

4

Clearheaded or Beheaded?

Worship

We praise God for His great love for us.

POWER TEXT

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship" (Romans 12:1).

KEY REFERENCES

- Matthew 14:1-13
- *The Desire of Ages,* chap. 22, pp. 214-225
- student lesson on page 52 of this guide

OUR BELIEFS

- No. 8, The Great Controversy
- No. 22, Christian Behavior
- No. 12, The Church

OBJECTIVES

The students will:

- **Know** they worship God by keeping their bodies free of harmful substances.
- **Feel** that God can help them avoid getting involved with harmful substances.
- **Respond** by living for God each day.



We worship God when we offer Him our bodies and minds.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

King Herod has put John in jail. On Herod's birthday he gives a big party. There is much drinking and feasting and dancing. Salome, the daughter of Herodia (Herod's wife), dances before him, and he is so impressed that he promises to give her anything she might ask for. Her mother, who is looking for revenge on John, tells her to ask for the head of John the Baptist on a tray. The king is very sorry about this request, but thinks he has to honor his promise. So he orders that John be beheaded. During all this time the king's mind is unbalanced from becoming drunk on wine.

This is a lesson about worship.

We worship God when we keep our bodies and minds free from mind-altering substances. Herod, who had been impressed with John's preaching, could not respond to God's spirit while he was drunk.

Teacher Enrichment

Herod Antipas was the son of Herod the Great, king of Judea and all Palestine when Jesus was born. When Herod the Great died, his domain was divided among his sons. Herod Antipas was made ruler of Galilee and Perea. Antipas was known for his cunning. Jesus called him "that fox" (Luke 13:32). He was ambitious and lived in luxury. . . . When he married Herodias, John condemned him for his adultery (see *SDA Bible Dictionary,* pp. 479-481).

"The king was dazed with wine. . . . He saw only the hall of pleasure, with its reveling guests, the banquet table, the sparkling wine and the flashing lights, and the young girl dancing before him. In the recklessness of the moment, he desired to make some display that would exalt him before the great men of his realm" (*The Desire of Ages,* p. 221).

"He who puts the intoxicating cup to his lips makes himself responsible for all the injustice he may commit under its besotting power. By benumbing his senses he makes it impossible for him to judge calmly or to have a clear perception of right and wrong. He opens the way for Satan to work through him in oppressing and destroying the innocent" (*The Desire of Ages,* p. 222).

How can refraining from those things that may cloud my mind benefit my relationship with God?

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. Brown Water* *B. Disorientation*	Bibles, cups, water, screen, food coloring
* Prayer and Praise	15-20	See page 47. 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, two platters, fruit Bibles, whiteboard or chalkboard, marker or chalk
3 Applying the Lesson	10-15	*Scenario*	Bibles
4 Sharing the Lesson	10-15	*Pass it On*	art supplies
* Closing		A. Prayer and Closing Comments B. Reminder to Parents C. Coming Up Next Week	pledge cards—see page 145 (optional)

1

READINESS ACTIVITIES

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

A

YOU NEED:

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ water
- ☐ cups
- ☐ screen
- ☐ food coloring

Brown Water

Give each student a cup of water with their name on it. Ask your students to drink half of the cup of water. Then ask them to place their cups on a table behind a "screen" so the cups are hidden from their view. Place several drops of different colors of food coloring in each cup. The water should turn brown. Do not tell the students what it is. Next invite them to take a closer look at the water and ask the students how they feel about drinking the rest of the water. Be sure that no one takes a drink.

Debriefing

Ask: **How would you feel about drinking the brown water that looks dirty and contaminated? Why didn't you want to drink the water after it changed color? How was it different? How is the pure water like the bodies that God has given us? What happens to our bodies when we allow harmful substances to enter them? Let's read Romans 12:1, our power text for today.**

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship" (Romans 12:1).

In other words,

We worship God when we offer Him our bodies and minds.

B

Disorientation

Have students stand and find a spot in the classroom that allows for sufficient room to move without touching someone else. Ask them to spin for a few seconds until they hear the signal to stop. Next ask them to walk in a straight line.

