

2

Guarding the Gates

Worship

We praise God for His great love for us.

POWER TEXT

"Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies" (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20).

KEY REFERENCES

- Luke 1:13-17
- Matthew 3:4-9
- *The Desire of Ages,* chap. 10, pp. 101-103
- student story on page 32 of this guide

OUR BELIEFS

- No. 22, Christian Behavior
- No. 5, The Holy Spirit
- No. 17, Spiritual Gifts and Ministries

OBJECTIVES

The students will:

- **Know** that living a balanced life is an act of worship.
- **Feel** a desire to make their body a "temple of God."
- **Respond** by giving their whole lives—body, mind, and spirit—to Jesus.

POWERPOINT

We respond to God's love when we dedicate ourselves entirely to Him.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Our bodies are the most incredible machinery ever created. We were created by God. We have the responsibility of caring for these bodies of ours. God Himself wants to live in us through the Holy Spirit. We care for our bodies by living healthfully. This includes a healthy diet, exercise, proper rest, pure air, sunlight, trust in God, and abstaining from harmful substances such as alcohol, cigarettes, and harmful drugs. John the Baptist had a simple lifestyle.

This is a lesson about worship.

God made us, died for us, and offers to dwell within us. Taking care of our bodies is a response of worship to Him for His love and salvation.

Teacher Enrichment

"In order to fulfill his mission, he [John] must have a sound physical constitution, and mental and spiritual strength. Therefore it would be necessary for him to control the appetites and passions. . . . By his abstemious life and plain dress he was to rebuke the excesses of his time. Hence the direction given to the parents of John—a lesson of temperance by an angel from the throne of heaven. . . . All who would perfect holiness in the fear of God must learn the lessons of temperance and self-control. The appetites and passions must be held in subjection to the higher powers of the mind" (*The Desire of Ages,* pp. 100, 101).

"Too little attention is generally given to the preservation of health. It is far better to prevent disease than to know how to treat it when contracted. It is the duty of every person, for his own sake, and for the sake of humanity, to inform himself in regard to the laws of life and conscientiously to obey them" (*The Ministry of Healing,* p. 128).

How is caring for my body an act of worship? What can I do to share with my students the joy of living a healthy lifestyle?

Welcome

Welcome students at the door and direct them to their seats. Ask them how their week has been. Encourage learners to study their Sabbath School lesson regularly, and use several minutes to debrief students on the previous week's lesson.

Ask: **What was the most interesting part of the Bible story? What activity did you find the most helpful? Which activity was the most fun?** Invite students to share their experiences and/or the handiworks they created for Sabbath School during the week. (The leader should be familiar with the previous lesson to be able to direct the discussion.) This is also a good time to have students recite the power text.

Have students begin the Readiness Activity of your choice. »

Program notes

LESSON SECTION	MINUTES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS NEEDED
Welcome	Ongoing	Greet students at door. Ask about their week.	
1 Readiness	10-15	*A. The Human Knot* *B. Someone Says* *C. That's Entertainment*	Bibles Bibles, paper, pencils
* Prayer and Praise	15-20	See page 27. Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.	songbooks, offering plate/basket
2 Bible Lesson	15-20	Introducing the Bible Story Experiencing the Story Exploring the Bible	 Bibles, paper, pencils, color markers, crayons Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	10-15	*The Body Temple*	life-size outline of the body with door flaps in strategic places, markers, paper, pencils
4 Sharing the Lesson	10-15	*Temple Maintenance*	activity sheets (see p. 31), whiteboard or chalkboard, markers or chalk
* Closing		A. Prayer and Closing Comments B. Reminder to Parents C. Coming Up Next Week	

1

READINESS ACTIVITIES

Select the activity or activities that are most appropriate for your situation.

A

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles

The Human Knot

Divide the class into circles of no more than eight students. Have each person put their right hand into the center of the circle and grab a hand, then do the same thing with their left hand, making sure that they don't take the same person's hand twice. Now tell them that their job is to untie this human knot in as few moves as possible. Time how long it takes each group to finish.

Debriefing

Ask: **How did it feel being all tangled up? How did it feel to get out of the knot? What strategy did you use to get undone?** Have someone read Hebrews 12:1. **What are some things in our lives that entangle us?** (Encourage comments that relate to lifestyle issues.) **In what way do these things keep us from God? How do you become untangled from these?**

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Accommodation for students with special needs

Consider involving them in observing, discussion, answering questions, if they cannot participate physically with their peers.

