



Faith Adventures for Children Together



Free to use – please acknowledge when using beyond local church children's and youth work so others can find and use the resource themselves.

*Committed to URC Children Together:
enabling everyone to grow more like Jesus
together in the home, church and beyond.*

For guidance on the purpose of the resource and how to use it as a launch pad for your engagement with children and families, please use this link: www.bit.ly/FACT-how-to-sheet

Title: James 1: 5–6

Theme: God provides... wisdom

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Introduction: What would be helpful to know in my planning? Please use this section as a reference and information guide for leaders only – we don't expect it to be read out to the children.

Welcome to the third week of exploring the theme “God provides...”

This week we'll be looking at “God provides wisdom”, using a short reading from the Letter of James. James was the leader of the church in Jerusalem and, according to the Gospel of Matthew, was Jesus' brother. The letter was probably written only 20 or 30 years after Jesus' death and was written for Jewish Christians who lived outside Palestine who were suffering persecution and living in poverty.

In the passage James tells the reader (or listener) that wisdom comes “from above”. It enables believers to withstand the difficulties they may be facing and to have peace rather than divisions among themselves.

Wisdom might be described as “understanding what to do with knowledge”. It is often said that knowledge is knowing that a tomato is a fruit, but wisdom is knowing not to include it in a fruit salad!

This passage reminds us that God is with us: that we are never alone and don't have to always rely on our own knowledge and understanding; that God will provide us with wisdom if we pray. We can trust the wisdom that God gives us – but who else do we trust to give us wise advice?

Together – prayer and games

How do I help my group to come together and get started with the theme?

Gathering prayer

Jesus, our friend,

(use alternate index fingers to point and tap the middle of opposite palms)

Be with us today

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move up and down twice)

As we share together,

(two hands, palms up in front of you, move one forward and one back and alternate twice)

Pray together,

(hands together, palm against palm, as though praying)

Play together,

(hands to each side, palms up, make two small circles outwards)

And get to know you better

(point up with one hand)

As children together in your family.

(one hand out, palm down in front of you, move it sideways and up in three 'steps' as though to indicate children of three different heights)

AMEN.

(two thumbs up, and bring fists slowly together to meet in front of you)

OR

Thank you, God, for bringing us together today.

Help us to grow closer to you in all we do.

**Help us to speak and to listen, to learn and to grow together,
adventuring together with you wherever we may go.**

Amen.

Active game – God says

God says: only follow the ones that are wise.

A version of "Simon says" that introduces today's theme.

Gather everyone together and tell them they only do the action if they think it is something God would want them to do (if it is wise).

Use a variety of phrases e.g. stand on one leg, pat your head, poke your eye, hold your breath, jump up and down, stamp on your foot, clap your hands, bend your knees, bite your finger. End the game when sufficient fun has been had.

Active game – Tossed like the sea

The idea of this game is to have words on fish shapes that could make a sentence e.g. "God provides wisdom" (three fish shapes); "believe and don't doubt" (four fish shapes). If you have a large group, you could split into teams. Using a folded-over newspaper, ask those gathered to then waft the paper fish to your designated finish line, then re-assemble the sentence. You could raise the level of the game by making it so there are two stripes, one each side of the "wafting area", designated as out – if your fish (word) goes in that section, they lose the word and the sentence doesn't make sense anymore. Be wise and waft carefully.

Quieter game – Banana in a box

This game plays with the ideas of knowing what to do, being wise, and not being swayed by others.

You will need:

two boxes, one with a banana in it

What you do:

Choose two volunteers. Give each one a box.

Explain that in one of these boxes there is a banana.

Each person looks in their box but does not make it clear what is inside.

They both then turn to the group and say, "There is a banana in my box" OR "There is not a banana in my box".

The group then needs to decide who it believes. Who has the banana in their box?

The group can ask each person questions to help them decide, e.g. "Who has the banana?", "Does the other person have the banana?", "Why should we believe that you have the banana?", "What does your banana look like?"

Once the group has decided (majority vote), the person they suspect of having the banana shows the inside of their box. Did they guess correctly? Your group will want to play this game again and again.

Experience – Bible story and songs

Hear, watch and sing the Bible story

When planning the session, the team of writers read many different Bible versions to find the one that is most suitable for the age range. We also look at vocabulary and how God/Jesus is described. We are aware that a lot of churches stick with one Bible version. We appreciate it can be difficult to have many different Bible versions and that access to them online isn't always easy. Therefore, we have provided the passage in the recommended version for your convenience.

