INTRODUCTION

Purpose
PrimeTime® Plus is designed for use with young people between the ages of 12 and 14. It aims to help young people develop positive relationships with program leaders, learn about God, develop a relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ, and introduce them to a life of Christian discipleship.

Yearly Schedule
The curriculum is presented with a yearly schedule with sessions one day a week for 40 weeks, corresponding to a typical school year. The material is also suited to a homeschool or after school care setting and can be adapted and expanded for use three or five days a week. For homeschoolers the material can be used in the home or with groups that you belong to.

FRAMEWORK
The curriculum includes an overview of the themes, titles, and Bible passage for each session. There are special sessions designed for Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentines and Easter. Each session in the curriculum builds on earlier ones, so you will want to use them in order as much as possible.

LEADER PREPARATION

SESSION GOAL: primary focus for the session
KEY VERSE: the key verse from the Bible passage
SESSION DESCRIPTION: overview of the session
BIBLE BACKGROUND: commentary on the session’s Bible passage to help leaders prepare
LIST OF MATERIALS: a list of what you need for that session
THOUGHTS: insights for leaders
IDEAS: additional suggestions for the leaders to share with the young people

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Part 1: Welcome
MUSIC: suggested songs to play and sing along as young people arrive
CONVERSATION: questions or activities to help the young people settle in
LAST WEEK’S KEY VERSE: Review of the key verse from the previous week

Part 2: Prime Time
LESSON INTRODUCTION: questions that help young people begin to think about the theme
SCRIPTURE READING: an introduction and Bible passage to read
WHOLE-GROUP ACTIVITY: an activity to help the young people explore the passage
SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSION: discussion questions for use in small groups
SMALL-GROUP PRAYER TIME: a time for sharing and prayer – individual, family, school, community, and world needs

Part 3: Wrap Up
KEY VERSE ACTIVITY: an activity that helps young people learn the key verse for that session
SHARE IT: a suggested comment from the session for sharing with friends
PRAYER: a closing prayer
Part 4: Lesson Extensions

Each session includes extension options for use in an extended program or for encouraging young people to continue reflecting during the week. These activities may also be used, adapted, and expanded for use on three and five day programs. (Additional games can be found in Kid's Play!, available from Scripture Union)

PRIMETIME® PLUS TAKE-HOME PAGES

The curriculum includes ten take home sheets that can be duplicated and used with the young people every four weeks. Each sheet includes a prayer, a Bible reading plan, a Bible study strategy, a special focus for the month, and a bookmark with the key verses.

Ways to tell and explore a Bible passage

- Read the Bible passage directly.
- Tell the story in first person.
- Re-tell the story orally and together. The storyteller will deliberately leave out words for the listeners to fill in. Storyteller could also deliberately use the wrong word.
- Role play the story.
- Create a drama (even if it's just a 2 person dialogue.)
- Sequence the story.
- Use a video.
- Use pictures such as those from FreeBibleImages.com to create a slideshow of the story.

PRIMETIME® PLUS FOR HOMESCHOOL AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE USE

Suggestions for using the curriculum 1 day a week

- Part 1: Welcome
  ✓ Start with a prayer and use one of the suggested songs.
  ✓ Use the conversation questions to open the session.
  ✓ Review last week's key verse (from week 2 onwards).

- Part 2: PrimeTime
  ✓ Introduce the theme by going through the lesson introduction.
  ✓ Read the Bible passage together.
  ✓ Use the whole-group or small-group activities or discussion questions to further explore the Bible passage.
  ✓ Talk about prayer needs and pray together - individual, family, school, community, and world needs.

- Part 3: Wrap Up
  ✓ Review the key verse and its meaning.
  ✓ Encourage the participants to share the 'share it' comment this week via text, e-mail, regular mail, or Meme, etc., before the next session.
  ✓ Close with prayer.

- Part 4: Lesson Extensions
  ✓ If you have time, use one activity, craft, project, or game suited to the size of your group.