B

Someone Says

Play a game of Simon Says with your students, but call it Someone Says. Give commands in a definite pattern that the students become accustomed to. Then change your commands by leaving out "Someone says." Some students will be tricked by the sudden change in what you say.

Debriefing

Ask: **What happened? What tricked you? Why? How difficult is it to make changes? What are some habits that people often want to change?** (habits that keep us from being our healthiest or our best) **What are some ways to go about making the change?** (When we see a need for change, we take it to God. He changes us.)

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Accommodation for students with special needs

Give commands slower so that all students can engage in the activity.

Prayer and Praise

C

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ paper
- ☐ pencils

That's Entertainment

Talk with students about the importance of making wise choices in regard to entertainment. Ask them to identify various criteria that could help them make choices that are pleasing to God. Read together Philippians 4:8 and invite discussion on how they could apply the principles described here to make good choices consistently. Distribute pencils and paper. Have students draw a vertical line on the paper to divide it into two columns. In the first column, have them list entertainment choices they made over the past week that were positive. In the second column they will list entertainment choices they recognize as negative.

Debriefing

Ask: **What relationship is there between what we watch, listen to, and do, and who we are?** (It is important to be constantly aware of whose we are. If we are Christ's, we will spend time doing only the things that are pleasing to Him.) **How is it possible to have a healthy body and an unhealthy mind? If we allow the wrong influences to enter our minds, how can we still worship God effectively?** (Whenever in doubt about whether the choices you make are right or wrong, ask yourself, "What would Jesus do if He were in my place?")

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Accommodation for students with special needs

Allow students who have special needs to work with a partner.

Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). If they have given you permission, share one or two special items from students' Bible study during the week. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.

Suggested Songs

"I'm Gonna Sing" (*He Is Our Song,* no. 10)
"Make Me a Servant" (*He Is Our Song,* no. 126)
"Seek Ye First" (*He Is Our Song,* no. 83)

Mission

Use *Adventist Mission* magazine for the mission story. You can go to https://am.adventistmission.org/mq-children or go to www.juniorpowerpoints.org and click on MISSION.

Offering

YOU NEED:
- ☐ offering plate/basket

Remind the students that God has given us healthy bodies because He loves us. He also blesses us financially so we can help others get to know Him.

Prayer

Close by asking God to help us make good choices so that we can worship Him more effectively. Each time, ask a different student to pray. This way you will encourage all students to take a turn and have prayer for their class.

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

2

BIBLE LESSON

Introducing the Bible Story

Say: **John the Baptist lived a particularly simple lifestyle. That was partly because he had been called to a very special work for God.**

We are called to worship God by living a healthy and balanced lifestyle. Our power text says:

"Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies" (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20). Today we are studying about our awesome body temple.

YOU NEED:

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ paper
- ☐ pencils
- ☐ color markers
- ☐ crayons

Experiencing the Story

Ask: **What is the purpose of a temple?** (The temple is the house of God, set apart for worship.) **What do people do there?** (They worship God.) **How would people react if others spray-painted bad words on churches, synagogues, mosques, gravestones in cemeteries, or shrines in our town?** (They would be offended.) **People care for temples and churches because these buildings are set aside for a special use, to be meeting places with God. Why do we keep the church clean, well maintained, and welcoming?** (We worship God there.) **Why do you think God wants us to think of our bodies the same way as we think of a temple/church?** (Allow several students to answer.) **Who owns our body?** (God) **What are some ways in which people abuse their body temples?** (bad habits, addictions, lack of exercise, poor nutrition, poor entertainment choices, staying indoors all the time, etc.) **Think of your weaknesses/bad habits that cause you to abuse your body, which is God's temple. Create an illustration of your "temple" as you think God would like it to be, including specific things that you need to improve in order to allow the Holy Spirit to live in you.** (You could show students a sample of your work, with drawings or word pictures that illustrate wholesome habits and constructive choices that build up the "temple.") Distribute the materials and specify the time frame for students to complete the activity.

Debriefing:

Ask: **How could we make sure that we take good care of our bodies and prepare them for God's presence?** (trust in God, sufficient rest, healthful living, wholesome entertainment choices, etc.) **What does God's desire to dwell in our body temples tell us about Him and the relationship He wants with us?** (He wants to help transform our lives. He wants our bodies and minds to be open and welcoming temples where He is the center of our worship.)

Let's repeat our power text together (encourage students to find the passage in their Bibles and read it aloud together):

"Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies" (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20).

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3

APPLYING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles

Exploring the Bible

Say: **Let's look at some other texts that tell us how we worship God by keeping our body healthy.** Have volunteers read 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19, 20; 2 Corinthians 6:16, 17; Ephesians 2:21, 22; 1 Thessalonians 5:23, 24.