Debriefing

Ask: **How did you feel after you finished turning? How did others look when they tried to walk? What were they able or unable to do?** (walk in a straight line) **What else can disorient us in a similar way?** (using illegal drugs, overdosing on certain medicines, etc.) **How effectively can you follow directions in this condition? How can you make good decisions when your brain is impaired and confused by alcohol, drugs, and other harmful substances? How do the choices you make regarding the things you take into your body or the people you follow impact our relationship with God? Why is it important to keep your bodies and minds healthy and clean from harmful substances. How can you bring glory to God in your body temples? Remember:**

We worship God when we offer Him our bodies and minds.

Accommodation for students with special needs

Some students with special needs may not be able to participate in this activity. Have them observe the other students and participate in the debriefing.

Prayer and Praise

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

"Behold What Manner of Love" (*He Is Our Song,* no. 42)
"Seek Ye First" (*He Is Our Song,* no. 83)
"Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus" (*He Is Our Song,* no. 45)

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

Say: **Today as we give our offering let us remember those who need help in overcoming their addictions. Our offerings help to send the message of how to worship God.**

Prayer

Before you have prayer, allow your students time to pray silently for those who are suffering with drug, alcohol, or other addictions. 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.

Notes

2

BIBLE LESSON

Introducing the Bible Story

Say: **God loves us and wants to communicate with us. Communication includes our being able to hear Him and our being able to answer back in worship. In differing degrees all drugs affect consciousness. Some, such as caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol, are legal and available. Others, such as heroin and cocaine, are illegal. Whether they are legal or illegal, they all work in the same way. They either imitate or interfere with neurotransmitters, the chemicals that carry messages between brain cells.**

When our consciousness is affected by these substances, it is more difficult for us to "hear" the Holy Spirit speaking to our minds. Today we are going to talk about how one man lost his life because another man allowed alcohol to dull his senses and shut out God's voice.

YOU NEED:

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ two platters
- ☐ fruit

Experiencing the Story

Prepare in advance a platter with fruit. Cover it and have it available when it is time for this activity. In addition have an empty platter ready to use.

Say: **Remember a time you were rewarded with your favorite food item, perhaps when your mom prepared your favorite treat for a special occasion.** Ask: **What are some foods and drinks that help us stay healthy? What are some foods and drinks that have harmful effects on our health? The choices we make in eating and drinking have a serious impact on our ability to think and make decisions as you will see in our story today. I have here some fruit and as I walk around with the platter you are welcome to take a piece.** (Before serving the fruit to the students, make sure no one is allergic to the fruit. Once you shared the fruit with the students, take out the empty platter.)

Say: **Think of one thing you would choose to receive on a platter if a wealthy person would be willing to grant your wish.** (Allow students to share their answers.) **In our story today someone was granted a wish on a platter. The story is about an innocent prophet who lost his life as a result of the foolish choice of a drunken king. Let's read together the story in Matthew 14:3-12.** (Have students read aloud one verse each.)

Ask: **How did king Herod make such a terrible choice as to order the beheading of the prophet? What does this story teach about a person's ability to make choices when using alcohol? Why is it important that we keep our bodies pure and clean from any toxic substance?** (So that we may be able to make a clear distinction between right and wrong.) **How does our relationship with God benefit if we abstain completely from using drugs and toxic substances?** (Our relationship with God grows stronger and deeper when we keep our body temple pure because we are able to distinguish between right and wrong and the Holy Spirit enables us to do what is right.) **Let's say our power text for today:**

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship" (Romans 12:1).

3

APPLYING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- Bibles
- whiteboard or chalkboard
- markers or chalk

Exploring the Bible

Ask: **What happened in this story? Why did Herod change his mind about killing John?** (He wasn't able to think clearly.)

Say: **Although the Bible doesn't say Herod was drinking, other books, including *The Desire of Ages,* by Ellen G. White, do. Let's see what the Bible says about the reasons for not using harmful substances.** Have volunteers look up and read the following texts and list the reasons where all can see: Judges 13:3-5 (it affects the unborn); Isaiah 5:22, 23 (causes woe and unfairness); Ephesians 5:18 (leads to debauchery or intemperance); 1 Corinthians 10:31-33 (may cause others to stumble). **The Bible doesn't specifically mention drugs or tobacco, but it does talk about caring for our bodies and minds.**

Ask: **What should be our criteria for whatever we do? Let's read Philippians 4:8, 9 and 1 Corinthians 10:31.** (Think about/do only things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, praiseworthy; whatever you do, do to the glory of God.)