You may wish to research different versions of this reading on www.biblegateway.com
Recommended versions to try are NRSV, Easy-to-read, The Message, NIRV

For this story we recommend using the Good News Bible

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James%201%3A%205-6&version=GNT>

⁵ But if any of you lack wisdom, you should pray to God, who will give it to you; because God gives generously and graciously to all. ⁶ But when you pray, you must believe and not doubt at all. Whoever doubts is like a wave in the sea that is driven and blown about by the wind.

Good News Translation® (Today's English Version, Second Edition) © 1992 American Bible Society. All rights reserved. For more information about GNT, visit www.bibles.com and www.gnt.bible.

Where can I find the story online?

Under-fives: Be wise and follow God's ways, by Cornerstone Kids

<https://youtu.be/9qKv7vpYCzg?si=c9Zw73nsK6mbIASX>

Five-to-elevens: God wants us to make wise choices!, by Douglas Talks

https://youtu.be/4BotCIS_6bl?si=Qa08mBcb0mp34RxK

Songs to support the story

Under-fives: If you lack wisdom, by U-Nite TV

<https://youtu.be/lPsGGd3g6f4?si=RG6T886uz97Pd4hj>

Five-to-elevens: Ask God for Wisdom!, by Lyric Lambs

<https://youtu.be/6yUvJKOl30E?si=faZlaFlxdmLS2cDo>

Explore – ways into the theme

Ideas and activities to explore this week's Bible passage together

A new way to explore the theme

Wisdom or knowledge?

Explain that this passage talks about wisdom. Ask the children what they think the difference is between knowledge and wisdom.

After some discussion you could summarise: knowledge is the things we know, things we learn, but wisdom is the knowledge that comes from God, God's direction, God's guidance. Wisdom sometimes is different from our own knowledge. The Bible reminds us that we need to not just depend on our own knowledge but trust in the words and wisdom from God. (Proverbs 3: 5-6)

Activity: Run around wisdom

This game provides the group with scenarios and the children must use their wisdom as well as their knowledge to answer the questions.

Gather the children in the middle of the room and explain that you will give them different scenarios along with some answer options. The children need to run to the option that they think is correct. Encourage them to think about what God's wisdom would be in this situation, not just what they think is correct. There will be two answer choices, and a third option to stand in the middle if they have another suggestion. Make sure the group knows that there is not necessarily a right and wrong answer; it's about encouraging them to



discuss. Encourage the children to discuss their answers after each one. However, also try to keep the game fast paced.

Here is a list of scenarios to get you started:

What's the safest place to cross the road?

- A) Where there are no cars parked
- B) Where there is a lollypop person

Which leader would you listen to if you needed advice? Give two leaders' names.

You see someone being mean to someone else?

- A) Always get involved and stand up for them
- B) Always go and get an adult to help

Your friend is going to go and do something risky

- A) Go with them and have some fun; you can look after each other
- B) Go along but don't get involved too much

You have a pound coin – what will you do with it?

- A) Go to the pound shop and get something cool with it
- B) Save half of it and give the rest to charity

A TikTok challenge is going viral. It looks a bit unsafe, but everyone is doing it – what do you do?

- A) Do it with a friend so that you can look after each other
- B) Never do TikTok challenges – it's not worth it

Once you have had fun with the game and discussions, the children might appreciate getting creative. You can continue to think about how we ask God for wisdom when we find ourselves in situations, and not just rely on our own knowledge.

Modern parables

Jesus used stories to help people understand the things of God, even though they weren't necessarily overtly Christian stories. Lots of children's books can be used in a similar way as a conversation starter on the week's theme. Examples are shared here but you may think of others too. If you are to use the modern parable, consider buying a copy or borrowing it from the library so children see the actual book and can explore the illustrations more (and support the author).



We usually suggest a book for this session but today we have included a cartoon clip. You may have the Winnie-the-Pooh book read in the clip. If so, use that instead. Owl is considered the wise one in Winnie-the-Pooh. All the characters go to him when they want some advice and answers.

<https://youtu.be/ISF3MUrNapA?si=W7DWueHHRV8tG9cy>

- Who do you go to for answers?
- I wonder if you think of yourself as wise.

Talking together: How might we talk about the Bible story together?

- Is there a difference between talking to God and praying to God?
- If you pray to God for wisdom what else can you pray for?
- How do you know when a thought has come from God?
- Why did James think the people needed to ask for wisdom?

Wondering: ways to reflect on the theme

- What do we mean by wisdom?
- What's the difference between wisdom and knowledge?
- Who is the wisest person you know?
- Who do you think needs to pray for wisdom?

What's in the box? (for under-fives)

Use the special box or bag and sing, "What's in the box/bag? What's in the box/bag? Let's see, let's see, what's in the box/bag?" (to the tune of The Farmer's in the Dell). Pull out the things one by one and then let the children play with them, talking about the theme or the story in simple terms.

