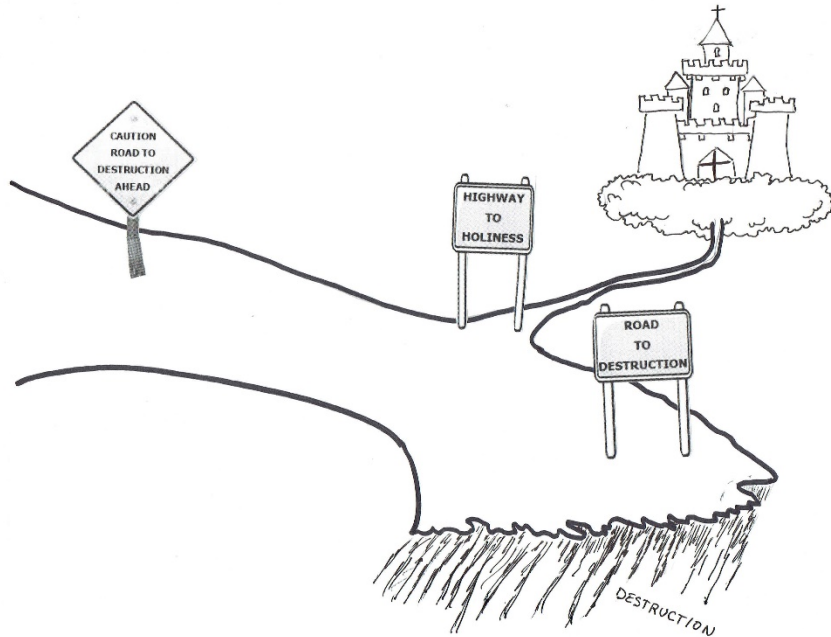


The Way of the Wise

The Path That Leads to Life

Pre-Session Warm Up

[Teacher, draw a simple map on the board showing a road that splits into two paths, similar to the following. Then lead the children in a discussion:]



- How many paths are on this map? (Two)
- Where does the narrow path go? (To Heaven and everlasting life.)
- Where does wide path go? (To destruction.)
- Can you get to heaven by way of the wide path? (No.)

- Suppose you thought that that the wide path leads to heaven because so many people were on it. Would you be correct? (No! Only the narrow path goes to heaven.)

It doesn't make any difference if you *think* that the wide path goes to heaven; it goes to destruction no matter what you think. You could try to get to heaven by the wide path, but you would not get there.

The Bible also talks about two paths we can take through life. Each path has a destination, a place where it leads, just like the narrow path goes to one place and the wide path goes to another place. The Bible tells us that there is only one way to get to Heaven and that is by way of Jesus. Jesus said that He is the way and that no one can come to the Father except through Him. [Show the Cross sign.]

Today we will be learning about these two paths in life.

Opening Prayer

Father, there are really only two paths in life, the path to eternal life with You and the path to destruction. Please help us to learn how to make wise choices in life so that we might stay on the path to heaven. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

Take hold of my instructions; don't let them go. Guard them, for they are the key to life. (Proverbs 4:13)

Lesson

The Bible talks about two roads we can take through life. Each road has a destination, a place where it leads.

Sword Drill: Matthew 7:13-14

*"You can enter God's Kingdom only through the narrow gate. The **highway to hell** is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose that way. ¹⁴But the **gateway to life** is very narrow and the road is difficult, and only a few ever find it.*

- How many roads are there? (Two: the highway to hell and the gateway to life.)
- Describe the highway to hell. (Its gate is wide and lots of people choose that road.)
- Describe the gateway to life. (It is narrow and difficult, leads to God's Kingdom and only a few people ever find that road.)
- Why do you think that it says the highway to hell is broad? (To have room for lots of people.)
- Why are so many people on the highway to hell? (They don't listen to and obey God.)
- Why do you think that it says the gateway to life is very narrow and the road is difficult? (Only a few people follow that road.)

Just like on our map, there are only two roads through life. Each road leads to only one place.

You cannot get to heaven on the broad road. The broad road leads to hell; the narrow road leads to heaven. We cannot change that.

The Bible calls the highway to hell, the *Way of the Foolish* and it calls the gateway to life, the *Way of the Wise*.

The prophet Isaiah talked about the Way of the Wise, too. He called it the *Highway of Holiness*.

Sword Drill: Isaiah 35:8-10

*And a great road will go through that once deserted land. It will be named the **Highway of Holiness**. Evil-minded people will never travel on it. It will be only for those who walk in God's ways; fools will never walk there. ⁹Lions will not lurk along its course, nor any other ferocious beasts. There will be no other dangers. Only the redeemed will walk on it. ¹⁰Those who have been ransomed by the LORD will return. They will enter Jerusalem singing, crowned with everlasting joy. Sorrow and mourning will disappear, and they will be filled with joy and gladness.*

- Who will walk on the Highway of Holiness? (Vs 8, it will be only for those who walk in God's ways. Vs 9, only the redeemed will walk on it.)

The "redeemed" are those who have been saved from sin through Jesus; those who are trusting in Jesus; those who have made Jesus the foundation of their lives. The only way to get on the *Way of the Wise* is through Jesus. He is our only sure foundation in life.

[Teacher, show HOUSE ON ROCK picture.]

- Who will NOT be walking on the Highway of Holiness? (Vs 8, Evil-minded people will never travel on it. Vs 9, Lions will not lurk along its course, nor any other ferocious beasts.)

[Teacher, show LION (or ferocious beast) picture.]

- Who are the evil-minded people? (Those who don't follow Jesus.)

The people on the *Way of the Foolish* are not trusting in Jesus. They have built their lives on a sandy foundation.

[Teacher, show HOUSE ON SAND picture.]

Only the children of God will walk on the *Way of the Wise* and they will be protected along the way.

Just like lions can attack and destroy our physical bodies, there are things that can attack and destroy our souls—our spiritual life—too.

- What are the lions and ferocious beasts? (Evil; things that could hurt us.)

Did you know that bad heart attitudes can hurt us? They can be like lions and ferocious beasts. What are some bad heart attitudes? (Pride, jealousy, and selfishness) When you are full of pride you become selfish, jealous, and mean.

People who tempt us to sin can be like the lions or ferocious beasts, too. Sometimes our friends try to pull us into sin with them.

Movies, television programs, and video games can also be like the lions or ferocious beasts because they can turn us away from God.

- How will the “redeemed” enter Jerusalem? (Vs 10, with joyful singing.)

Arriving in Heaven is going to be the most exciting thing you have ever experienced in life. God tells us in His Word what eternal life with Him will be like:

Sword Drill: Revelation 21:4

He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.

There will not be any sadness or crying in heaven.

Heaven will be a place of great joy and happiness.

- How long will the joy last? (Forever!)
- Will everyone receive this? (No.)
- Who is this for? (Only the “redeemed”.)
- How does someone become one of the “redeemed”? (By trusting in Jesus; by making Jesus the foundation of your life.)
- Is there any hope for someone who is not trusting in Jesus to get on the *Way of the Wise*? (Yes, if they ask Jesus to forgive them.)
- Are you one of the “redeemed”?

There are only two paths through life: The *Way of the Wise* and the *Way of the Foolish*. The *Way of the Wise* leads to heaven and the *Way of the Foolish* leads to hell and destruction.

You must choose which path you want to walk on in life!

Fire Alarm Illustration:

- What would you do if you heard a fire alarm go off? (Get out of the building.)
- Why? (You could get burned up if you don't get out of a burning building.)

A fire alarm is a warning. It tells us that there is danger. If we don't obey the fire alarm we could die.

- What would a foolish person do if he heard a fire alarm? (Ignore it.)
- What would a wise person do if he heard a fire alarm? (Obey it.)

The Bible has good advice and a warning for us about the two paths of life. The warning is like a fire alarm to us.

Sword Drill: Proverbs 4:10-15

My child, listen to me and do as I say, and you will have a long, good life. ¹¹I will teach you wisdom's ways and lead you in straight paths. ¹²When you walk, you won't be held back; when you run, you won't stumble. ¹³Take hold of my instructions; don't let them go. Guard them, for they are the key to life. ¹⁴Don't do as the wicked do, and don't follow the path of evildoers. ¹⁵Don't even think about it; don't go that way. Turn away and keep moving.

The Bible guides us in the *Way of Wisdom*. This passage tells you what to do and what NOT to do:

- What does it tell you to do?

Verse 13: *Take hold of my instructions; don't let them go. Guard them, for they are the key to life.*

- What do you think it means to “*Take hold of instructions*”? (Listen to God and obey His Word.)

If we truly treasure the teachings of the Bible we will stay on the *Way of the Wise*. God's Word will guide us in God's ways. We must BE WISE and hold on to the teachings of the Bible.

- What does it tell you NOT to do?

Verse 14: *Don't do as the wicked do, and don't follow the path of evildoers.*

Don't imitate the *Foolish*. Turn away from evil, stay as far away from it as you can. This is a warning from the Bible: Don't set foot on the *Way of the Foolish*. DON'T BE FOOLISH!

- What do wise people do with the warnings from the Bible? (They listen to and obey the Word of God.)

The Bible warns us to stay on the *Way of the Wise* and to avoid the *Way of the Foolish*. Wise people leave a building when they hear a fire alarm.

Closing Prayer

Father, we have learned today that there are two paths through life: The *Way of the Wise* and the *Way of the Foolish*. Your word warns us not to be foolish but to listen to Your Word and to obey it. Please help us to make wise choices in our life so that we might stay on the Highway to Heaven. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Activity Center

Show Me the Way

Have the children draw a map from their home to church. Discuss how the road you go on determines where you go.

Game Center

Use the following questions in a discussion or game of your choice:

1. Why is the highway to hell so wide? (Many choose that Way.)
2. What does it mean in Proverbs when it tells us not to even set our foot on the path of the wicked? (Don't give in to the temptation to sin.)
3. If you know you've been walking on the *Way of the Foolish*, how can you turn around and get back on the right path in life? (Confess your sins.)
4. Can you give any examples in your life where you needed to turn from the path of the wicked but didn't? That is, where you were tempted to sin.
5. Is there anything in your life that is tempting you away from the *Way of the Wise*? Do you have any friends that try to turn your heart away from God?
6. What do wise people do with warnings from the Bible? (They listen to and obey the Word of God.)
7. What keeps us from obeying God? (Pride, laziness, not caring about consequences.)
8. What would keep you on the *Way of the Foolish*? (The love of the world, pride, not knowing Jesus, wanting to be popular with the wrong type of friends.)
9. What is the good advice and the warning we learned from Proverbs 4:10-15? (Hold on to God's teachings and Don't be a fool.)
10. What does it mean to hold on to God's teaching? (Listen and obey.)