Accommodation for students with special needs

Use the 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 books of the Bible.

Scenario

Read the following scenario to the students:

Say: **Miroslav has been very depressed lately. Everything seems to be going wrong, at home, at school, and in his personal life. And he just can't seem to do anything right. A kid down the block has offered him some pills as a way to feel good and forget his problems. And lately that offer is looking good. However, Miroslav doesn't think that's what God would want him to do.**

Debriefing

YOU NEED:
- Bibles

Ask: **If he comes to you for advice, what will you tell him?** (Pills and other substances are not the solution. They won't make the problems go away.) **What verses would you share with him for encouragement?** Have someone read Romans 12:1 and Proverbs 3:6. **How can these verses help him to solve his problem?** Accept all reasonable responses. **Other than giving advice, what could you as a friend do to help Miroslav?** (Spend time with him; invite him home and to activities where he will meet people who are drug-free; introduce him to a caring adult who can help him; pray for and with him.) **Remember:**

We worship God when we offer Him our bodies and minds.

4

SHARING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- art supplies

Pass It On

Have the students get into groups and brainstorm ideas for creating an advertisement or commercial to help others their age avoid getting involved with alcohol, drugs, and other harmful substances. Pass out art supplies and/or props and tell students to work on their ideas and creations and be prepared to present them to the class. (If the results are quite good, you may want to contact your local government Health Department to give them the opportunity to see what the students created.)

Another option: Invite your church's health ministries leader to come and talk with the students about active ways they can be involved in your community or a local school.

Remember:

We worship God when we offer Him our bodies and minds.

Closing

YOU NEED:
- pledge cards—see page 145 (optional)

Prayer and closing comments:

Encourage students to choose "accountability buddies." Ask them to pledge to each other that if or when they are tempted with harmful substances they will call each other for support in making the healthy choice. (Optional pledge cards on page 145.)

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: **Jesus calls His first disciples. We each have been called by God to share the gospel with our friends.**

Notes

Student lesson

Clearheaded or Beheaded?

Have you ever tried to talk to someone on the phone, but been interrupted by a bad connection? It's disappointing. That disappointment is what God feels when He tries to communicate with people whose minds are clouded with harmful substances that interfere with the connection.

Day after day John the Baptist waited in his gloomy dungeon cell. John thought a lot about his days beside the Jordan. He remembered going for walks in the early morning and hours of quiet talking with God. He remembered preaching to hundreds of people, who later lined up for baptism. He also remembered the many priests and leaders who mumbled and argued and wished he would just go away.

One of the reluctant listeners had been Herod Antipas himself—the ruler of the local area. John recalled noticing him on the edge of the crowd, listening.

"Repent and be baptized," John had preached. "Repent of your selfish ways—your lying, your pride, your adultery. Don't be like Herod, taking his own brother's wife for himself. 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near' [Matthew 3:2]."

John had watched Herod out of the corner of his eye. The king had obviously been trembling. When the others left, Herod waited and talked with John. From that time on, the two had spoken many times.

At home Herod began to act differently. Herodias, the wife he had taken from his brother, was not pleased with the changes. "You have to quit talking to that prophet," she had demanded.

"But," Herod had sighed, "what if he is right? What if you should return to your husband?"

"Quit talking like that," Herodias had snapped. "Be a man and arrest the fellow for insulting us. Throw him into the dungeon. If you don't, I won't speak to you!"

Herod did as he was told, not by John, but by Herodias, the wife of his brother.

Days passed. Herod believed John was a prophet, but he couldn't bring himself to release him. And he couldn't bring himself to kill the man either, as Herodias wanted.

Herodias continued to plot to get rid of the prophet she thought was trying to ruin her life. Finally her chance arrived. A large party was thrown for Herod's birthday. The tables were loaded with rich food and intoxicating drinks. Around the tables sat people Herod wanted to impress and who wanted to impress him.

