

OUR MISSION OF LOVE

Fifth Grade Student Textbook

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Updated Second Edition

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IMAGE OF GOD SERIES

IMAGE OF GOD, INC., MAPLE GROVE, MINN.
IGNATIUS PRESS SAN FRANCISCO

Nihil obstat: Reverend Joseph Johnson
Censor Librorum
June 8, 2013

Imprimatur: ✠ John C. Nienstedt
Archbishop of St. Paul and Minneapolis
June 8, 2013

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The Subcommittee on the Catechism, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, has found this catechetical series, copyright 2014, to be in conformity with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

For teacher information
Image of God: 1-800-635-3827
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www.ipreligious.com

Cover design by Riz Boncan Marsella
Cover and text illustrations by Barbara Harasyn
Photography by Bill Wittman and Getty Images

2019 updated second edition with USCCB corrections
First Edition published 1991 by Ignatius Press, San Francisco
© 1989 by Image of God, Inc., Brooklyn Center, Minn.
Second Edition published 2013 by Ignatius Press, San Francisco
© 2013 by Image of God, Inc., Maple Grove, Minn.

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ISBN: 978-1-62164-326-5
Printed by Friesens Corporation in Altona, MB, Canada, March 2019
Job Number 252682
In compliance with the Consumer Protection Safety Act, 2008

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Unit 1: God the Father

LESSON 1: BLESSED TRINITY—COMMUNION OF PERSONS

Vocabulary

incarnate: God the Son assumed human nature; Jesus is both true God and true man.

creed: a formal statement of what we believe as Catholics

mystery of faith: a truth revealed by God that cannot be fully understood by the human mind

faith: the gift that God gives us that helps us believe in him and all he has taught

person: someone who has a mind and a will. (In God there are three persons, but each person possesses the exact same mind and will.)

human person: someone who is created in the image of God with a mind, a will, and a body

consubstantial: Each of the three persons of the Most Blessed Trinity is God, whole and entire.

Concepts of Faith

What is the Most Blessed Trinity?

The mystery of the three persons in one God.

Who are the members of the Blessed Trinity?

We call the first person “God the Father”, the second person “God the Son”, and the third person “God the Holy Spirit”.

What is a communion of persons?

A loving union of two or more persons. The Blessed Trinity is the perfect communion of persons.

Dig deeper with YOUCAT

Learn more about the mystery of the Blessed Trinity by reading YOUCAT 36.

The Nicene Creed

Each time we come together at Sunday Mass, we recite together the Nicene Creed, our “profession of faith”.

In this profession of our faith, we openly declare or say what we believe about God and the things that are related to God—for example, that there is a resurrection of the dead. “The Church’s faith precedes, engenders, supports, and nourishes our faith” (CCC 181).

LESSON 1: BLESSED TRINITY—COMMUNION OF PERSONS



The Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven (*At the words that follow, up to and including “and became man”, all bow.*), and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins, and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

LESSON 1: BLESSED TRINITY—COMMUNION OF PERSONS

When we say the Nicene Creed, we say that we believe in one God. We also say that we believe in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. In other words, we say that we believe that in one God there are three persons. This is the mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity. This mystery is a mystery of faith. A mystery of faith is a truth revealed by God that we cannot fully understand because of the limits of our minds and the greatness of God. “The Church . . . having received the faith from the apostles and their disciples . . . guards [this preaching and faith] with care” (CCC 173).¹ The mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity is one of the more difficult mysteries of our Catholic faith.

The Most Blessed Trinity

It is very difficult to understand the mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity, but we can use some examples from our own experience to help. Of course, these examples are not exactly the same as the Most Blessed Trinity, because there is nothing exactly like the Most Blessed Trinity.

The Most Blessed Trinity has been compared to a triangle. The triangle is one thing. But it has three sides. There are three sides in one triangle. There are three in one. We could also say that the triangle has three angles, but it is still one triangle.

Some of the great saints of the Church have compared the Blessed Trinity to a clover leaf. One clover leaf has three leaflets, but it is really only one clover leaf. There are three in one.

Another example that may help us understand the Blessed Trinity is an apple. One apple has its skin, its fruit, and its core. Still, it is only one apple. Every apple is three in one.