Suggestions for extending the program over 3 days a week

Day 1

- Part 1: Welcome
  ✓ Start with a prayer and one of the suggested songs.
  ✓ Use a conversation question to open the session.
  ✓ Review last week’s key verse (from week 2 onwards).

THEME: WHO SHOULD YOU FOLLOW?

WEEK 4

Option 3: Don’t Follow That Leader!

Form a small group. Develop two or three situations in which the leader is someone you would not want to follow.

Here is an example of a situation to inspire your thinking:

You and your friends walk the same way to school every day. One morning, an older teen who leads a local gang approaches your group. He says that if you want to keep walking this way to school, you have to deliver a package that contains drugs to some kids at your school.

Pick one of the stories you created and work with your group to figure out a good way to get out of the situation. Develop and rehearse a skit to demonstrate how the situation might be handled in a positive way. Present your skit to the rest of the group. Follow up with a discussion of the positive methods you used to resolve the situation.

Option 4: Persuade Your Peers

Write a speech entitled, “It’s What’s Inside that Counts,” directed towards young people your age. Think about the influences surrounding you, especially on television, in magazines, and online, that try to convince you to worry most about your appearance and what other people think about you. How can you convince young people your age that it’s what’s inside that counts, in spite of all the messages they receive to the contrary? Present your persuasive speech to the rest of the group.
**THREE: WHO SHOULD YOU FOLLOW?**

**WEK 4**

Part 3: WRAP UP

**KEY VERSE ACTIVITY:**

Read the Key Verse aloud and ask the young people to repeat it back to you. Have the young people walk around the room, reciting the verse. Then ask them to link arms with one another person and recite the verse together. Then ask that pair to link arms with another pair, and all four recite the verse together. Groups will continue to link up and recite the verse until the whole group is linked up and reciting the verse together.

**Share It:**

“If a blind person leads another who is blind, both of them will fall into a pit” (Matthew 15:14).

**PRAYER:**

Close with prayer, asking God to help us be wise about who we choose to follow. Ask Him to help us choose those who lead the way to life and not to harm.

As the young people leave for the afternoon, remind them that God loves them! Invite them to receive His love and share it in the ways they think, speak, and act toward themselves and others this week.

Part 4: LESSON EXTENSIONS

If you have the time to complete additional activities, or would like to give the young people ideas for activities to carry home and do throughout their week, here are some possibilities:

**Option 1: Scripture Study**

Look up the following Bible verses. What do they mean, and how does their meaning apply to your life?

- Proverbs 2:1-5
- James 2:1-5
- 1 Samuel 16:7
- 1 John 4:1
- 1 Kings 3:9

Here is an example to show you what to do:

**Verse:** James 1:5 “If any of you needs wisdom, you should ask God for it. He will give it to you. God gives freely to everyone and doesn’t find fault.”

**Meaning:** If we ask for God’s help to know the right thing to do, He’s not going to disapprove of us; He’s going to help us.

**How it applies to me:** When I don’t know the right thing to do, I am going to ask for God’s help.

**Option 2: Interview Research**

Interview someone about a time in their lives when they followed someone and it led them into trouble. Perhaps they did something just because the people around them were doing it, and it ended up being a poor choice. You may want to ask questions such as: When did you make a bad choice because you followed the wrong leader? What happened? How did you feel? How did you get yourself out of the trouble? What did you learn from the experience? Write down the person’s answers so you can share what you find with the rest of the group.

**Option 3: Bible Passage**

Read the Key Verse aloud and ask the young people to read it out loud when possible. Encourage them to see it frequently through the week. Encourage them to read it out loud whenever possible. (You might also like to make an enlarged copy of the Key Verse to place on the wall or the room where you are meeting.)

Close with prayer.

**Part 4: Lesson Extensions**

- Introduce the activity, craft, project or game that you have chosen OR present the options to the young people and let them choose what they would like to do.
- Ask the young people to create a plan and rough draft for their craft or project OR play the game that has been chosen.

