

Attentiveness

Parents

Parents' prayer

Even as adults, we struggle with attentiveness. A pressing deadline, a demanding schedule or other anxieties can preoccupy our mind so that we miss what others are trying to communicate. As you prepare to guide your child through this lesson on attentiveness, don't let anything distract you from first drawing near to the One who hears every word you share with Him. Use this sample prayer, or build your own prayer using the verses from "Scripture-guided prayer for parents."

Sample prayer

Wonderful Counsellor, thank you for being a God of interactive communication. I am amazed that You, the Lord of the universe, communicates with me personally. Thank you for speaking to me and listening to me! The Bible tells the story of Your desire to commune intimately with mankind (Exodus 25:8, John 1:14, Revelation 21:3). What a privilege it is to know that You want to know us and be known by us. As the God of all wisdom, You promise to share Your wisdom generously (James 1:5). Please find me willing and worthy as Your student and Your friend (Psalm 25:12,14). My desire is to be attentive to Your voice. I pray that You would show me any sin in my heart that is interfering with my communication with You (Psalm 66:18). Humbly I ask that You would forgive me for the times that I have been inattentive to Your leading in my life or slow to respond to Your gentle prompting. My desire is to have a heart that is sensitive to the guidance of Your Spirit of Truth (John 16:13). When You speak to me in the night or the day, through Your Word, through nature or through other avenues, may my ears be tuned to You so that I cannot miss Your voice. Listening carefully to those around me is also so important. When my children come to me wide-eyed and excited, telling a story, help me to listen with genuine care and attention. When my spouse or another friend speaks, help me to listen with a focused mind. When others offer genuine advice or criticism, please help me to be open to accepting their input so that I may be wise in the end (Proverbs 19:20).

I bring before You and I pray that You will build into him/her an attentive and teachable spirit. Please give him/her ears that are ready to listen to You and to others and protect from the temptation to ignore anything You bring to his/her

attention. I ask that would develop a deep respect for You. As learns to revere You, I trust that You will grow in him/her a spirit that is humble and contrite – one whom You esteem (Isaiah 66:2).

I ask that early in life would learn to practice effective listening skills. As grows and matures, may he/she become someone who is "... quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry" (James 1:19). Listening is such a crucial aspect of learning and obedience. I pray that will reach his/her full potential spiritually because he/she has learned to be attentive to Your voice. In school, sports, music or whatever avenues in which pursues competence or excellence, I pray that he/she will be teachable and humble so that he/she makes wise use of the talents You have given him/her.

Thank you for giving us directions for living life. Whether we turn to the right or to the left, give us ears to hear Your voice saying, "This is the way; walk in it" (Isaiah 30:21). For this is the desire of our family: to walk in Your ways so that we can influence the world for You. We pray together, "Teach [us] to do Your will, for You are [our] God; may your good Spirit lead [us] on level ground" (Psalm 143:10). Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for parents

Read and pray through one or more of the selected Scriptures under each heading. Focus on listening to God and allowing His Spirit to direct you as you pray.

Character focus

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate Him and desire to hear His voice.

Proverbs 2:1-9 | Isaiah 55:2-3 | Jeremiah 29:11-13 | Daniel 10:10-12 | John 10:25-27

Heart search

Acknowledge your inattentiveness to God and others.

Psalm 66:16-20 | Proverbs 1:22-23 | Proverbs 12:15 | Isaiah 29:13-14,23-24 | Luke 6:46

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have seen attentiveness exhibited in your family.

Family requests

Ask God to help you and your family to listen effectively to His voice and to others.

Deuteronomy 30:19-20 | Proverbs 19:20 | Proverbs 22:17-19 | Isaiah 48:17-18 | John 16:13-15

Kids talk with God

God is ready to help! These prayers will remind your child that God is pleased when they try to be more attentive and that He will help them develop this attribute. Alternatively, use the verses under "Scripture-guided prayer for children" as a basis for guiding your child in prayer.

Sample prayers

Dear God, please help me to listen to Your voice when You speak to me. Amen.

Dear God, please help me to listen when my parents speak to me. Amen.

Dear God, listening is hard work. Please help me to do a good job. Amen.

