

# Choose Life

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Sunday Plan

SCRIPTURE

Deuteronomy 30

MEMORY VERSE

Deuteronomy 30:19

OPTIONAL VIDEO

Obey God

<https://southside.cc/103-333>

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*Choosing to love and obey God is choosing life.*

## For the Teacher

Read this before you teach. The kids have walked all the way through the wilderness with Moses. Today they stand with God’s people right on the edge of the Promised Land — and they hear Moses’ last big sermon before he hands the people off to Joshua. The kids should leave with one idea firmly in place.

### KEY TRUTH

Choosing to love and obey God is choosing life.

**This is Moses’ farewell sermon.** Deuteronomy is one long speech Moses gives the second generation of Israelites — the children of the people God rescued from Egypt — right before they cross the Jordan into the land God promised them. Moses won’t be going with them. He’s about a hundred and twenty years old, and he knows he’s going to die on this side of the river. So everything he says in Deuteronomy carries the weight of a last word. Chapter 30 is the hinge: Moses lays out two paths, and tells the people to choose.

**The choice is real, and it’s loving.** “I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live, loving the LORD your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life” (Deut 30:19–20). Notice the order: choose life *by* loving God *and* obeying his voice. Love and obedience are not in tension here. They’re the same motion. Moses isn’t asking the people to grit their teeth and follow rules. He’s asking them to love God — and that love will look like obeying him.

**God’s word is close, not far.** Deuteronomy 30:11–14 is the part of the chapter people sometimes miss: God’s commands are not too hard, not up in heaven, not across the sea. The word is “very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.” For an elementary kid, that matters. Obeying God isn’t an impossible thing only superheroes can pull off. It’s something they can actually do — small choices, every day, with God’s help.

**Don’t moralize this into “be good or else.”** A heavy-handed reading turns Deuteronomy 30 into a threat: obey or get cursed. That misses the heart of the chapter. Moses is *pleading* with the people because he loves them. He wants them to live. He wants them to flourish in the land God is giving them. The kids should walk out feeling like loved children offered a gift — not scolded children handed a list of rules.

**What we’re skipping and why.** Deuteronomy 30 also includes verses 1–10, which look ahead to a future where the people break the covenant, are scattered, and then God brings them back and circumcises their hearts. That’s a deep adult discussion about exile and renewal, and it would crowd out the kids’ bottom line today. Save it for an older class.

**Repeat the bottom line all morning.** Say it at least six times. Have the kids say it back. Write it on the board. End with it.

### MATERIALS

- Bibles for every student
- Whiteboard or large paper, markers
- Pencils, crayons or colored pencils
- Two large arrows cut from paper or poster board, one labeled **LIFE — Love and Obey God** and one labeled **DEATH — Turn Away from God**
- A handful of simple scenario cards (see The Two Paths section) — hand-write them on index cards before class
- Activity sheets (printed in advance from this week’s activities — pick what you’ll use)

# 1. Gather

Welcome the kids back. Tell them today's story is one of the most important moments in the whole Bible — Moses' very last sermon to God's people before they finally walk into the Promised Land. Moses won't be going with them. So the words he says today are the words he most wants them to remember.

## ASK

*If a grown-up you love had only one thing left to tell you, what would you want them to say?*

Let two or three kids answer. The honest answers are usually beautiful — “I love you,” “I'm proud of you,” “Don't forget me.” Then tell them: today we're going to hear what Moses, who knew God better than almost anyone, wanted his people to remember most. Write the bottom line on the board:

## SAY

*Choosing to love and obey God is choosing life.*

# 2. The Story

## Setting the Stage

Tell them, in your own words: it has been about forty years since the Red Sea. Forty years. The whole generation that walked out of Egypt has died in the wilderness — including Aaron, and soon Moses too. The people standing in front of Moses in today's chapter are the *kids* and *grandkids* of the people who left Egypt. They've never been slaves. They've never seen the Red Sea split open. All they've known is the wilderness — and now, finally, God is bringing them into the land he promised Abraham hundreds of years ago.

But before they cross over, Moses gives one last sermon. And in chapter 30, he sets two paths in front of them and tells them to pick.

## The Word Is Close

Have everyone open to Deuteronomy 30:11. Pick a confident reader.

