow. Whether she won or not, she knew that down in her heart she wanted to do what was right and good in God’s sight.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

Below are the four shortest key verses we had this quarter. The first word of each verse is in the first circle. One word is circled, one underlined, one in parentheses, and one has a line through it. As you follow the verses through the maze, keep the same markings for each verse. Example: if the first word is circled then every word in that verse should be circled, including the text at the end of the verse. Have Fun!





**How did it all
begin?**

**Read *The Answer*
next quarter!**

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