

LESSON 1

Seek the Truth, Choose the Good, Love the Beautiful.



Learning Objectives

In this lesson you will:

- Explore our faith in God, who is good and who created us good.
- Appreciate the gift of conscience, God's voice within that helps us choose what is good and avoid what is evil.
- Learn how Saint Maron sought the truth, chose the good, and loved what is beautiful in life.

Opening Prayer



O God, help me to always seek the truth, choose what is good, and love what is beautiful. Amen.



Opening Activity

Scan the QR code to access the online resources.

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Introduction

Life is about choices. What clothes should I wear? What foods should I eat? What does God want from me? But the biggest choice we make involves following Jesus. Throughout the Gospels, Jesus calls various people to follow him, for he is “the way, and the truth, and the life” (Jn 14:6). While Matthew was sitting at the tax collector’s booth, Jesus approached him and said, “Follow me.” Matthew followed Jesus immediately and left behind all that he had so he could be with God. Jesus is the most true, the most good, and the most beautiful person to ever live, and he is asking us to follow him.

Reflection Questions

1. *Jesus invites you each day to follow him. How do you show that you follow Jesus?*
2. *Matthew gave up his wealth to follow Jesus. What keeps you from following Jesus better? What can you give up?*



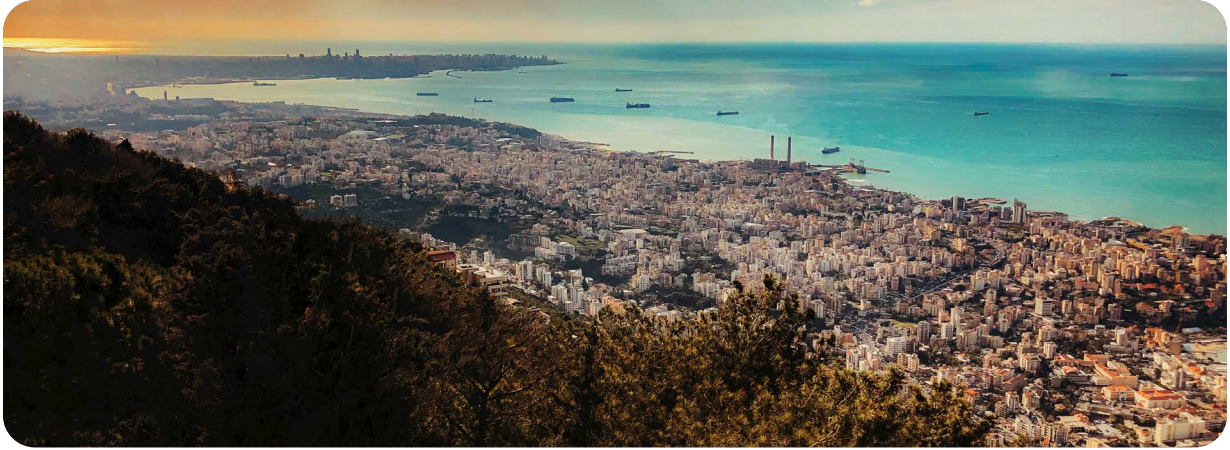
Point **1**

The Maronite Catholic Inheritance and Tradition

As Maronite Catholics, we have a wonderful inheritance, a rich Tradition. An inheritance is a valuable gift that has been handed down to us. We Maronites received our Faith from Christ, his apostles, and the Church. We also inherited our Lord's words that help us in our everyday living centered on faith in Christ. Jesus is the Messiah and the Son of God. We follow Jesus and his teachings. His rules for everyday life involve choosing between right and wrong and following the paths to what is true, good, and beautiful. The Maronite Way helps us to seek the truth, choose the good, and love what is beautiful in his creation.

? Reflection Questions

1. *What gifts has God given you?*
2. *What is beautiful in your family, in your life, and in your relationship with God?*



Point 2

How to Seek the Truth, Choose the Good, and Love the Beautiful

We learn about what is true, good, and beautiful by studying the Bible. The Word of God is true, so without error. The **truth** speaks to our hearts, and is a virtue that can be seen in our actions and words.

The first book of the Bible is called Genesis, which means “the beginning.” The creation story tells us how God created everything—the sun, moon, land, ocean, plants, animals—and they are good. And when God created humans as male and female, he said they were ‘very good.’ The **good** involves living in harmony with God’s plan for the world, being wholesome, kind, and honorable.

The **beautiful** is something that shows how amazing God is and makes us happy when we see it. Beauty is a sign of God’s presence throughout creation, such as an amazing sunset. The beautiful can be seen with our physical senses, but also invisibly with our mind and our heart.

When we seek the truth, choose what is good, and love what is beautiful, we stay close to God. He is invisible but present in everything he has made.



Point **3**

How to Live like Jesus

We are **responsible** for our thoughts, words, and actions. God wants us to choose good. To grow in goodness, we need his help. God helps us by giving us his life, his grace. The more we seek God and choose the good, the more we become holy and more like Jesus. With grace, we can grow in **holiness**, just like the saints. (See page 19 “My Role Model”)

God also gives us our conscience to help us grow in holiness. Our **Conscience** is the voice of God within us, which helps us to know right from wrong. Our conscience helps us to seek the truth, choose what is good, and love what is beautiful.