### Deuteronomy 30:11–14

## DISCUSSION

1. Look at verse 11. Are God's commandments too hard for us to keep?

→ *No. Moses says they're not too hard, not far away in heaven, not across the sea. They are close — close enough that we can actually do them. God doesn't ask us to be superheroes; he asks us to love and obey him in real, everyday ways.*

2. Verse 14 says the word is “in your mouth and in your heart.” What does that mean?

→ *That God's word isn't just stuck in a book somewhere far away. It gets inside us — into what we say and into what we love. When God's word is in our heart, obeying him isn't fighting against ourselves; it's living from who God is making us.*

## The Two Paths

Have them turn to Deuteronomy 30:15. Pick another reader. Read slowly — this is the heart of the lesson.

### Deuteronomy 30:15–20

While they're still looking at the page, lay your two big paper arrows on the floor at the front of the room — **LIFE — Love and Obey God** on one side, **DEATH — Turn Away from God** on the other.

**SAY**

*Moses says God has set two paths in front of his people. One leads to life, blessing, and being close to God. The other leads to death and trouble. Moses isn't being mean. He's begging the people to pick the right one because he loves them.*

Pull out your scenario cards. Pick one student at a time to come up, read the scenario aloud, and step onto the path they think it belongs to. After each one, ask the class what *blessing* comes from the life path, or what *trouble* comes from the death path. Sample scenarios:

- *Your mom asks you to clean your room.*
- *A friend at school is sitting alone at lunch.*
- *You're tempted to lie so you don't get in trouble.*
- *Someone dares you to say something mean about another kid.*
- *You really want to read your Bible, but your show is on.*
- *Your little sister is annoying you and you want to yell.*

Don't drag this out — five or six scenarios is plenty. The point is that obeying God *is* the life path. Every small choice the kids make this week is one of these moments.

**DISCUSSION**

1. Look at verse 19. What does Moses say God has set before the people?

→ *Life and death, blessing and curse. Real choices, with real consequences. Make the kids find it themselves.*

2. Verse 19 ends with two famous words. What does Moses tell the people to do?

→ *"Choose life." That's the whole sermon in two words. Underline it in your Bible if you can.*

3. Look at verse 20. What does it look like to choose life?

→ *Loving the LORD, obeying his voice, holding fast to him. Choosing life isn't just picking a path one time — it's loving and sticking with God every single day.*

### 3. The Point

Say the bottom line again, with the kids:

**SAY**

*Choosing to love and obey God is choosing life.*

#### The Memory Verse

Have everyone turn to Deuteronomy 30:19. Read it together:

**SCRIPTURE**

*Deuteronomy 30:19*

*I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live.*

Read it together three ways: all together normally, all together in a whisper, then once with everyone standing up and stepping forward on the words "choose life."

**SAY**

Moses doesn't say "choose to be good" or "choose to be perfect." He says choose life. That's God's invitation to us too. Every day, we get to choose — love and obey God, or turn away. Choosing God is always choosing life.

**What This Means For Us****DISCUSSION**

1. What's one small choice this week where you can pick the life path instead of the other one?

→ *Listen for specifics. Telling the truth even when it's hard. Helping a parent without being asked. Including the kid nobody talks to. Reading the Bible before screen time. Push past "be good" to one real choice.*

2. Choosing life sometimes feels harder in the moment. Why is it actually the better choice?

→ *Because God made us, and he knows what makes us truly alive. The life path isn't always the easy path, but it's the one that leads somewhere good. The other path looks easier and ends nowhere.*

Say the bottom line one more time, with the kids:

**SAY**

*Choosing to love and obey God is choosing life.*

**Closing Prayer****PRAY**

*God, thank you for not hiding from us. You put your word close to us — in our mouths, in our hearts — so that we can actually love you and follow you. This week, when we come to a moment where we have to pick a path, help us choose life. Help us choose you. Amen.*

## 4. The Work

Pick one or more activities from this week's menu. Print enough copies for each kid in advance. The kids don't have to do all of them — pick what fits the group's energy and what time you have left.

The menu for this week:

- **Two Paths** — coloring page of Moses pointing to the two paths, with the memory verse.
- **Choose Life Words** — word search with names and key words from Deuteronomy 30.
- **My Life Path** — drawing prompt where the kids draw one choice they want to make this week to choose life.
- **Remember the Story** — fill-in-the-blanks recall using the kids' Bibles.

The full production specs for each activity are in this week's activities file.

**NOTE**

While the kids work, sit with them. Ask one or two what they're working on. Reinforce the bottom line one more time before class ends.

## What Comes Next Week

Next week is the last week of the Exodus journey — a chance to look back at everything the kids have learned this quarter, from God hearing his people in Egypt all the way to Moses' final words at the edge of the Promised Land.