**Day 2**

- **Part 1: Welcome**
  - Start with a prayer and one of the suggested songs.
  - Use the conversation question that you didn’t use Day 1 to open the session.
- **Part 2: PrimeTime**
  - There may be games or activities in the introduction that can be used on days 2 and 3.
  - Read the Bible passage leaving “blanks” for the young people to fill in with the correct words.
  - Ask the young people to listen carefully, you can also deliberately use wrong words throughout the passage, and have the young people respond with the correct words.
- **Part 3: Wrap Up**
  - Review the key verse for the week. Explore the verse in context and discuss what it means.
- **Part 4: Lesson Extensions**
  - Plan, commence, or continue work on an activity, craft, or project OR play a game.

**Day 3**

- **Part 1: Welcome**
  - Start with a prayer and one of the suggested songs.
  - Conversation: create your own lesson-specific question OR ask children to share something they have learned about Jesus or God during the sessions this week.
Suggestions for extending the program over 5 days a week

Day 1

- Part 1: Welcome
  ✓ Start with a prayer and one of the suggested songs.
  ✓ Use a conversation question to open the session.
- Part 2: PrimeTime
  ✓ Re-read the Bible passage together in several different translations.
  ✓ Use one of the whole-group or small-group activities or discussion questions to explore the passage further.
  ✓ Explore and discuss one of the questions identified on Day 1.
  ✓ Talk about prayer needs and pray together – world needs.
- Part 3: Wrap Up
  ✓ Review the key verse and give young people the opportunity to say it from memory. (An alternative is to have the words written on individual pieces of paper and ask them to put them in order.)
  ✓ Review verses from previous weeks if time allows.
  ✓ Close with prayer.
- Under Part 4: Lesson Extensions
  ✓ Finish the week’s craft or project OR choose another game or activity, if time allows.

Day 2

- Part 1: Welcome
  ✓ Start with a prayer and one of the suggested songs.
  ✓ Use the other conversation question to open the session.

Theme: Who should you follow?

1. Jesus’ teaching makes us look closely at what is important in the life of a Christian, a follower of Jesus. How would you describe what is more important to God than just “following the rules”? (God doesn’t want us to follow rules for “show,” just to make ourselves look good. Instead, He wants us to follow His rules because we know He loves us and has a perfect plan for us. He wants us to obey Him because we trust Him. Our inward heart is more important to Him than our outward actions, but when our inward heart is tuned to Him, our outward actions will reflect that with obedience.)

2. In light of what we’ve talked about, why is “pretenders” an accurate name for the Pharisees? [They are pretending] to honor and follow God, but they are really just following their own rules to look important and “good” to others.

3. In verse 12, Jesus’ followers, called disciples, seem concerned that Jesus is making the Pharisees angry with his words. How does Jesus respond to their worry? Look at verses 13 and 14 to answer. [He tells them not to worry about the Pharisees, that they are “plants that my Father in Heaven has not planted” and “blind guides.” He tells them that if they follow the Pharisees, they will just be led into a pit.]
3. When you follow a bad leader in real life, what are some of the consequences you should be concerned about? (You may need to follow up with some more concrete examples of what a bad leader in real life might look like: someone who wants you to follow their lead and steal something from a store, or tease or play a trick on a kid at school, or break a rule your parents have set. What would be the real-life consequences of following a real-life bad leader like that? With some concrete examples, the young people should be able to respond.)

4. When you follow a good leader in real life, what are some of the good results you can look forward to? (Again, you may need to follow up with some more concrete examples of what a good leader in real life might look like: an instructor who teaches them a new skill, or a neighbor who shows them how to find their way when they are lost, or a parent who takes them to PrimeTime® Plus after school. What would be the positive real-life results of following a real-life good leader like that? With some concrete examples, the young people should be able to respond.)

Say: In the Bible, Jesus teaches about the danger of following the wrong leaders. Let’s read what he has to say.

SCRIPTURE READING:
Be sure that each person has a Bible.

Open with prayer: Dear God, thank You for Your Word. Teach us the importance of finding the right leaders to follow.

Help the young people find Matthew 15:7-20 in their Bibles.

Idea:
Explain to the young people that the first four books of the New Testament—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—are called the Gospels. Gospel means “good news,” and these four books of the Bible tell the story of Jesus’ life and ministry on Earth, which is good news for all who believe in him!

