

# PARENT/STUDENT WISE CHOICES GUIDE

## 11th Grade Conversation

### OBJECTIVE

Have a conversation with your teen while preparing a home-cooked meal together that has multiple ingredients. Have fun doing this. During this time together, talk about making wise choices, especially when no one is looking. This is called integrity. You will encourage them that integrity is what defines our character and helps us become more like Christ.

### THE 411

Our teens are bombarded with messages and influences to make decisions that are for their best interests only. Rarely do society and our culture convey what we do in private matters. Character and integrity are not valued like they used to be. That is why it is so important to help our teens understand that the choices we make in private really do matter, because they are a reflection of who we are. We must help them understand that integrity and character matter, because Christ calls us to a higher standard and to imitate Him. Help your teen to stop asking what is wrong with this choice if everyone's doing it, and instead ask what is right with this choice.

### SUGGESTION

You will need to first figure out what meal you want to cook together. Your teen can be part of this process if you want. You will also need to go to the store to purchase all the needed ingredients for this meal. Have your teen join you for that too if you have time. Then arrange the time when you will cook the meal together. Bring out all the ingredients and start having fun cooking together.

The idea of cooking something together is an example of how integrity plays such a huge role in our characters and in our lives. Just as when a dinner is served, most people see only the end product of the meal. They didn't see all the ingredients and how it was prepared. In the same way, our lives are made up of many daily choices behind the scenes that nobody else sees. However, God does see them, and they do matter. This is the development of our character and our integrity. Who are we when no one is looking? As you make this meal together, here are some discussion points to bring out.

### DISCUSSION

#### SAY SOMETHING LIKE:

I wanted to talk with you a little bit about integrity.

How would you define integrity? (Who are you when no one is looking?)

Why do you think integrity matters in our lives? (It is developing our character and who we are.)

Why would integrity matter to God? (It's also a heart issue.)

If it is also a heart issue, how did Jesus respond to the Pharisees who tried to look good on the outside with great prayers and were religious? (He called them whitewashed tombs.)



READ: **Matthew 23:27 (NIV)**

“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men’s bones and everything unclean.”

SAY SOMETHING LIKE:

How can poor choices in private eventually destroy us or relationships in our life? (Tiger Woods)

Just like this meal we are making for the family, which they will see as the end product on the plate – and hopefully it will taste good – they didn’t see all the ingredients that it took to make it. In the same way, our lives are made up of choices every day that are behind the scenes that no one sees, but they make up our character and integrity.

READ: **Proverbs 10:9 (NIV)**

“Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but whoever takes crooked paths will be found out.”

ASK:

What is that saying? (Our choices in private matter. The choices we make in private will eventually become public.)

What are choices that develop our integrity? (Telling the truth; not cheating on homework; when we say something, we follow through on it; knowing what is right and doing it; etc.)

*This could be a time to finish the conversation and eat together with the family. After the meal or while it is baking, finish this conversation. Here is an example how to conclude:*

SAY SOMETHING LIKE:

I don’t know whether you know this or not, but I pray for you every day and the choices you will make. My prayer is that you continue to honor God with your life. Here is a great thing to think about when contemplating a decision or choice. So often you might be asking the wrong question, such as: What’s wrong with this if everyone is doing it? Instead ask yourself: What’s right about this?

EXAMPLE:

You are driving through McDonalds, you order a meal and pay with a \$10 bill. You get back more than \$20 in change. What do you do?

*Ask what’s right about keeping the change? Is this the right thing to do?*

You are home alone and wanting to get on the Internet and are tempted to look at some porn. What do you do?

*Ask what’s right about looking at porn? Is this the right thing to do?*

Add your own examples that will connect with your teen.

ASK:

What is the key ingredient to developing strong integrity in life? (Accountability in our life)

ENCOURAGE:

Encourage your teen to have an accountability partner in their life to ask the tough questions and to pray about those questions with one another. (An accountability partner could be someone in their small group, a youth leader, a youth pastor, a good friend.)