We should remember that none of these examples is the same as the Blessed Trinity. These examples only help us to see a small, small part of the mystery of the Blessed Trinity. There is nothing in this world that can fully explain the three persons in God. We need our faith to help us say, “I believe”, even when we must say, “I don’t fully understand.”

Communion of Persons

Another way of describing the three persons in one God is to say that they are a communion of persons. A communion of persons is a loving union of two or more persons.

The mystery of the Blessed Trinity is the central mystery of the Catholic faith. No mystery is more fundamental. “We do not confess three Gods, but one God in three persons, the ‘consubstantial Trinity’.² The divine persons do not share the one divinity among themselves but each of them is God whole and entire: ‘The Father is that which the Son is, the Son that which the Father is, the Father and the Son that which the Holy Spirit is, i.e., by nature one God’ ”³ (CCC 253). The communion of persons of God is fundamental because the divine persons are consubstantial. The communion of persons in God expresses itself in their perfect love for one another. Each divine person gives himself totally to the other two. The persons of the Blessed Trinity love each other perfectly.

LESSON 1: BLESSED TRINITY—COMMUNION OF PERSONS

By our creation, we are called to form communions of persons. “The divine image is present in every man. It shines forth in the communion of persons, in the likeness of the unity of the divine persons among themselves” (CCC 1702). When we love others and they love us, we form a communion of persons with them. There are three types of communions of persons that we form.

The communion of persons of the family is established in marriage. A man and a woman accept the intimate communion of life and love and plan to share their love with their children. “The Christian family is a communion of persons, a sign and image of the communion of the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit” (CCC 2205). The communion of persons of the workplace, which for us is the school, is established when students and teachers work together to achieve a good learning environment for all. Finally, the communion of persons of the Church is founded on the Sacrament of Baptism and joins us to another family, God’s family.

We are created in the image of God, and so we should strive to act like God. “Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect” (CCC 2013, quoting Matthew 5:48). Remember that the communion of persons of God is fundamental because the divine persons are consubstantial. The communion of persons in God expresses itself in the three persons’ perfect love for one another. The way God loves is the example for us to follow in our own lives as we live in various communions of persons. We are called by our creation to act like God or to imitate him. We should live imitating God, ready to work together and to love one another.



Glory Be

Glory be to the Father

and to the Son

and to the Holy Spirit,

as it was in the beginning,

is now, and ever shall be,

world without end. Amen.

LESSON 1: BLESSED TRINITY—COMMUNION OF PERSONS

Review Questions

1. What are some things we need to do in order to form a communion of persons?

2. Why should we love others as God loves them?

3. How do we know how to love?

LESSON 1: BLESSED TRINITY—COMMUNION OF PERSONS

Communion of Persons Activity

Directions: For each communion of persons below, write a specific example showing how you can be a good member.

Church _____

Family _____

School _____

LESSON 2: CREATION

Vocabulary

Genesis: the first book of the Bible. It begins with the story of creation.

create: to bring something into existence out of nothing

physical world: all that we can see or experience with our senses or scientific instruments

spiritual world: all that we cannot directly experience with our senses or scientific instruments—for example, God and angels

steward: someone who cares for the property of others

infinite: without any limit

immortal: living forever

Dig deeper with YOUCAT

Learn more about how we are to take care of animals and creatures of the earth by reading YOUCAT 57.

The Bible Tells Us about Creation

We know that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are the perfect communion of persons. The three persons of the Blessed Trinity share love among themselves. To share his love and goodness, God created the angels, us, and the world we live in. In order to experience God's creation, all we have to do is look about us. We can see, hear, smell, taste, or touch God's various creations every day of our lives. An excellent place to read about God's creation is in the Bible. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who is the author of all Sacred Scripture, the human authors were able to write God's message to his people. Sacred Scripture (the Bible) contains the Word of God and, because these words are inspired by the Holy Spirit, they are truly the Words of God. We should know the Sacred Scripture, study it, and live by it, for the Word of God is a light for our path.