Say: In this Bible passage, the religious leaders of the day come to ask Jesus why he and his followers don’t follow the same religious rules that everybody else does. These leaders, called Pharisees, follow strict rules about what foods they can and cannot eat, when they are allowed to eat and when they are not allowed to eat, how they have to wash and prepare themselves before eating, who they can eat with… rules, rules, and more rules.

Say: Last week we heard John the Baptist call the Pharisees “a nest of poisonous snakes” (Matthew 3:7); this week Jesus calls them “pretenders!” John and Jesus are very bold to point out the shortcomings of the religious leaders of their day. Here’s what Jesus says to them:

Read aloud Matthew 15:7-14.

Say: Let’s talk more about this Scripture in small groups.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION:
Use the following questions to continue your discussion. Be sure the young people have Bibles with them to help them with their answers.

- Part 2: PrimeTime
  ✓ There may be games or activities in the introduction that can be used on various days.
  ✓ Retell the Bible passage leaving “blanks” for the young people to fill in with the correct words
  Asking the young people to listen carefully, you can also deliberately use wrong words throughout the passage and have the young people respond with the correct word.
  ✓ Use one of the whole-group or small-group activities or discussion questions to explore the passage further.
  ✓ Explore and discuss one of the questions identified on Day 1.
  ✓ Talk about prayer needs and pray together – family needs.

- Part 3: Wrap Up
  ✓ Review the key verse for the week. Explore the verse in context and discuss what it means.
  ✓ Encourage the participants to share the ‘share it’ comment this week via text, e-mail, regular mail, or Meme, etc., before the next session.
  ✓ Close with prayer.

- Part 4: Lesson Extensions
  ✓ Plan, commence, or continue work on an activity, craft, or project OR play a game. (Game suggestions can be found in Kid’s Play!, available from Scripture Union.)

Day 3

- Part 1: Welcome
  ✓ Start with a prayer and one of the suggested songs.
  ✓ Conversation: Ask the young people, what is something new they have learned about God or Jesus from this week’s Bible passage?

- Part 2: PrimeTime
  ✓ There may be games, activities and questions in the introduction that can be used on various days.
  ✓ Read the Bible passage in three different translations and share insights these bring to the story.
  ✓ Use one of the whole-group or small-group activities or discussion questions to explore the passage further.
  ✓ Explore and discuss one of the questions identified on Day 1.
  ✓ Talk about prayer needs and pray together – school needs.

- Part 3: Wrap Up
  ✓ Review the key verse and give young people the opportunity to say it from memory. (An alternative is to have the words written on individual pieces of paper and ask them to put them in order.)
  ✓ Review verses from previous weeks if time allows.
  ✓ Close with prayer.

- Part 4: Lesson Extensions
  ✓ Plan, commence, or continue work on an activity, craft, or project OR play a game (Game suggestions can be found in Kid’s Play!, available from Scripture Union)

Day 4

- Part 1: Welcome
  ✓ Start with a prayer and one of the suggested songs.
  ✓ Conversation: Ask the young people, what was their favorite part of the Bible story from this week?
THEME: WHO SHOULD YOU FOLLOW?

Say: We usually get lost because we are unfamiliar with where we are, we aren’t paying attention, we aren’t prepared (such as looking at a map ahead of time), or we are following someone who doesn’t know where they are going!

Say: Today we are going to be talking about how important it is to follow the right leader. Following the wrong leader can lead us into trouble, such as getting lost, or worse. Before we get too serious about it, though, let’s play some games where following the leader, whether good or bad, is part of the fun!

Choose one or more of the following games to play with the young people.

Follow the Leader:
Choose one person to be the Leader. The Leader moves around the space in a way that the other players must mimic. If the Leader hops on one foot, everyone must hop on one foot. If the Leader skips, everyone must skip. Whoever doesn’t follow correctly is out of the game! For even more fun, put on some music and ask the Leader to include some dance moves.

