

DOCTOR STRANGE

How Do I Choose What is Good?

EDGE NIGHT AT A GLANCE



Scripture

Proverbs 25:16, 28; Ecclesiastes 5:10; Sirach 18:30-32, 37:27-31; Matthew 16:24-26; Galatians 5:22-24; Titus 2:11-12



Catechism

1809



Resources

Spotify: "ES - A Great Marvel" (spotify:user:lifeteen)

Edge Support August 2021: "Super Save or Super Fail" (lifeteen.com)

GOAL

The goal of this Edge Night is to use the example of Dr. Strange to show the youth how temperance frees us to choose what is good and for the youth to begin fostering this virtue so that they can more freely choose what is good in their own lives.

GATHER

The youth watch an interactive game that leads them through different outcomes of different choices. The purpose of this game is for the youth to have fun and continue to think about how they make decisions and the consequences of actions.

PROCLAIM

The following are the main teaching points of the Proclaim:

- The virtue of temperance helps us to moderate our desires and actions so we can freely choose the good God desires for us, not just what we want.
- Doctor Strange began to exercise the virtue of temperance after he realized what was truly worthwhile in the world, and it continues to be a necessary part of his duty as a protector of Earth.

- In a culture that glorifies having an excess of whatever we desire, temperance helps us imitate Jesus by overcoming our excessive desires so that we might be free to do and choose what is good as He did.

BREAK

The youth receive an Origin Story handout focusing on things they may often spend too much time or attention on and how they can learn to exercise temperance in the midst of those moments. The purpose of this activity is to give the youth concrete ways to learn temperance in their daily lives.

SEND

The youth reflect on a variety of Scripture verses that speak of the goodness of God and the good things He desires for us. The purpose of this is for the youth to continue to understand that God wants what is good for them and temperance helps them to find that good.

WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Choose one thing this week that you spend too much time doing and spend some of that time doing another good activity instead.

Notes: _____

DOCTOR STRANGE

How Do I Choose What is Good?

EDGE NIGHT SET UP

SET UP

Download the video for the Gather activity and print copies of the *My Origin Story - Temperance* handout for the Break activity. Videos and handouts can be found on the *August 2021 Edge USB* or online at lifeteen.com under Edge Support: *August 2021*. For each of the Edge Nights in this semester that teaches a specific virtue, the youth will be given a handout that has to do with their own “origin story.” These handouts provide ways to reflect and process how to apply the specific virtue to their lives as middle schoolers. The goal is that they learn to apply the virtues while they are still young and form good habits that influence them for the rest of their lives, hence the title “Origin Story.”

Add to the set environment for the semester by adding cutouts or posters of Dr. Strange. Also create a poster with the word temperance on it along with its definition found below, if you have Hispanic/Latino youth also use the Spanish translation.

Temperance: Moderating our desires and actions so we can freely choose the good God desires for us, not just what we want.

Templanza: Moderar nuestros deseos y acciones para que podamos elegir libremente el bien que Dios desea para nosotros, no solo lo que queremos.

SUPPLIES

The following is a list of supplies needed for the Edge Night:

- G: “Super Save or Super Fail” video
- G: Projector screen or TV with audio
- B: *My Origin Story - Temperance* handout, one per youth
- B: Pens or pencils, one per youth

ASSIGNMENTS

Use the following list to assign core members to specific tasks:

Set Up: _____, _____, _____

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How Do I Choose What is Good?

EDGE NIGHT OUTLINE

GATHER

Edge Night Introduction (5 min)

Welcome the youth, introduce any youth who are there for the first time, and begin in prayer. Give a brief overview of the topic of the Edge Night, using the following as an example:

When we are faced with decisions, it is important that we know how to choose what is right and to go about doing what is good in the best way. That is practicing the virtue of prudence, that we learned about last week. This week we are going to look at the good things in our lives and the choices we have to make in how we spend our time. We will learn how to practice the virtue of temperance. In order to help us understand the virtue of temperance, we are going to look at Dr. Strange, a superhero whose life was turned upside down when he lost the use of his hands. His example will show us the sacrifice and discipline it takes to live a life of temperance but also the happiness that comes when we learn how to moderate our desires and actions.

Weekly Challenge Check In (5 min)

Ask any youth who are willing to share about their experience with the weekly challenge from the previous Edge Night: Take home your notecard from the Send activity and discuss what you wrote down with your parents or another trusted adult and work with them to make a prudent decision.

Alternative Timeline (10 min)

This game is played in small groups.