This week's box could include:

- Owl toy – in *Winnie-the-Pooh*, everyone goes to owl if they need a wise answer. Talk about who children go to if they have a question.
- Bible – the Bible is full of God's wise words and helps us to know how to live.
- Dictionary or book of facts – talk about all the knowledge in the book.
- Praying hands – talk about needing to ask God for wisdom.
- Question mark – talk about not always having the answers.
- Thumbs up/down – talk about not everyone being wise. Think up some suggestions and ask those gathered to respond with thumbs up or down e.g. it's good to share; drawing on the table is OK if I have no paper; look before crossing the road etc.
- Blue cloth – talk about how the Bible passage today speaks about the waves of the sea.
- A tactile cross of wood or fabric (a cross shape reminds us of Jesus. Jesus/God loves us and it's always in the box because Jesus/God always loves us!)
- A set of play people to act out the story or random shapes/bits you can move around to make pictures from the story as you tell it (e.g. stones, felt, twigs etc.)

Express – prayer and creative activities

Praying together: enabling your group to respond spiritually

Prayerful activity: Ripple boat prayers

You will need:

- Clean, used plastic or foil containers (make sure they do not have holes in)
- paper, thick is best. You can colour or use coloured paper; you could repurpose a used envelope
- drinking straw, pencil or craft/lollipop stick
- some Blu Tack, Play-Doh or Plasticine. If you do not have these, mix a small amount of flour and water to make a dough

What you do:

Decide where you are going to sail your boat as this will affect how big you can make it. If you have a big sink, great, but if you are going to use a dish of water, small is best. Select a container to make your boat. Make your sail out of paper and place two holes in the sail to push your straw through. If you are using a lollipop/craft stick for your mast, glue it to the back of your sail. Using your preferred choice of tac, make a good ball, flatten and place it in the middle of your container and then push your mast into it.

Fill a container/sink with water and watch your boat float on the water. Then make a ripple with your hands. Watch your boat sail and think about the decisions or situations you are in at the moment, ones which you would need God's wisdom for. Thank God for sending Jesus to be our guide, steering us through. Ask God to help us make wise choices and to trust God in all we think and say and do. Amen.



Spoken prayer

Under fives

Say the words in bolder type.

Dear God, help us to be wise,

when we have to make a choice,
help us to, **stop and pray,**

When we are faced with a problem,
help us to, **stop and pray,**

When we have big questions,
help us to, **stop and pray,**

When we are learning new things.
help us to, **stop and pray,**
Amen.

Five-to-eleven

Dear God, help us to be wise,

When we have to make decisions,
help us to, **stop, pray and ask for wisdom.**

When we are faced with difficult issues,
help us to, **stop, pray and ask for wisdom.**

When we have big questions,
help us to, **stop, pray and ask for wisdom.**

When we are learning new things.
help us to, **stop, pray and ask for wisdom.**

Amen.

Responding together

Here are some suggested crafts and activities, and there is a colouring sheet at the end of this resource. You could also use small play toys and/or have a basket of resources available so children can choose their own way to respond.

With an online group, plan whether to deliver any resources in advance or how you will encourage them to use what they've got to hand in their response.

However you do it, it is good for the adults to engage in the response too, and all chat together.

Wisdom box

You will need:

- boxes for each child: these can be any small, recycled boxes, like large matchboxes, or you can buy treasure boxes
- a list of wise words from the Bible (see list below)
- scissors
- things to decorate the box

What you do:

Decorate your box using pens and stickers. Cut the Bible promises into strips and roll them up. Place them in the box. Your box is now ready to take home and use. Choose a Wise Bible promise and be encouraged.

Remember that God is faithful and will strengthen and protect you. *2 Thessalonians 3: 3*

When you are afraid, put your trust in God. *Psalms 56: 3-4*

God did not give you a spirit that makes us afraid. God gave you a spirit of power and love and self-control. *2 Timothy 1: 7*



God says, "I will make you wise. I will show you where to go. I will guide you and watch over you." *Psalms 32: 8*

Yes, I am sure that nothing can separate us from the love God has for us. Not death, not life, nothing now, nothing in the future, no powers, nothing above us, nothing below us, or anything else in the whole world will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Romans 8: 38-39*

Let's come to God with thanks. Let's sing songs to God and be glad. *Psalms 95: 2*

Continue to think about the things that are good and worthy of praise. Think about the things that are true and honourable and right and pure and beautiful and respected. Fill your minds with these things. *Philippians 4: 8*

Do not worry about anything. But pray and ask God for everything you need. And when you pray, always give thanks. *Philippians 4: 6*

God says: "I know what I have planned for you, I have good plans for you. I don't plan to hurt you. I plan to give you hope and a good future." *Jeremiah 29: 11*