First, let's review our knowledge of the Bible by answering these questions:

1. What are the two main divisions, or parts, of the Bible?

2. What is the name of the first book of the Bible?

3. This first book of the Bible begins by telling us about what great act of God?

LESSON 2: CREATION

Creation

In the Bible, the inspired Word of God, we read how God created everything and everyone. To create means to bring something into existence out of nothing. Can any of us make something out of nothing? No! God alone has the power to create—to make something out of nothing. We are able to fashion and make things because God created us and gave us our talents. But in order to make things, we always start with something. God started with nothing and made everything.



We Are Unique

We are unique because we are part of the physical world and the spiritual world. Our bodies are physical and our souls are spiritual. “The human person, created in the image of God, is a being at once corporeal [physical, bodily] and spiritual” (CCC 362). The soul is the invisible, spiritual, and immortal gift from God that gives us life. We have minds or intellects and wills because they are powers of our souls. Because we have minds and wills, we can think or reason and choose, and we are persons created in the image of God. No other physical creation of God is a person. In other words, nothing else in the physical (visible) world can think and choose, has a mind and a will, or is created in the image of God. Only human beings belong to both the physical world and the spiritual world. No other creation of God is both physical and spiritual. But there are creations of God who are pure spirits. They belong only to the spiritual (invisible) world. We call them angels. They are persons; they have minds and wills. They are created in the image of God; but they do not have bodies.

God Is Perfect

Did God need to create things for himself? No, God is perfect, and he does not need anything. God creates because he is good and wants to share his goodness. By his creating, God shows us he is powerful, wise, and loving.

God is powerful. A powerful person has great strength and ability. God showed us his infinite power by creating everything out of nothing. For example, when God created the heavens and the earth, there was darkness everywhere. So he brought into existence light, by creating the sun, the moon, and the stars. He created something out of nothing.

God is wise. A wise person can organize things and put order into things. God showed us his infinite wisdom by establishing order in the world. Everything has its proper place in creation. For example, the planets stay in their orbits around the sun.

LESSON 2: CREATION

God is loving. Loving persons give themselves to others. God showed us his infinite love by sharing his life with human beings. For example, no one would be alive if it weren't for God.

It is important to remember that God is one, but he is also three. In the one God, there are three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Sometimes, we think of God the Father as the maker of heaven and earth, as we recite in the Nicene Creed at Sunday Mass. But, even though “the work of creation is attributed to the Father in particular, it is equally a truth of faith that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit together are the one, indivisible principle of creation” (CCC 316). In other words, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit act as one in the act of creation.

We Are Stewards

Because we are created in the image of God, God made us stewards of his physical creation. This means we are responsible for taking care of the physical world God has created. The Old Testament tells us that God wants us to be stewards. Being a good steward means understanding that the world and everything in it was created for the whole human race. We are to care for the whole world and be sure that the goods of the world are available to everyone.

Read Genesis 2:18–20.

LESSON 2: CREATION

Review Questions

1. Into what two major groups are the things of creation divided?

2. In addition to his infinite power, what else does God show us by creating the world?

3. What part of a human being is physical?

4. What part of a human being is spiritual?

LESSON 2: CREATION

Bible Verses Activity

Directions: Look up these Bible verses:

1. Genesis 1:31 _____

2. John 10:14–15 _____

3. Psalm 27:1 _____

4. Matthew 11:25 _____

5. Acts 1:11 _____

6. Luke 2:16–17 _____

LESSON 3: OUR DIGNITY AND UNIQUENESS

Vocabulary

uniqueness: being in some way different from others of the same kind

dignity: having worth or value

Concepts of Faith

What are the two ways in which we are unique?

We are the only persons with bodies; and each of us has unique talents and gifts.

Dig deeper with YOUCAT

Discover more about what it means when we say we are created in the image of God by reading YOUCAT 58.

We Are Created in the Image of God

We have learned that the universe was created by God because he wanted to share his goodness and love. Through creation God showed us his infinite power, wisdom, and love. We know that the list of God's creations is almost endless. Human persons are unique among all God's earthly creation because they are the only persons with bodies. In other words, human persons are the only earthly beings that are created in the image of God and the only persons created in the image of God with bodies. Jesus, God the Son, is the perfect image of God. Jesus is "the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation" (Colossians 1:15; cf. CCC 241). "Jesus can say: 'Whoever has seen me has seen the Father' (Jn 14:9)" (CCC 516). On the other hand, we are created in the image and likeness of God.