1. Download and set up the video “Super Save or Super Fail” from the *Resources* section. Throughout this video, the youth will see the consequences of different actions.
2. As the video begins, instruct the youth to do a certain action based on what choice they think should be made — for example, if the youth thinks “x” should be done, they do air karate chops, or if they think “y” should be done, they pretend like they are flying.
3. Youth should be shown the outcomes from each decision, and where their choice led.
4. There is no winner of this game, it is intended solely to be a fun activity.

PROCLAIM

“Doctor Strange” Proclaim Teaching (10 min)

The teaching can be found on pages 46 to 49. The following main points are covered in the teaching:

- The virtue of temperance helps us to moderate our desires and actions so we can freely choose the good God desires for us, not just what we want.
- Doctor Strange began to exercise the virtue of temperance after he realized what was truly worthwhile in the world, and it continues to be a necessary part of his duty as a protector of Earth.
- In a culture that glorifies having an excess of whatever we desire, temperance helps us imitate Jesus by overcoming our excessive desires so that we might be free to do and choose what is good as He did.

BREAK

Origin Story: Temperance (10 min)

Break the youth into their small groups, begin in prayer, and then give each of the youth a copy of the *My Origin Story - Temperance* handout found on the August 2021 Edge USB and online at lifeteen.com under Edge Support: *August 2021*.

Allow the youth to spread out around the meeting space and instruct them to think through each question as it applies to them and write down their answers.

Small Group Discussion (10 min)

After the youth have completed the handouts, gather them back together and use the following to foster a time of discussion:

- *Whip Around Question:* Would you rather have the superpower to speed up time or slow time down?
- Of all the things you spend time doing, what do you spend the most time doing? Did this surprise you? Why or why not?
- What is something you wish you could spend more time doing?
- Do you think you spend too much time on one of these activities? Why?
- What is one way you could apply the virtue of temperance to your day to moderate how you spend your time?
- How can the virtue of temperance help you grow in your relationship with God?

SEND

All the Good Things (20 min)

Bring the youth back to the large group. Play soft reflective music in the background and use the following to introduce this time of prayer:

God wants good things for us in our lives. God created us out of love and wants us to experience His love and goodness every day of our lives. But sometimes we can become distracted and forget about God, or forget about His love. We can be preoccupied by the things we want, or just the busyness of daily life that we lose sight of what God might want for us. The virtue of temperance can help us to take a step back and make more space in our days and hearts so we can grow in our relationship with God. It is through this quieting that we might learn of the goodness He desires for us — so let us take time now to be reminded of all the good things God wants for us.

Ask the youth to spread out around the room so they are at least an arm's length away from one another. Ask them to take a few deep breaths, close their eyes, and listen to the following Scripture verses as they are read.

Begin with the Sign of the Cross and a simple prayer asking Jesus to open the ears and the hearts of all the youth to know and experience God's love and goodness.

Read aloud the following Scripture verses:

"For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope." (Jeremiah 29:11)

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)

"But God shows His love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)

"Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart." (Psalm 37:4)

"Blessed are you that hunger now, for you shall be satisfied. Blessed are you that weep now, for you shall laugh." (Luke 6:21)

Ask the youth to open their eyes. Project the verses and read through them one more time asking the youth to pick one verse that stands out to them.

Next, read through the verses again, this time focusing on one verse at a time. After reading one verse, ask the youth to stand up if that verse stood out to them. If any youth are willing, ask them to share with the group why that verse stood out to them. Do this for each of the verses.

End this time of prayer by reminding the youth that God wants good things for them and the virtue of temperance will help them live in this goodness every day.

Close the Edge Night by praying a Hail Mary as a large group. Following the prayer, give the youth their weekly challenge.

DOCTOR STRANGE

How Do I Choose What is Good?

EDGE NIGHT PROCLAIM

GETTING STARTED

This teaching is provided to give you an example of how to present this topic in an age-appropriate way, making it relevant to middle school youth. If the youth are ready to take it deeper, incorporate a few of the *Going Deeper* call-out boxes, picking the ones the youth would relate to the most. If there are Hispanic/Latino youth in the youth group, incorporate the applicable suggestions from the *Hispanic Inculturation* call-out boxes.

TEACHING GUIDE

All in Moderation

Ask a few youth to share their response to the following question: If you could only eat one food for the rest of your life, what would you choose? Write your own thoughts here:

- Food is good, and it is a gift from God that is both delicious and necessary for our survival. But there is such a thing as too much of a good thing. Imagine if you really only could eat that one food for the rest of your life, you would be lacking in many other essential nutrients. (And, likely you would get really sick of that food.) In eating that food in excess, it loses its delicious taste.
- This can be true for almost every good thing in our lives. If we have too much of it, it is no longer enjoyable and can sometimes make us feel worse.