Even when life seems hard, we know that God can conquer the bad and bring good out of it. As Saint Paul said, “We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.” (Rom 8:28).

Activity 1

Finding Beauty in Nature



*Go outside as a class and find three beautiful things.
Share why they inspire you and make you happy.*

Activity 2

Draw the Days of Creation

Directions: *God created many beautiful things when he created the universe. Pick one day of Creation and read about it in your Bible. Then, using the space below, draw what God created on that day.*

- **Day 1:** Genesis 1:1-5
- **Day 2:** Genesis 1:6-8
- **Day 3:** Genesis 1:9-13
- **Day 4:** Genesis 1:14-19
- **Day 5:** Genesis 1:20-23
- **Day 6:** Genesis 1:24-31





Maronite Wisdom

“O Lord, adorn our souls with your truth and sanctify us by your Holy Gifts. May you dwell among us, that we may be secure.”

— *Book of Offering: Anaphora of Saint John Maron*

My Role Model

Saint Maron, Father of the Maronite Church



Saint Maron is a very special role model of someone who sought truth, chose the good, and loved what is beautiful. He was a priest who lived on a hilltop that once had been the site of false worship of idols. Through his relationship with God and his prayers, he drew others close to God. He changed the site into a place where people could worship the true God. Saint Maron's feast day is February 9.

Saint Maron, pray for us.

Recall



Choose answers from the words below to complete each sentence.

1. The Genesis story of creation tells us that God created everything _____.
2. We are _____ for our thoughts, words, actions, and the decisions we make.
3. The Bible is the Word of God and is _____ and therefore has no error. This term describes something that is trustworthy. This term speaks to our hearts.
4. The voice of God within us, which helps us “to do what is good and to avoid evil” is our _____.
5. When we make good choices, we grow in _____; we become sharers in the life of God.
6. When we say something is _____, we mean it is pleasing to our senses, and our mind, and our heart.

Conscience • Good • True • Beautiful • Holiness • Responsible



Weekly Journal

This Sunday, before taking part in the Divine Liturgy, take time to listen to your conscience. What does it say about how you chose to act during the past week?

Write: What good choices did you make this week?

Concluding Prayer



O God, as we celebrate the memory of our father Saint Maron, bind us to you, that we may always walk with you in seeking the truth, choosing what is good, and loving what is beautiful in your creation. As faithful people in your Church, may we always be protected from evil. We give you glory and praise, now and for ever. Amen.

Climbing the Mountain

Bonus Materials for Students & Teachers



Gen 1:24–25; 27–31

Six Days of Creation and the Sabbath

And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.” And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” God said, “See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Reflection

God created the world in seven days. Notice that after each day of creation, “he saw that it is good.” Then when he created man and woman, he saw that “*it is very good.*” The Genesis story shows us that God created everything and that all creation is good, and that humanity, its culmination, is very good.

Saintly Quote

“From the creation, learn to admire the Lord! Indeed the magnitude and beauty of creation display a God who is the creator of the universe. He has made the mode of creation to be our best teacher.” — *Saint John Chrysostom*

Questions

1. What do you think God is saying to you personally in the story of creation?
 2. How can you better appreciate and admire God’s creation?
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Reaching the Summit

For Teachers & Parents



“God created the world to show forth and communicate his glory. That his creatures should share in his truth, goodness, and beauty – this is the glory for which God created them.” — CCC 319

Good and evil

The word good means being in harmony with God’s plan for the world. Good is wholesome, kind, and honorable. It means loving what is right. It means to follow Christ.

The word **evil** refers to the absence of good. Evil is selfish, mean, and sinful. It means loving what is wrong. It means not being like Christ. When we listen to the Holy Spirit, we can stay on the right path.

There are three elements of what makes any action good or moral: the object (what is done); the intention (why the act is done); and the circumstances (where, when, how, with whom, and the consequences). A good action is good in all three elements.

Choice

Conscience is the voice of God that helps us do what is good and avoid evil. No one knows exactly where conscience is located in a person, but we can feel its effects. When we do something that is good, we feel a sense of happiness. When we do something wrong, we feel shame. The freedom to choose good or evil makes us responsible for our actions, thoughts, and words. Therefore, we cannot blame God or anyone else when we do wrong. *God wants us to grow in goodness, love what is beautiful in creation, and seek truth.* The more we choose good, the more we grow in holiness. We become more like Christ.

Discussion Questions

1. How can you help a child form a conscience to conform to Christ and his teachings?
 2. What are some ways you can discern good from evil?
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Words to Know



Q. What is **beautiful**?

A. A sign of God's presence throughout creation, such as an amazing sunset. The beautiful can be seen with our physical senses and with our mind.

Q. What is **conscience**?

A. Conscience is the voice of God within us, which helps us to know right from wrong. When we examine our conscience, we ask, "What have I done wrong? How can I do better?"

Q. What is **good?**

A. Good means being in harmony with God’s plan for the world. Good is wholesome, kind, and honorable. It means choosing what is right. It means to follow Christ.

Q. What is **truth?**

A. What is accurate and complete. Telling the truth is an important part of justice—right relationships with others. When we tell the truth, we do what is right to others. When we do not tell the truth, we hurt others and violate the eighth commandment.



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