Drawing Challenge:
Give each person a partner. One partner is the Presenter, while the other partner is the Artist. Give each Artist a piece of paper and a pencil or marker, and ask them to turn around and face the back of the room. Show the Presenters an everyday object (such as an apple or a hairbrush). Each Presenter then must describe the object to their Artist partner in such detail that the Artist is able to make an accurate drawing of the object on paper. The Presenter may not name the object at any time… descriptions only! When finished, invite the Artists to share their drawings to see how closely they match the object being described. If there’s time, invite the partners to switch roles and do the activity again with a new object.

Trust Walk:
Give each person a partner. One person is the Leader, while the other person is blindfolded. The Leader must take the other person through an obstacle course (some desks and chairs placed along the path may be sufficient using only words; the partners may not take their arm or physically direct them in any way. Invite the partners to switch roles and do the activity again with a few rearranged obstacles.

Follow up with these questions:
1. Was it easy or difficult to follow the leader in these games? Why do you say that? [Give the young people an opportunity to respond.]
2. What happened to you when you weren’t able to follow the leader, or if the leader didn’t do such a great job leading you? [Answers might include: I got kicked out of the game, my drawing didn’t look anything like the object, or I ran into a desk.]

Idea:
If you have a story about getting lost, be sure to share it!

At the end of each four weeks, distribute the take home pages to help young people further explore the Bible and remember the key verses.
Theme: Who Should You Follow?

As You Prepare:
1. Pray for the upcoming session and for the young people in your program. Pray that they will begin to consider the importance of choosing who they will follow and ask God to open their hearts to following Jesus.

2. Reflect on the people you have followed and emulated over the course of your life, both the positive and the negative role models. What was the experience like in both cases? How did following these people impact your life?

3. Read Matthew 15:1-20. Meditate on verse 14 in the context of the rest of the passage. In what areas does our culture tend to focus on people’s external qualities? Pray for God’s help in relating the Key Verse to the young people’s everyday experience.

4. Choose music for the session.

5. Prepare displays of the Key Verse either on posterboard or computer slide.

Part 1: Welcome
Here are some ideas for welcoming the young people and getting them settled into today’s session.

Music: As they arrive, play songs related to the theme of going the right way. Encourage the young people to sing along once they are familiar with the chorus or some of the verses. Including music in our worship helps us to incline our hearts to God, unite our voices with others in praise of God, and express our love for Him with our whole being.

CONVERSATION: Distribute name tags to the young people if you or they are still learning each other’s names. Check in with the young people to see how they are doing and what is on their minds. You may wish to use one of these conversation starters to get your group talking:

a. What do you always take with you whenever you leave the house?

b. What is the most important thing you have learned from your family?

Last Week’s Key Verse: Say: Who can recite last week’s Key Verse? (“Dear children, don’t let anyone lead you down the wrong path” (1 John 3:7)."

Part 2: Prime Time

Lesson Introduction:
Say: Have you ever gotten lost? Maybe you were a young child, and you got lost at the mall or in the grocery store. Or you got lost walking to your friend’s house or trying to find your way around a new school. Or maybe you got lost in the woods on a hike. Who can tell us the story of a time when you got lost? [Give the young people time to share their stories.]

CONVERSATION: Your group discussion questions:

a. Do you think God is able to lead you even when you get lost?

b. How would you describe God’s leadership in your life?

C. What are some ways you can follow God’s direction in your daily life?

Lesson Extensions
Activity, Craft, Project, or Game
Session Goal:
The young people will understand that there are risks and benefits involved in following a leader.

Key Verse:
“If a blind person leads another who is blind, both of them will fall into a pit” (Matthew 15:14).

Session Description:
The young people will play games that depend on following a leader in order to understand the potential positive and negative results of following a leader.

Bible Background:
In Matthew 15:1-20, Jesus challenges the Pharisees to understand that they have been focusing on the wrong things. For the Pharisees, outside appearances have mattered most: looking good, following the rules, seeming holy. Yet, in reality, it is what’s on the inside that matters most. God is concerned with the condition of our hearts. Because the Pharisees refuse to see things that way, Jesus calls them “blind guides.”