Created in the image of God, we are called by our creation to act like or imitate God. The story of creation tells us, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" (Genesis 1:27).

Not only are we unique because we are persons (created in the image of God) with bodies, but we are also unique because we have individual differences. God made each of us unique in many different ways. Our height, weight, hair, and eye color are some of the things that make each of us unique. In addition, we all have our own talents and gifts.

We have unique likes and dislikes. Based on our likes and dislikes, each of us makes choices. These choices show that we are unique. Our choice of foods is different. When we grow up, we will choose different jobs. There are no two people who are exactly alike, and there never will be.

LESSON 3: OUR DIGNITY AND UNIQUENESS



LESSON 3: OUR DIGNITY AND UNIQUENESS

Even though we are all different from one another, we are all made in the image of God, and therefore, we have a great dignity. One aspect of our dignity is our freedom to choose. For example, we are free to choose to believe in Jesus and what he teaches us through the Church. No government has the right to take this freedom away from us or to restrict our exercise of our freedom to believe. Any government that would do this would be violating human dignity.

We see how special every human being is to God by looking at the way Jesus, God the Son, treated people on earth. An example of Jesus' love for us is found in John 5:1–9, in which Jesus cures a sick man.

Jesus had gone to Jerusalem to celebrate one of the Jewish feast days. In the temple area was a large pool of water. By the pool there were a large number of ill, blind, lame, and crippled people. They came to the pool because they believed that when the water began to bubble it had healing power. When Jesus was walking by the pool, he saw a man who had been ill for a very long time. Jesus asked the man, “‘Do you want to be healed?’ The sick man answered him, ‘Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is troubled [stirred up], and while I am going another steps down before me.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Rise, take up your pallet [mat], and walk’ ” (John 5:6–8). Immediately the man got up and walked.

In this Bible reference, we see Jesus sharing his love. Jesus loved the sick man and all people. He showed us that each one of us has dignity and value. We respect each other's dignity.

We Are Special

We feel good about ourselves when we are well liked, when we do well in school, or when we help our team. But even on those days when we don't feel good about ourselves, we are special and unique. God loves us. Because he created us, he knows who we are and everything about us. He calls us by name, and we are his. Psalm 139 tells us that God is all-knowing.

O LORD, you have searched me and known me!
You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
you discern my thoughts from afar.
You search out my path and my lying down,
and are acquainted with all my ways.
Even before a word is on my tongue,
behold, O LORD, you know it altogether. . . .

For you formed my inward parts,
you knitted me together in my mother's womb.
I praise you, for I am wondrously made.
Wonderful are your works!
You know me right well;
my frame was not hidden from you,
when I was being made in secret,
intricately wrought in the depths of the earth. (Psalm 139:1–4, 13–15)

LESSON 3: OUR DIGNITY AND UNIQUENESS

We have great value. We are important and worthwhile. We can see how special we are to God by what Jesus said to the children in Luke 18:15–16.

People were bringing children to Jesus so he would touch them. When the disciples saw this, they tried to tell the people to leave Jesus alone. But Jesus called the disciples to him, saying, “Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God” (Luke 18:16).

Review Questions

1. Why are human beings unique among all of God’s creations?

2. What did God show us by creating everything from nothing?

3. What are some of the ways we, as individuals, are unique?

4. What does it mean that a person has dignity?

5. What can we do to show love and respect toward others?

LESSON 3: OUR DIGNITY AND UNIQUENESS

“I Am Unique” Activity

We are unique in many ways. No two people have the same fingerprints. To demonstrate this, make a set of your thumbprints by following these directions:

1. *Run a pencil over the ball of your right thumb.*
2. *Place a piece of clear tape on the graphite smudge.*
3. *Carefully remove the tape and place it on a piece of paper.*

Repeat the process with your left thumb. Compare your thumbprints with those of your classmates.