Surely you know. Surely you have heard. The Lord is the God who lives forever. He created all the world. He does not become tired or need to rest. No one can understand how great his wisdom is. The Lord gives strength to those who are tired. He gives more power to those who are weak. *Isaiah 40: 28-31*

God's love never ends. His mercies never stop. They are new every morning. Lord, your loyalty is great. *Lamentations 3: 22-23*

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified, for the LORD your God goes with you; God will never leave you nor forsake you." *Deuteronomy 31: 6*

Don't worry, because I am with you. Don't be afraid, because I am your God. I will make you strong and will help you. I will support you with my right hand that saves you. *Isaiah 41: 10*

Everyday with Jesus – Walking the Way

What could we do this week to carry on what we've learned? Maybe members of the group could come up with a suggestion. If not, get them to choose from these two challenges:

- Talk to someone older or younger than you and ask them to tell you about a time when God helped them to be wise.
- This week try to turn to God for wisdom or research biblical advice rather than thinking you always know the right answer – only give the answer to someone when asked for.

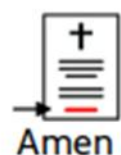
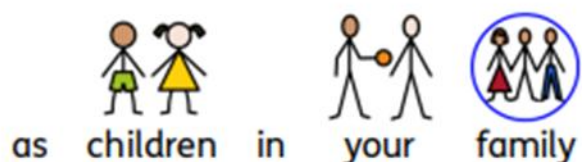
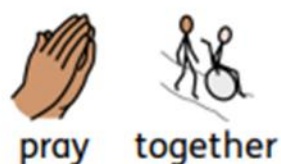
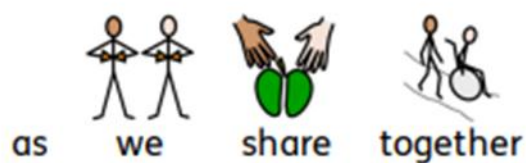
We hope you enjoyed exploring the story of **wisdom** with us.

Please let us know what you liked or what you would find useful by emailing **sharon.lloyd@urc.org.uk**

Please join the Faith Adventures Facebook Group **bit.ly/FACT_FB**

Why not have a look at next week's resource on **God provides help**





The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread

and forgive us our sins As we forgive those who sin against us

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil

For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory

For ever and ever . Amen

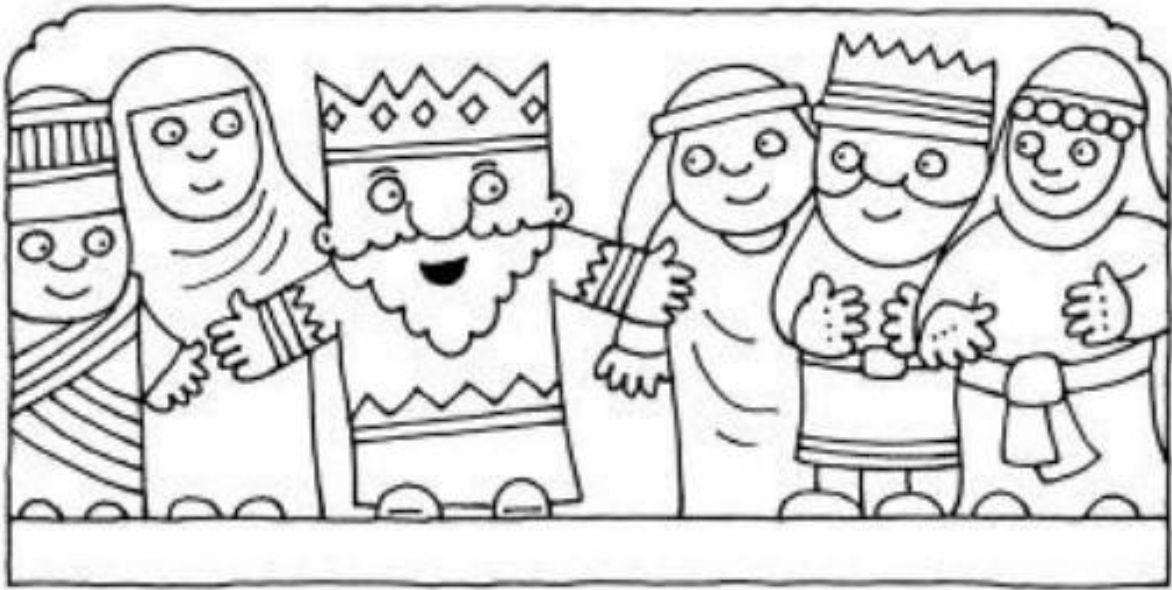


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