Give the youth a few other practical examples of this. For example — if you love running but you run too much you can hurt your body, if you love social media but you spend too much time on social media it can make you feel foggy or negatively affect your emotions, if you have a best friend that you spend too much time with you can sometimes get annoyed with one another. Write your thoughts here:

- It is not bad to have a lot of good things in our lives, but from these different examples we can see that too much of a good thing can knock our lives out of balance and actually make those good things less enjoyable or even become destructive. That is why it is important to learn how to moderate or find a good balance of even the good things in our lives. This also allows us to have more time and space to listen to what God desires for our lives.



Hispanic Inculturation

It is not wrong to desire material things, but an extreme excess of desire for material goods can be harmful to our spiritual lives. In many Hispanic/Latino households it is very common for there to be an excess of various things such as food storage containers, blankets, bedding, sheets, towels, home decorations, and kitchen utensils. It can also be very common for Hispanic/Latino families to bring attention to how beautiful various things are in their homes when there are visitors. Oftentimes Hispanic/Latino youth see their family taking better care of, protecting, and praising these items than they do their spiritual lives. With that said, take the time during the Edge Night to challenge the Hispanic/Latino youth to find opportunities in their homes to direct praise and glory to the Lord first, and slowly move away from an excessive attachment to material things.

- That is where temperance comes in. The virtue of temperance helps us to moderate our desires and actions so we can freely choose the good God desires for us, not just what we want. (CCC 1809)
- But there is more to temperance than not eating too much of what we like. While moderating food, drink, and other desires is part of it, the real core of temperance is self-mastery. It is about not being enslaved to our desires, but instead being the master of them. Temperance can lead us to true freedom.
- Temperance is tied to the will — that part of us that makes choices and acts. As human beings we have free will, we are able to choose what we do in every situation. Temperance helps strengthen our will so that we can be free to say “yes” to what God wants for us, “no” to things that are sinful, and even “no” to good things that we don’t necessarily need. (CCC 1731)
- You may have already been practicing temperance without even knowing it when you sacrifice one thing for something else that is better. For example, you sacrifice time on social media to study for a test so you can do well, or you sacrifice time with your friends to practice for the upcoming big game.
- Sometimes we have to give up doing what we want in order to get to a greater goal. This is the heart of temperance, learning how to direct our will and our choices to make the best possible decisions. (CCC 1838)

Doctor Strange

- We can look to the character of Dr. Strange to see an example of the virtue of temperance.
- In the story, Dr. Strange is a very well known but self-absorbed doctor who chases fame above all else. All he cares about is success and his own reputation. However, after a terrible accident, his hands get so wounded that he can no longer do his job as a doctor.

- After this accident that upended his whole life, Dr. Strange goes searching for healing so that he can return to his profession and luxurious life. In his quest for healing He encounters the Ancient One who introduces him to magical powers and trains Dr. Strange in mystic arts.



Hispanic Inculturation

There are many different traditions that Hispanic/Latino youth may be familiar with — some of them good and some of them potentially problematic. It is important for youth to understand that just because it is a tradition or cultural thing, that does not mean they have to, or should, participate in it. For example, in many Caribbean cultures, voodoo and witchcraft can have some connections to certain aspects of Christianity. While those practices are a part of the culture, that does not mean it is something the youth should participate in because voodoo and witchcraft should not be practiced for any reason. As you discuss Doctor Strange and choosing what is good, allow the Hispanic/Latino youth to reflect on common cultural things they see in their households and whether those things are helping or hindering their relationship with the Lord.

- At a certain point, Dr. Strange is faced with a decision. He can use his skills to return to his life as a doctor where his one focus was growing in fame and fortune, or he can use his new found skills to protect the Earth from dark forces and evil.
- It is in this decision that we see an example of the virtue of temperance. While it would not have been bad for him to return to his life as a successful doctor (although he would need more temperance to moderate his desires for fame and fortune), he chooses a greater good. He uses mastery over his will that desires to a certain degree to go back to a life of luxury to choose what he knows is a greater good for both himself and for others. In choosing to let go of pursuing one good he is free to do something even better.

Free for Good

- God wants us to use the virtue of temperance to be free to choose the greatest good for our lives. (CCC 1733)
- The more we practice temperance in small ways — like saying no to eating more than we need to, or saying no to spending excessive amounts of time on social media — we will then be able to practice temperance in bigger decisions in our lives.

Give the youth a few examples from your own life where practicing temperance in small ways has helped you to use temperance to make bigger decisions. Write your thoughts here:
