

# GOD'S GUIDE TO GODLINESS

1. Check out **Joshua 24:14-15** and **Matthew 12:30**. What life-changing choices are presented in these passages?

2. Read **Psalms 1** and rewrite it in your own words. How would you explain this psalm to someone who didn't understand it?



3. Which of the following positive steps can be found in **Psalms 1:1-2**? Check the ones that seem to fit what the passage is saying.

- Always seek and follow godly advice.
- Surround yourself with godly, Christian friends.
- Instead of ignoring God, fill your mind with him and thank him for what he does in your life.
- The Bible has exciting, life-changing truths! Get to know it and obey it.
- People who ridicule God don't really know what he's like. Get to know him!
- To be really blessed, choose God's way.

4. Take a look at the following situations, where important choices must be made. Describe which of the steps in question 3 apply to each situation. What you would say to the person in need of help?

- Alexia never seems to have an opinion of her own. She always goes along what other people say. If she's with wise people, she thinks clearly—if she's in bad company, she stumbles.
- Chad likes to party and drink with his friends. He knows that it could eventually cause him problems, but he doesn't know how to change.
- Keanu was in a car crash where one friend was killed and another was seriously injured. He believes in God but is angry at him—and even feels like rejecting God.
- Tricia dresses way too provocatively—so much so that even some of the guys think she's weird.
- Casey is angry because her parents don't trust her. Now she's wondering if it pays to obey their rules.

5. How well are you doing in choosing to go God's way in life? Rate yourself by placing an X on the graph below.



I'm going only my way.

I'm going all God's way.

# GOD'S GUIDE TO GODLINESS [pursuing godliness—Psalm 1]

## THIS WEEK

Psalm 1 deals with life's most important issue—choosing to live as God wants his children to. Godly living is often overlooked in today's society, even though it's an essential Christian teaching. This TalkSheet gives your students a look at what godliness is and how they can strive for it in their own lives.

## OPENER

Start by asking your students to make a master list of some hard decisions that they and their peers are facing. These may include what college to attend, whether or not to use drugs, or how they'll handle a dating situation. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being "This is a very easy decision to make"), ask your group to rank the difficulty of each decision. How many of your kids are facing these decisions right now? Have any of them made (or know of anyone who has) made a smart decision—or a poor decision? Point out that life is full of choices—some of which can be extremely difficult to make. Move into the lesson by pointing out that God has placed the ultimate choice in everyone's path—to live for him or to ignore him. And this discussion will reveal the steps to take to successfully follow God's plan for their lives.

## THE DISCUSSION, BY NUMBERS

1. These two passages center on choosing to follow God's way rather than some false or useless way. Ask a few of your students to explain what the passages are about—then ask if choosing to live for God is an easy or hard thing to do. How realistic is it to live for God day in and day out? What is the hardest part about doing that?
2. Be sure your kids understand that the psalm warns against lending an open ear to tempting words or sinful advice, following others into sin, and mocking (ridiculing or ignoring) God. Point out that there's wisdom in relying on God's wisdom, which is found in the Bible.
3. Explain that by positive steps, you mean steps that people can take to follow God and be blessed (leading happy, meaningful lives). To help explain the third and fifth steps, point out that thanking God can help them think of him often, while prayer and trust will help them get to know him. Is there one step in particular that is less important than the others? What do your students think?
4. These situations give your students a chance to think ahead about ways to deal with similar situations they may face in their lives. What other

situations are they facing like these? Talk about practical advice that your students could realistically use in there and other scenarios.

5. Challenge each of your kids to think about what they can improve on. What areas in their lives do they need to give over to God? How can they begin to live for God today? What struggles will they face if they decide to make these changes?

## THE CLOSE

Close by summarizing the steps mentioned in question 3—to seek and follow godly advice, keep godly friends, think of God (thanking him helps us do this), read and obey the Bible, get to know God (through prayer and trust), and choose to go God's way. Reinforce this point—godliness results when people practice these steps. Living for God requires strength and encouragement from God—and from others like Christian friends, youth pastors, and others. It's easy to give up and give in to the lies and temptations in the world. How can your students begin to find God's way for their lives?

## MORE

- The Christian life is a journey—with ups and downs. How have your students' journeys with God been so far? What ups and downs have they encountered? You may want to have each of your kids describe their own walk with God, by mapping out their journeys—showing when the journey started and what ups and downs they've faced since then. How have they handled the struggles and temptations? How have their experiences brought them to where they are today?
- Give your kids some time to examine how well they are doing in the six steps listed in question 3. Challenge them to think of one area they're determined to improve this week and from now on. You may want to share one area in your life that you will work on—and ask if any of them want to share theirs too. Be sure to follow up with them later and encourage them to rely on God for strength, patience, and forgiveness.