LESSON 4: MAKING CHOICES

Vocabulary

consequences: results of an action

will: what we make choices with

personal soul: the invisible, spiritual, and immortal gift from God that gives each person life; has the powers of intellect and will—that is, the powers of reasoning or thinking, and choosing

immortal: will not die; will live forever

Concepts of Faith

What are the two powers of our personal souls?

Our minds and our wills.

Who gives us our souls?

God, when he creates us.

What is sin?

Knowing something is wrong (against God's Commandments) and freely choosing to do it anyway.

Dig deeper with YOUCAT

Learn more about the immortal gift of our souls by reading YOUCAT 63.

The Soul

All human beings have souls. The soul gives life. Having a soul makes human beings different from non-living things. Human beings have personal souls. Human beings are the only creations given personal souls. A personal soul is the invisible, spiritual, and immortal gift from God that gives us life. In creation, God has given each human being a unique personal soul. Our personal souls are rational. They have the powers to think and to choose. In other words, each human being has a mind and a will. The Glossary of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* defines the human soul as: “The spiritual principle of human beings. The soul is the subject of human consciousness and freedom; soul and body together form one unique human nature. Each human soul is individual and immortal, immediately created by God. The soul does not die with the body, from which it is separated by death, and with which it will be reunited in the final resurrection.”

LESSON 4: MAKING CHOICES

Our souls are immortal, so they will never die. This means that once we are created we are immortal, even though our bodies die. If we make the right choices in our lives, repent of our sins, and die as friends of God, we will live forever with God in heaven. “Those who die in God’s grace and friendship and are perfectly purified live for ever with Christ. They are like God for ever, for they ‘see him as he is’ (1 Jn 3:2), face to face” (CCC 1023).

Choices

We make choices every day. Sometimes the choices are easy, and sometimes they are difficult. Some choices may be very important, and some may not be so important. Our choices may affect us very much, or they may affect us very little. Adam and Eve made a wrong choice. Read about their choices in Genesis 3:1–13, 23–24.

Scripture Summary

Adam and Eve’s Choice

Based on Genesis 3:1–13, 23–24

The first man and the first woman God created were Adam and Eve. God made Adam and Eve a beautiful garden in which to live. One day the devil appeared to Eve in the form of a serpent. The serpent asked Eve if God had really told her not to eat from any of the trees in the garden. Eve told the serpent that she and Adam could eat any of the fruit, except the fruit from one of the trees. If they did eat the fruit from that tree, they would die. The serpent told Eve that she and Adam would not die. He said to Eve, “God knows that when you eat of it . . . you will be like God” (Genesis 3:5). Eve chose to believe the serpent and eat from the tree. Adam also chose to eat from the tree. They immediately knew that they had made a wrong choice. They had sinned. When they heard God in the garden, they hid from him. They were afraid and ashamed. God knew that Adam and Eve had eaten from the forbidden tree. Because of their sin, Adam and Eve lost God’s life and friendship for themselves and their descendants. They could no longer live in the beautiful garden God had made for them.

LESSON 4: MAKING CHOICES

Review Questions

1. What was the wrong choice Adam and Eve made?

2. What choice should Adam and Eve have made?

Freedom to Choose

Whenever we make choices or decisions in our lives, we should want them to be the right ones. We use our minds or intellects to reason or think about what we should choose with our wills. When we are about to make a choice or a decision, we should think about the decision a person created in the image of God would make and then choose to act in that way. Created in the image of God, we are given the freedom to choose how we act.

When we know something is wrong (against God's Commandments) and freely choose to do it anyway, we are not acting as persons created in the image of God should act. When we freely choose not to act as we should, we make the wrong choice—we sin.

Sin is an offense against God. When we sin, we hurt our relationship with God, with ourselves, and with others. We have talked about how Adam and Eve freely chose to believe the devil instead of God. They hurt themselves and wounded their human nature through their sin. They hurt their relationship with God and lost his friendship. They hurt all human beings.

There are times in our lives when we are tempted to do what we know is wrong. Our parents may ask us not to do something, because they know it is not good for us, or because what we want to do may hurt us. Sometimes we may freely choose not to listen to our parents. Imagine you are the child in the story that follows.