The Pharisees were leaders within the religious establishment. But because they focused on external things, they themselves walked in darkness. Those who followed them couldn’t help but go wrong! Ultimately, both leader and follower would end up falling into a pit.

In our culture, many of us choose heroes based on external factors: appearance, wealth, talents, fame, who they know and what they have. God calls us to follow a different system of values, to look deeper, and to choose heroes and leaders based on what’s inside their hearts.

Thought:
God calls us to follow a different system of values.

Materials:
- Display of Key Verse (either on posterboard or computer slide)
- Optional: Name tags
- Paper
- Pens and pencils
- Everyday objects to draw (such as an apple and a hairbrush)
- Several blindfolds (or scarves)
- Bibles
- CD or online source of songs related to the theme of going the right way

Program Preparation

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<td>What have you learned about Jesus or God during PrimeTime® this week?</td>
<td>What was your favorite part of the Bible story this week?</td>
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<td>Sharing &amp; prayer – school</td>
<td>Sharing &amp; prayer – community</td>
<td>Sharing &amp; prayer – the world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrap Up</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key verse</td>
<td>Key verse activity – repetition link up</td>
<td>Explore the key verse in context.</td>
<td>Say (or arrange) it from memory.</td>
<td>Review and ask yp to explain it</td>
<td>Read the verse in 3 translations &amp; share insights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing prayer</td>
<td>Ask God to help us be wise about whom we choose to follow.</td>
<td>Ask God to help us choose those who lead the way to life and not to harm.</td>
<td>Pray that local leaders will know God through Jesus &amp; be led by him.</td>
<td>Pray that world leaders will know God through Jesus &amp; be led by him</td>
<td>Pray for the young people in their leadership roles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Extensions</td>
<td>Activity, Craft, Project, Prepare YP for Interview Research</td>
<td>Scripture Study</td>
<td>Don’t Follow that Leader!</td>
<td>Persuade Your Peers</td>
<td>Share Interview Research</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Distribute the take home page for Weeks 1-4 to help young people further explore the Bible and remember the key verses.
PROGRAM PREPARATION

Goal
The young people will understand that there are risks and benefits involved in following a leader.

Key verse
"If a blind person leads another who is blind, both of them will fall into a pit" (Matthew 15:14)

Bible passage
Matthew 15:1-20

Materials
Display of key verse, paper, pens and pencils, everyday objects to draw, several blindfolds, Bibles, CD or online source of songs

PROGRAM ELEMENT

Welcome

Music
"I Will Follow" - Chris Tomlin, "My Lighthouse" – Rend Collective

Conversation
a. What do you always take with you whenever you leave the house?
b. What is the most important thing you have learned from your family?

Previous week’s key verse review
"Dear children, don’t let anyone lead you down the wrong path" (1 John 3:7).

Prime Time

Lesson introduction
Getting lost and following the right leader
Game: Follow the leader – follow up questions

Scripture reading
Prayer / Introductory comments / Read Matthew 15:7-14

Whole/Small Group exploration
Small group questions 1 - 5

Group prayer
Sharing and prayer

Wrap Up

Key verse
Key verse activity – repetition link up
Encourage them to share it with friends and others

Closing prayer
Close with prayer, asking God to help us be wise about whom we choose to follow. Ask Him to help us choose those who lead the way to life and not to harm.

Lesson Extensions
Activity, Craft, Project, or Game
Interview Research: Prepare the young people and encourage them to carry out interviews. Include feedback in next week’s program
Time permitting: Don’t Follow that Leader activity

Group prayer
Sharing and prayer – individuals and family
Sharing and prayer – school and community
Sharing and prayer – the world

Wrap Up

Key verse
Key verse activity – repetition link up
Explore the key verse in context. Encourage them to share it.

Closing prayer
Close with prayer, asking God to help us be wise about whom we choose to follow.

Lesson Extensions
Activity, Craft, Project, or Game
Scripture Study
Don’t Follow that Leader
Persuade Your Peers

Share and prayer

Distribute the take home page for Weeks 1-4 to help young people further explore the Bible and remember the key verses.