

The Rhythms of Life



Collegiate Quarterly

Teacher's Guide

Surveying the Source

Gen. 8:22; Prov. 14:12; Eccles. 3:1–8; Jer. 9:23, 24; 29:11; Rom. 8:28; James 1:5

Plotting the Course

The students will:

- ▶ Realize that the decisions we make everyday not only affect our lives, but also the lives of those around us.
- ▶ Determine to seek God's wisdom to make the right choices so that His plans for our lives come to fulfilment.

- ▶ Accept that God is in control even during moments when our lives seem out of control.

Preparing to Lead

Who Moved My Cheese? is a book about four characters who ran through a maze in search of cheese. Eventually they found some at Cheese Station C. Each morning, they returned to this station to nourish themselves until the cheese eventually ran out. While the first two characters argued and complained about the

cheese that was no longer there, the other two characters immediately began exploring the maze and eventually found new cheese at Cheese Station N (Johnson, 1998). Life is a constant readjustment to our surroundings and the quicker we can adapt, the better.

Materials

Reproducible Activity, Bibles, pencils

Getting Started

A. A little boy watched a caterpillar climb into a cocoon to begin its metamorphosis. A couple weeks later, he watched the butterfly struggling to emerge from the cocoon through a small hole. He assisted it by making the hole bigger. The butterfly easily emerged, but it was never able to fly. The butterfly's struggle to push through the tiny opening was actually supposed to push liquid from its body into its wings to strengthen them. Our struggles are important for our growth and we should remember that everything works together for good (Rom 8:28).

B. Reinhold Niebuhr, an American theologian wrote the Serenity Prayer. "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can and wisdom to know the difference." Ask the students to give examples of situations that they have the power to change and examples of situation that they do not have the power to change.

Delving Into the Word

A. As a class, *read*: Gen. 25:29–34; Jer. 9:23, 24; 29:11; James 1:5.

Say: “When we read Genesis 25:29–34, we often laugh at how Esau could give away something as important as his birthright just to satisfy his appetite. Conversely, how often do we strive for worldly pleasures at the expense of our eternal life? ‘For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?’ (Mark 8:36).

“Jeremiah 9:23, 24 helps us set our priorities straight by highlighting that true joy comes from a relationship with our heavenly Father. God has plans for us to prosper (Jer. 29:11) and we need to ask Him for wisdom (James 1:5) in order for us to make wise decisions that will bring those plans to fulfillment.”

B. As a class, *read*: Judg. 13:24–14:2; Prov. 14:12; 2 Cor. 6:14.

Say: “An angel told Manoah’s wife she would have a son who would deliver the Israelites from the Philistines. She was instructed not to let him drink wine nor cut his hair. She and Manoah were obedient to the angel’s instructions and their son, Samson, became the strongest man alive. Later, Samson chose to marry Delilah, a Philistine woman, disregarding his parent’s advice. Delilah became the path to his loss of strength and freedom.

“Samson made the wrong decision by trusting his own wisdom and marrying a Philistine woman. But God forgave him when he asked for it at the end of his life. We too are tasked to make decisions in our lives. We must ask God for wisdom to make the right choices. But if we do make the wrong choices we should return to God and ask forgiveness (1 John 1:9).”

Discussing the Ideas

1. Give examples of advice your parents gave you when you were young that only made sense once you were older.
2. How can we learn to embrace change instead of resenting it?
3. How can we build a stronger relationship with God so that we make more godly decisions in the future?
4. Mention a few decisions you have

made in the past that you now regret?

5. Why does God allow bad things to happen to good people?
6. What should we do when something bad beyond our control happens?
7. Give examples from the Bible of characters that made a bad decision that ruined their lives.

Closing the Activity

The song entitled “*If This is What God Wants*” teaches us to respond as Abraham responded when he was asked by God to sacrifice his only son, Isaac. Even though Abraham did not understand

God’s plan, he trusted God and obeyed. (Gen 22:1–19). Let us commit ourselves to trust God through changes that occur in our lives even though we may not understand His plan.

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Divide the class into two groups. Give each group a copy of the maze drawing below. For the first exercise, each group should work together to find their way through the maze to Cheese Station C.

For the second exercise, we will assume the cheese on Cheese Station C has run out and the group will need to work together to find their way through the maze to Cheese station N.