Dear God, thank you that You are my shepherd. Please help me to be like a sheep who knows Your voice. Amen.

Dear God, please help me to be attentive like a (select animal of your choice) when it is stalking prey. Remind me to be this focused when You, or my parents, teachers or friends, talk to me. Amen.

Dear God, please forgive me for not listening to (name the person) as I should. Amen.

Dear God, I find it distracting and hard to listen when (fill in the blank with an appropriate moment, e.g. "when I am playing with my toys and Mom asks me to do something"). Help me to be attentive even during difficult times. Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for children

Read through one of the selected Scriptures under each heading and help your child pray based on the verse you read. Encourage them to listen to God and to allow His Spirit to guide them as they pray.

Character focus

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate Him and desire to hear His voice.

1 Samuel 3:8-10 | Ecclesiastes 5:1-2 | Jeremiah 29:11-13 | John 10:27

Heart search

Acknowledge your lack of attentiveness to God and others. Proverbs 12:15 | Proverbs 18:13 | James 1:19

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have been attentive.

Personal requests

Ask God to make you, your siblings and parents, attentive to Him and others.

Proverbs 3:5-6 | Proverbs 18:15 | Isaiah 48:17-18 | John 14:26

Speak a blessing

When our children "slip up," it's usually all too obvious. But often the moments when they "did it right," go unnoticed. Learn to watch for situations that demonstrate that your child is making progress in the area of attentiveness. Then, use the ideas listed here to encourage them.

- What a good listener you are, _____.
- What an attentive boy/girl you are, _____.
- Thank you for listening so carefully, _____.
- Thank you for being quick to listen, _____.
- You were also slow to speak and slow to become angry. I am proud of you and so is God.
- I notice that when I talk to you, _____, that you look at me as you listen. Good job being an attentive listener.

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

Freeze-frame game (physical activity)

To play this game, invite your children run and dance around until you call "Freeze-frame." They must immediately stop what they are doing, freeze in position and listen to you. Have some fun two-liner jokes ready to tell them each time they stop and listen. If you play this game often, your children will be prepared to stop what they are doing and listen whenever you call "Freeze frame!"

Introduction

Opposites

Attentiveness vs Distraction or Unconcern

Translation

Spanish: Atención

Japanese: Chūi-ryoku

Go to the root

Attentiveness is derived from the Latin, *attentus* which means to be heedful or observant. It is a word form of attend and in this sense it is an active verb. Can you see where attentiveness is more than just not being distracted but actively seeking to understand what you are focusing on?

What does it mean

Showing the worth of a person or task by giving my undivided concentration

Nature Story

Attentiveness Nature Story VID (2:36)

Poem

Attentiveness Poem VID (5:15)

Bible Connection

God gets mad!

Read

Jeremiah 32:30-34

Questions for discussion

1. What did the Israelites do to make God mad?
2. What did they do instead of listening to or responding to God's discipline?
3. What makes your mom or dad angry with you?
4. What can you do to let your parents know that you want to obey them?

Key concepts

The people of Israel made God mad because they refused to listen to His advice or to change their ways when He disciplined them.

They set up idols and worshipped them, even though God had commanded them not to. Just as it makes your parents angry if you turn your back to them - or cover your ears or ignore them when they are trying to talk to you - it makes God angry when we choose not to listen to His commands. God is pleased when His children listen and obey, and so are your parents.

Bible Memory Verse

Heb 2:1

God's Way vs My Way

God's Way

I am demonstrating godly character when:

- I listen carefully to God
- I listen carefully and look at others when they speak
- I listen and follow instructions

And God is pleased!

My Way

When I am tempted to:

- ignore God's instructions
- not give my full attention to others when they speak
- insist on doing things my own way

I know that I need to go to God for help.

The I WILL's of Attentiveness

To practice Attentiveness I will:

- look at people when they speak to me
- ask questions when I do not understand
- sit or stand up straight
- not draw attention to myself
- keep my eyes, ears, hands, feet, and mouth from distractions

Monday Evening

Closed ears and hard hearts

Read

2 Kings 21.

Questions for discussion

1. How do you feel when someone doesn't listen to you?
2. What did the people do to make God angry?
3. What did God say He would do as a result of the people not listening and obeying His commands?