Herodias encouraged him to eat and drink and forget his problems. "Here," she suggested soothingly, "have another drink and relax. I have a surprise for you."

Herod's conscience shut down for the night as musicians gathered off to the right. As the beat of the music throbbed and filled the room, a young woman began to weave her body as she danced closer and closer to the king.

Salome, Herodias and Philip's daughter, was the surprise entertainment. She held the complete attention of Herod and his guests. Herod felt the same way he had when he first saw Herodias. He was not thinking logically. He wasn't thinking at all.

When the dancing stopped, Herod called for Salome. He wanted to impress her, to appear powerful and generous, but his words came out a little slurred. "Delightful, delightful, your dance was delightful. Whatever you want—tell me anything you want," he grinned foolishly.

Some of the guests who could still think looked at the girl a little surprised. How would she respond to this unreasonable generosity? Would she accept it as just that, or would she take advantage of this drunken stepfather who was not thinking straight?

Salome ran to her mother for instructions. Herodias whispered in her ear, and the girl returned to Herod, who was still muttering, "Up to half my kingdom . . ."

The room quieted as Salome stood fearlessly before Herod. "Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist." The girl stood still without a smile.

Herod began to laugh. Salome was drunk, too, and making a joke, he decided.

"There's nothing to laugh about!" Fire flashed from her eyes. "I want his head on a platter, now!"

Herod looked beyond her at his important guests, who waited for his reaction. He looked at Herodias, then back at Salome's fiery eyes. The drunken king had no power left to decide for right. He raised his hand for a servant to take a message to the prison. Before the night was over, Salome and Herodias would have a bloody head on a platter, and Herod would have given up his last bit of conscience.

KEY REFERENCES

- Matthew 14:1-13
- *The Desire of Ages,* chap. 22, pp. 214-225
- No corresponding story from *The Bible Story*
- Our Beliefs, nos. 8, 22, 12

POWER TEXT

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship" (Romans 12:1).

POWER POINT

We worship God when we offer Him our bodies and minds.







Sabbath

DO Do this week's activity on page 33.

Sunday

READ Read Romans 12:1 and this week's story, "Clearheaded or Beheaded?"

CREATE Find a clean piece of paper. Tear off a little all around the edges so the edges are ragged. Write your power text, Romans 12:1, in the center of the paper. Roll the paper in slightly from both edges like a scroll. Place it where you will see it all week.

PRAY Thank Jesus for His sacrifice for you.

Monday

READ Read 1 Corinthians 10:31 and Proverbs 3:5, 6.

LIST In your Bible study journal, list all the things you can do to glorify God.

THINK What does it mean to you to "trust in the Lord with all your heart" and to submit to God "in all your ways"? (Proverbs 3:5, 6).

PRAY Ask God for the understanding you need to worship Him in all you do.

Tuesday

READ Read Matthew 14:1-13.

DISCUSS With an adult you trust, discuss how John's life was an act of worship to the end. Then discuss ways that your life can be an act of worship every day.

PRAY Ask God to help you worship Him by offering Him your entire being—body and mind.

Wednesday

READ Read Mark 6:17-28.

LIST List the different emotions people at Herod's party may have experienced that caused them to do and say what they did.

REVISE In your Bible study journal, rewrite or retell the story with the people responding in more positive ways. How would the story have ended if the people would have made wise choices of entertainment, food, and drinks?

PRAY Ask God to give you wisdom so that you can honor Him in your choices.

Thursday

READ Read 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20.

FIND Find as many facts as you can about keeping your body and mind clear.

CREATE Start a scrapbook that you can share with others who are interested in making choices that will honor God.

PRAY Ask God to lead you to the friends who need your advice to adopt good habits.

Friday

READ Read Romans 13:13, 14.

THINK Caffeine, tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs hinder a person's ability to choose what is right. How did King Herod's use of alcohol interfere with his ability to make wise choices?

WRITE In your Bible study journal, write a note to God. Tell Him that you choose not to use those substances that interfere with your communication with Him.

SHARE Share your commitment with someone and ask them to be accountability partners with you—someone that would encourage you to always make wise decisions.

PRAY Pray that you will make a decision daily to worship God by the choices you make about your body.