Ask: **What did you find?** (God lives in us by the Holy Spirit. We are not our own; we were bought with a price. God is preparing us to live with Him.)

Accommodation for students with special needs
Use Bibles with tabs for students who don't know all the books of the Bible so that they can start to become independent in finding the boooks of the Bible.

YOU NEED:
- ☐ life-size outline of human body
- ☐ markers
- ☐ paper
- ☐ pencils

The Body Temple

Have a large picture of a human body, with several doors representing the eye, the ear, the mouth, the nose, the fingers. (For a simpler version of the activity, have students draw the outline of the human body and list the various influences that could enter each of the doors of our senses.) Divide students into groups of three and assign each group a door to the body/mind temple. Then ask each group to list all the influences that can go through that specific door that will either strengthen or weaken and destroy the body/mind. Have students report back to the class.

Debriefing

Ask: **These "doors" represent ways that things enter our body temple. What choices might we make that would help guard the doors to our body and mind and allow in only things that help us worship God?**

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Accommodation for students with special needs
It may be helpful for students with special needs to work with a partner.

4

SHARING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- ☐ activity sheets (see p. 31)
- ☐ whiteboard or chalkboard
- ☐ markers or chalk

Temple Maintenance

Say: **Just as a temple or church in the physical world has to be kept in good working order, so do our body temples. Let's brainstorm a list of things God has provided for us to stay in good working order for Him.** Start a list where all can see. (Answers may include any of the following: Eat a healthy, natural diet; drink lots of water; exercise in the fresh air and sunshine; get sufficient rest; use no alcohol, harmful drugs, or tobacco; trust in God.) After you have solicited the students' answers, write either of the following acronyms on the board or use one of your own that incorporates the eight elements of health as outlined in *The Ministry of Healing,* page 127.

Nutrition	**C**hoice
Exercise	**R**est
Water	**E**nvironment
	Activity
Sunshine	**T**rust
Temperance	**I**nterpersonal
Air	**O**utlook
Rest	**N**utrition
Trust in Divine Power	

Talk about ways students can do each one of these daily. Appoint a scribe to list them where all can see as you talk. For example:

Nutrition—Eat two or three balanced meals a day.

Exercise—Play soccer, run, roller blade, ride a bike, walk, play on the basketball team at least 30 minutes a day.

Hand out copies of the chart on page 31. Encourage each student to keep track during the week of their "temple maintenance" activity and be ready to share next week.

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Accommodation for students with special needs

Students with special needs may need to enlist the help of their parents in order to complete this activity.

Closing

Prayer and closing comments:

Close with a prayer of dedication of the body temple to God.

Reminder to parents:

Say: **Check out the student Bible study guide to find Parents' Pages for your use in family worship, or however you wish to use them to guide your children spiritually. You may listen to the podcast of the lesson online at www.juniorpowerpoints.org/podcast.php?channel=1.**

Coming up next week:

Say: **John questions whether Jesus is the Messiah. Jesus will never leave us because we have doubts.**

	Sabbath	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Nutrition							
Exercise							
Water							
Sunshine							
Temperance							
Air							
Rest							
Trust in Divine Power							

Student lesson

Guarding the Gates

Imagine what John the Baptist might have said to share the reason for his simple lifestyle with someone your age.

John the Baptist stood beside the Jordan River. It was evening, and the people who had been around him all day were finally on their way home.

John talked to God. When he was alone with nature, he felt that God was right there with him. Slowly John realized that he and God were not alone. The young man who had asked him such thoughtful questions a few days ago had hung back from the crowd and was waiting patiently to catch John's attention.

John looked up and smiled, inviting the young man to come closer.

"I want to know why you live so simply," the young man stated.

"There is no easy answer," John replied thoughtfully. "I was dedicated to God for a special purpose before my birth. I am not just trying to be different. I am obeying God's call and purpose for my life. Each person must talk with God about their own life," John began. "But there is an important principle to use in making decisions about how you will live, and how you will worship God."

"Tell me the principle," the young man responded.

"The principle is this," John started slowly, staring into the calm water of the Jordan where the young man had been baptized. "You decided to 'love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength' [Deuteronomy 6:5]. Imagine that you are a special place for the Spirit of God, that you are a tabernacle or a temple. What do you think that principle would tell you about how to take care of yourself?"

Now it was the young man who stared thoughtfully into the Jordan waters. "I imagine I need to make sure the temple is always clean and ready for God. I have seen the priests cleaning the temple. I think it would be important to keep the temple clean."