Key concepts

God promised to care for the Israelites as long as they were

careful to do everything He commanded them and to keep the whole law that He had given to Moses to give to them. One of these laws was, "You shall have no other gods before Me" (Deuteronomy 5:7).

When Manasseh was king of Israel, he led the people astray. He rebuilt altars to other gods that his father had previously destroyed. He even built altars to other gods right in God's temple. This made God angry. He was angry that the Israelites had not listened to Him and were not being careful to obey His commandments. He had no choice but to punish the Israelites for their sin (2 Kings 21:9). God said that He was going to send such disaster on them that "the ears of everyone who hears of it will tingle" (2 Kings 21:12).

Tuesday

Object Lesson: Microscope

A microscope is almost never focused on the subject when you first look through it. You need to adjust the knobs to bring the item into focus. The same is true with learning. It isn't enough to be present in the schoolroom in order to be attentive. Staying focused on a lesson requires actively adjusting yourself to stay focused on your spelling words rather than what is going on outside the window.

* Have your students experiment with a microscope and see how small an area on which it can focus. Next give them a written seat assignment from one of your lessons. Have them pretend to be a microscope and focus on just that assignment.

Discussion: Family Connection

Start this game by asking the family if they are breathing. Immediately they will think about their breathing. Some may even look at their chest or focus on the air going in and out of their mouth. Point out that they had been breathing all day without thinking about it but when it was mentioned, it got their attention. Now have them look for things that are circles in the room. Let them point them out for everyone to observe. Ask them if they had noticed that there were that many circles in the room. Explain how you find what you focus on. Next look for rectangles. The same can be done with colors. For the rest of the day, challenge each person to be more focused on a shape or a color as they go through

their day. At the end of the day or sometime in the following day, have them report back the how many things they noticed. Did they notice circles even when they weren't really looking for them? Relate this exercise to selective attention.

Discussion: Family Connection

Sherlock Holmes was a fictional crime detective created by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. His powers of observation were the key to solving crimes. By paying attention to detail, he was able to draw conclusions that became vital clues to solving criminal mysteries.

The character of Holmes is likely based on Joseph Bell, a medical lecturer at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. Bell emphasized the observation of detail before making a diagnosis and was a pioneer of forensic science. Conan Doyle worked for Bell as a clerk at the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary.

Sherlock Holmes admonished Dr. Watson with the classic quote: "You have seen but not observed." He recognized observation as a primary investigative skill. Sherlock Holmes use attentiveness to observe what others overlooked.

Songs

Attentiveness Song VID (6:20)

Poem

Attentiveness Poem VID (5:15) - Review

Bible Connection

Knowing the Shepherd - Jesus

Read

John 10:22-30.

Prior to reading, talk with your kids about their pets, or about a friend or relative's dog, cat or horse. Remind them that animals know their owners because they are familiar with their owner's voice.

Questions for discussion

1. If Mom or Dad (or Grandma or Grandpa, or another special friend) came in the front door and said, "Hello!" before you could see who was there, would you know who it was?
2. Why do you know these people's voices?
3. How do animals know their owners'?
4. How can we follow Jesus?

Key concepts

Because animals know the voice of their owners, they willingly follow them. When people asked Jesus how they could know for sure if He was really from God, He said, "My sheep know My voice and they follow Me." God knows we are His followers if we listen to Him and if we follow His commands. Just as you know 's voice because you have heard it often, in order to become familiar with God's voice, we must spend time with Him.

Bible Memory Verse

Heb 2:1

The I WILL's of Attentiveness

Review

Tuesday Evening

Eager listeners

Read

Mark 6:30-35 and Psalm 25:12-14.

Questions for discussion

1. How can you tell that the people were eager to listen to Jesus?
2. Why do you think that so many people were eager to listen to Jesus?
3. Do you think that Jesus still speaks to people? If so, how?
4. How can Jesus tell if you are an eager listener?
5. Who does God speak to? (See Psalm 25:12-14.)

Key concepts

The people were so eager to hear Jesus teach that they went to a very remote place to catch up with Him. The Bible

says that they ran to where He was going to be. They left their toys and games and their work and food to go and hear Jesus talking.