LESSON 4: MAKING CHOICES

Story with a Moral

The Oak Tree

There is a large oak tree next to a lake down the street. The tree is perfect for climbing, and one of its branches hangs over the lake. You and many of your friends have climbed the tree and climbed to the end of the thick branch that hangs over the water. It is great to hang from the branch and drop into the lake. And the swim back to shore is a short one. But your parents find out about the tree and tell you that they do not want you to climb the tree or jump from it. When you ask why, they tell you that the tree is not safe. You do not want a discussion, because a friend is waiting, so you tell your parents that you won't climb the tree. The next day you and your friends go to the lake. You sit and watch as they climb the tree and jump into the water. They are having a blast and keep yelling at you to come and join the fun. You know your parents have told you not to climb the tree, but you decide that you can't resist anymore. You climb the tree and, as you start to climb onto the branch hanging over the lake, it breaks, and you fall to the ground. You are in a lot of pain because you have broken your ankle. You spend the rest of the summer watching your friends playing and swimming at the lake.



As in the story, if we freely choose to do what we know is wrong, we may get hurt physically. But when we freely choose to do what we know is wrong, we always hurt ourselves spiritually. God asks us not to do certain things, because he knows that when we do them they will hurt us. God is a loving Father, and he does not want us to get hurt. God tells us that when we sin, we offend him; we hurt our relationship with him, ourselves, and others.

Knowing How to Act

God helps us to know how we should act, since we are beings created in the image of God. God gave Moses the Ten Commandments to help us to know how to act. God wants us to follow the Ten Commandments every day of our lives. The Ten Commandments tell us the right choices. To fulfill the Ten Commandments, God sent Jesus, God the Son, to show us how to act. “The Law [which includes the Commandments] has not been abolished, but rather man is invited to rediscover it in the person of his Master [Jesus] who is its perfect fulfillment” (CCC 2053). Jesus revealed that we should follow the Commandments with love in our hearts. “The Ten Commandments state what is required in the love of God and love of neighbor. The first three concern love of God, and the other seven love of neighbor” (CCC 2067).

LESSON 4: MAKING CHOICES

Jesus' life on earth was filled with perfect examples of how we should act as persons created in the image of God. When Jesus was on earth, he showed us how we should act and make choices. We should imitate Jesus and act as persons created in the image of God. We should pray and ask God for the strength to follow the Commandments, to make the right choices, and to follow Jesus. To learn more about the Ten Commandments, see the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, section two.

Review Questions

1. What is the soul?

2. Why are the souls of human beings unique?

3. Why do only human beings have personal souls?

4. What do our minds or intellects give us the power to do?

5. What do our wills give us the power to do?

LESSON 4: MAKING CHOICES

Review Questions (continued)

6. When we are about to make a choice or a decision, what should we think about?

7. When we freely choose to sin, whom do we hurt?

LESSON 4: MAKING CHOICES



Directions: In the following situation, two people have a choice to make. After reading the story, answer the questions about the choice each girl might make.

Choices

Heather and Veronica were in the fifth grade. They had been best friends since first grade. They did everything together. They went to dance class together, they walked to school together, they went on family camping trips together, and they told each other everything. Sometimes they felt more like sisters than friends. One day, Heather and Veronica went shopping at the mall down the street. Veronica had brought along five dollars from her allowance. Heather had only one dollar, because she had spent most of her allowance the day before. When the two girls walked into a new store in the mall, Heather saw a pair of earrings she really wanted. The earrings cost four dollars. Heather told Veronica, “I want these earrings so much, I’m going to slip them into my pocket and walk out of the store.” Veronica whispered, “I don’t think that is the right thing to do.” Heather whispered, “If you’re really my friend, you will help me.”

1. What choices could Veronica make? _____

2. What is the right choice for Veronica? _____

3. What choices could Heather make? _____

4. What is the right choice for Heather? _____

LESSON 4: MAKING CHOICES

Bible Activity

Jesus shows us how to act as persons created in the image of God. In the New Testament we read about what Jesus did.

Directions: Look through the New Testament and find an example of Jesus showing us how we should act. Then draw a picture of the example in the frame below. Write a title under your picture. Then write what you think Jesus is showing you.

