

middle school



Lesson 7 / October 18, 2020

# Split Decision

By Jill Meek

for use as  
**STEP 1** 

**Lesson 7**

**Focus:**

Be careful whose advice you take.

**Lesson 7**

**Bible Basis:**

1 Kings 12:3-16

**Lesson 7**

**Memory Verse:**

Listen to advice and accept discipline, and at the end you will be counted among the wise.  
—Proverbs 19:20

**Students will consider their sources of information in an age of information overload and “fake news” as they explore being careful when taking advice.**

**Materials:**

None

The idea of “fake news” has been talked about often lately. In a digital age, anyone can post news, information, and articles—even if they’re not rooted in truth or fact.

For example, let’s say you see a headline on Instagram that catches your eye—a recent study shows how sugar is good for your health! You share it to your feed, and several of your friends share it to their feeds. When you take a closer look at the article and sources, though, you realize it isn’t a scientific article, and there isn’t research to back up the conclusion. The article was designed to get your attention, not to share true information.

➤ **Have you ever experienced a situation like this—when you or someone you know has shared information without checking to see if it’s true?** (Answers will vary.)

➤ **How can you tell what’s real and what’s fake? What have you learned in school or elsewhere about which news or research sources to trust?** (Answers will vary. Students may or may not have had classes on this topic, or may have received ad hoc advice from teachers or advisors. Students may have been told something specific by a friend or family member, or simply picked up their views on what to believe by observing what sources that person trusts.)

➤ **Why might it be important to know what information we can trust?** (Accept all reasonable answers. Give students an opportunity to really explore this. They may make connections to information influencing how we vote or what we buy. Or students may reference the need for good science for medicine, technology, etc.)

➤ **When was the last time you took advice from an untrustworthy source? What happened?** (Be prepared to share your own experience. Students should share without naming names or detailed specifics.)

**Some information sources just aren't trustworthy, and having an honest source is critical when you are basing your own reactions and choices on information received. Let's see what the Bible has to say about listening to and heeding advice and instruction.**

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher's guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

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# Split Decision

for use as  
**STEP 4** 

**Lesson 7**

**Focus:**

Be careful whose advice you take.

**Lesson 7**

**Bible Basis:**

1 Kings 12:3-16

**Lesson 7**

**Memory Verse:**

Listen to advice and accept discipline, and at the end you will be counted among the wise.  
—Proverbs 19:20

**Materials:**

None

**Sometimes news, information, advice, and opinions come at us so fast that we don't even realize how much content we've consumed or how it may impact us.**

Have students work individually or in pairs to make a list of all the news, information, advice, and opinions they receive in one day. If your class is meeting online, you can either use a breakout group feature on your video software, or you can work together as a group.

Ask them to think through their day, from the moment they wake up until they go to sleep, consider every time they receive information or a message of some kind, and write that down. For example, checking their phone for the time, weather, Instagram updates, hearing reminders from parents in the morning, talking with friends or overhearing peers on the bus, listening to announcements at school, learning at school, being coached in sports, watching YouTubers, viewing ads, listening to music, etc.

➤ **What are some of the sources of information you've listed?** (Answers will vary. See paragraph above for some possible examples.)

➤ **Which sources do you value most? Why?** (Answers will vary. Students may have reasons for most valuing opinions of those closest to them, or celebrities, or experts, or artists, etc.)

➤ **How do the messages you receive each day impact your thoughts and actions?** (Accept all reasonable answers. Students may or may not have considered this, but the messages we receive impact our view of ourselves, what we wish to be, how we see our world, how we treat others, the things we want and buy, etc. We also tend to consume more of whatever messaging source we like best and begin to seek out other similar voices.)

**Christians have a way to sort through all the messages we receive to find the truth—by lining everything up to what we know about God and His ways as revealed in Scripture.**

**The Bible has something to say on just about every topic you can imagine. You can use a concordance in your Bible or a larger version if you have one at home.**

**There are also great online resources available that can help us identify what Scripture says about different topics—*YouVersion* and *BibleGateway* are two of them. For instance, if you want to know what the Bible has to say about friends, you can go to a Bible search app, enter “friends” in the search tool, and you will find not only specific uses of that word in the Bible, but also you can look under a topical index for that subject.**

Challenge your students to think about the information they are receiving throughout each day. Ask them to consider specifically some advice they have heard from a source they most value and identify what messages they are hearing from that source. For instance, they might want to evaluate some song lyrics from a favorite recording artist, etc. Be sure your students understand that if they have trouble finding Scriptural instruction about that topic online, they can ask a parent or spiritual mentor for help.

Close in prayer.

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