God still speaks to people today. He speaks to people who "fear him." To fear God means to treat Him with great honour and respect. We can show God that we honour and respect Him by putting away our toys, turning off the television and choosing to spend time talking with Him, listening to Him and reading our Bibles. God is pleased when we honour Him in this way.

Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Memory game with a deck of cards

Several pairs of cards are shuffled together and then laid out upside down in a grid. The students take turns turning over 2 cards to find the matches. They need to pay attention when the other students are playing so that they know where the cards are laying.

Discussion

Definition:

The dictionary explains that being attentive is paying particular notice of something or someone that needs attention. It is the trait of being considerate and thoughtful of others. You can show the worth of a person or task by giving your undivided attention. It ALSO is viewed as a trait of being observant and paying attention. There's a lot to learn about the world and about each other—stay attentive and take your cues! The opposite of ATTENTIVENESS is DISTRACTION or UNCONCERN.

- When have you found yourself being very attentive? What caused your ATTENTIVENESS?
- Identify three careers or activities which require a great deal of ATTENTIVENESS to details. Explain why.
- Describe your career plans and why you will need ATTENTIVENESS.

Discussion

Attentive Senses

When you exhibit to others that you are **ATTENTIVE** you are paying attention to cues from the environment or from the individuals with you; you are noticing, watching, listening, or attending closely. You are viewed as **ATTENTIVE** when you give something your complete attention. It helps you keep track of all the details to be considered.

- Draw a picture that depicts you watching and listening attentively. Show with detail the situation in which you are acting this way.
- How can you be more **ATTENTIVE** with the help of your five senses?
 - Use your five senses to describe what you experience right now:
 - I taste...
 - I can smell...
 - I can see...
 - I can hear...
 - I touch...

Activities: Scramble your senses

Mr. (or Mrs.) Potato Head has removable parts that are related to all 5 senses. Use a Mr. Potato Head to set up some games to focus on each of the senses. They can be activities that deprive a sense (remove his eyes if you are using blindfolds) or focus on a sense (only insert the sense you are using).. Some examples:

- blindfolded students must fold paper according to vocal instructions
- go outside and have students listen and identify what they hear
- make a recording of various sounds and have the students guess what they are
- hide items in paper lunch bags or cloth bags and let students feel the bag to guess what's inside
- create some vials of smelly foods and see if they can identify what they are
- make some simple candy that has a flavor that doesn't match the color (i.e. the cherry flavor is yellow and the grape flavor is orange) and have the students try to identify the flavor. Find out if they are paying attention to the color or the taste.

Once you have completed several of the activities, relate attentiveness to training your senses to stay focused on what is important.

Discussion

Too Much of a good thing

Make a list of things that can happen when someone is not attentive such as missing an assignment or distracting another student. Once that list is complete, start a discussion on too much attentiveness. Is it possible to be too focused? Of course! Think about being so involved in an activity that you do not smell smoke or notice that a child needs attention. Have the students add to the list times when someone may have been so focused on something that they forgot something else.

Bible Memory Verse

Heb 2:1

Songs

Attentiveness Song VID (6:20) - Review

Poem

Attentiveness Poem VID (5:15) - Review

The I WILL's of Attentiveness

Review

Wednesday Evening

Mary and Martha learn from Jesus

Read

Luke 10:38-41.

Questions for discussion

1. Who did Jesus say "chose what was best"?
2. What did Martha do wrong?

3. What things make us too busy to listen to Jesus?
4. Other than being too busy, what else can distract us from listening to God or others?

Key concepts

Mary sat at Jesus' feet and listened to what He had to say. She valued His teaching and focused her attention on spiritual things – listening to what Jesus was saying. But her sister Martha was preoccupied with all the things she had to do – getting the meal ready and the house clean. She asked Jesus to send Mary to help her. But Jesus said that listening to Him was more important than all the other things Martha wanted to get done. Just like Martha, we can become too busy with day-to-day activities to read our Bibles and listen to what God wants to teach us.

- Can you hear what one DJ is saying if you are tuned-in to another frequency?
- How can we tune-in to what God wants to tell us?
- How do we tune out the things that Satan wants us to believe?