"Yes," John nodded, "cleanliness is important. That could include how you take care of your body inside and out, couldn't it? The food you eat, the thoughts you allow to stay in your head."

"I see," the young man responded. Thinking of ways to apply the principle was almost like playing a game. "I have watched the priests chase stray dogs away from the gates. I guess it would be important to guard the gates of the temple. What would that be like for my body temple?" He looked expectantly at John.

"Let's see. What are the gates of your body temple?"

"I think that my eyes and my mouth are gates."

John smiled. "What about your ears, your nose, and your fingers?"

"I get the idea." The young man laughed. "I need to keep my body temple clean and in good order. That probably means I need to get enough sleep, like my mother keeps telling me. And I need to eat the fruit and vegetables that will keep me strong and active. And I need to shut my 'mouth gate' to wine and the other substances that could damage my brain."

"Yes," John replied. "Guard all the gates so that nothing comes in that clutters it up or makes it dirty, so that the temple is always ready for the presence of God. That is a way you worship Him, by providing your body and mind as a dwelling place for Him."

Both of them sat in thought for a few moments. "You know," the young man finally broke the silence, "keeping my body and mind as a temple for God makes me the best person I can be."

"Exactly," John smiled broadly. "If you dedicate your entire self to God, and then ask Him to always live in you, you will know to make the choices that He would have you make for your own lifestyle. When you have a choice to make, you can just think about your body temple and its gates. God will give you the wisdom to know how to take care of that temple and what to let in those gates."

The young man had come that evening looking very serious. Now he looked relieved and enthusiastic.

The prophet Isaiah had predicted that John was going to "prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God" (Isaiah 40:3). As John watched the young man climb up from the Jordan riverbed toward his home, he thanked God for the straight path the Spirit had into another heart temple.

KEY REFERENCES

- Luke 1:13-17
- Matthew 3:4-9
- *The Desire of Ages*, chap. 10, pp. 101-103
- No corresponding story from *The Bible Story*
- Our Beliefs, nos. 22, 5, 17

POWER TEXT

"Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies" (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20).

POWER POINT

We respond to God's love when we dedicate ourselves entirely to Him.







Sabbath

DO Do this week's activity on page 19.

Sunday

READ Read "Guarding the Gates" and start learning the power text found in 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20.

TRACK Each day, write in the appropriate box of your NEWSTART sheet (from Sabbath School) how well you are worshipping God in that area of your life. If you did not receive a handout, put the words from the activity on page 19 down the left-hand side of a piece of paper. Put the days of the week across the top and draw lines to make columns for a chart.

PRAY Ask God to help you make choices to worship Him in each area of your life today.

Monday

READ Read Luke 1:13-17. What does this passage tell you about the habits and healthful choices of John the Baptist?

DRAW Draw or trace a picture of a body, remembering that our five senses—touch, taste, hearing, smell, sight—are the five main gates into our body and mind temple.

THINK What types of things should you let in through these gates, or keep out?

PRAY Ask God to help you understand what is going into your temple.

Tuesday

READ Read 2 Corinthians 6:16 and 7:1.

THINK What do these verses teach about how you can allow God to live in your body and mind temple?

WRITE In your Bible study journal, write your thoughts about how these verses relate to your life and your worship of God.

TRACK Fill in your NEWSTART chart. How are you doing?

PRAY Ask God to guard one specific gate into your body temple today.

Wednesday

READ Read Proverbs 4:20-27. Think about your entertainment choices such as music, videos, TV, magazines, the Internet, and books.

THINK How could you keep your heart and mind clean "above all else," knowing that all your actions are based on what you feel and think?

LIST List the positive things that you allow into the mind chamber of your body temple. List the negative things that sometimes get in as well.

PRAY Ask God to help you make good entertainment choices.

Thursday

READ Read 1 Corinthians 3:16.

PLAN Based on what you have learned this week, write out God's plan to improve the treatment of your body temple.

PRAY Ask God to send His Holy Spirit to make the changes you need to make to care for your body temple.

WRITE In your Bible study journal, write out a prayer to God asking Him to make the changes you have outlined.

Friday

READ Read 1 Corinthians 10:31.

SHARE With your family, create a care manual for the human body. List as many positive ways to care for the wonderful body God provided as you can think of.

PRAY Commit your mind/body temple to God and ask Him to live there.

TRACK Before going to bed, look over your NEWSTART sheet. What is the Holy Spirit changing in you? What did you learn about yourself this week? Be prepared to share what you learned in Sabbath School tomorrow.