To further develop this concept, ask your kids to list some things Satan would want them to believe and compare their answers with what God says instead (i.e. Satan says it is OK to lie if it is only a small lie. What does God say?)

Close your time by praying and asking God to help you tune in to His voice.

Bible Connection

Closed ears and stubborn hearts

Read

Isaiah 30:1-21.

Questions for discussion

1. What did the people do to make God angry?
2. What did God say He would do to the people who chose not listen and obey His commands?
3. Do your parents give you a warning before disciplining you?
4. Does God act in the same way?
5. If you are sorry, do your parents forgive you?
6. What did God say He was going to do and would do?

Key concepts

God was not pleased with the people of Israel because they were being stubborn and doing their own thing instead of looking to God for direction. They were rebellious, deceitful and unwilling to listen to the Lord's instruction. God warned them that because of their behaviour He was going to allow their sin to "shatter" their lives. The amazing thing about God is that He never gives up on us – He wants to be gracious and to show compassion. When we turn from our sinful ways and repent of our sin, God promises to give us guidance, saying "This is the way; walk in it" (Isaiah 30:21).

Bible Memory Verse

Heb 2:1

Songs

Attentiveness Song VID (6:20) - Review

Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

Name that tune

Have your children listen to music, then ask them to identify the song. Use a CD player, or play songs on a musical instrument. If you are driving in the car, hum familiar songs or listen to a CD.

Fun with listening exercises

Introduce extra hilarity into your listening exercises by throwing some "curve balls" at your kids, rewarding them for following instructions.

For example, you might say something like, "Place your ear on the table if you would like chocolate ice cream for dessert. Place your chin on the table if you would prefer vanilla ice cream."

Radio frequencies

While listening to the radio, intentionally tune the radio poorly. Then use the following questions to initiate discussion.

Questions for discussion

- Is it enjoyable to watch or listen when things are not tuned correctly? Why not?
- When you are communicating with others, are they always tuned-in to your communication?
- Does this make communicating with them easy or difficult?

Friday

Poem

Attentiveness Poem VID (5:15) - Review

The I WILL's of Attentiveness

Review

Thursday Evening

Open ears and a soft heart

Read

2 Kings 22-23:25

Questions for discussion

1. How old are you?
2. How old was Josiah when he became king of Israel?
3. Did he obey or disobey God?
4. What did Josiah do when he heard the "Book of the Law" (God's directions) read aloud?
5. What did Josiah ask his helpers to do?
6. Why did God decide not to punish Israel during the time that Josiah was king?
7. What did Josiah do to lead the people in doing right?
8. What was special about Josiah?
9. What do you think God would say is special about you?
10. Do you think that God would say you have a soft heart?

Key concepts

Although Josiah was very young when he became king of Israel, he chose to obey God and His commands. He was eager to please God and was very sorry when he found out that Israel had not been obeying God's commands. He served God with all his heart and soul and strength. He destroyed all of the places where the Israelites were worshipping idols and other gods. The Bible says that neither before nor after Josiah was there a king who so wholeheartedly followed God. Josiah had a soft heart and did his very best to honour God.

Attention Grabber Activity

Eyes and ears in action

Another way to have your children hone their listening skills is to have them practice using their sense of hearing outdoors. If possible, find a location away from the urban buzz. Have your children close their eyes and listen. After listening for a minute, have them call out what they heard so that you can record it. Repeat this step two to four times, then have them open their eyes and see if they can find everything that they heard.

Bible Memory Verse

Heb 2:1

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic / Scripture in my life today?

Heb 2:1

Songs

Attentiveness Song VID (6:20) - Review

Poem

Attentiveness Poem VID (5:15) - Review

The I WILL's of Attentiveness

Review

Friday Evening

Listening to parents and wise teachers

Read

Proverbs 4:1,5-6,20-22.

Questions for discussion

1. If a baby were born deaf, do you think that he/ she could learn to talk?
2. How can you learn about God?
3. Why should children listen to their parents?

Key concepts

Children can learn about God through listening to their parents. The Bible says that learning about God and His Word is as important as life and health. God's Word also says that when children listen to their parents, they gain wisdom. This wisdom will protect you and help you stay out of trouble

Thoroughness

Monday

From the late 15c. OE thuruh "from end to end, from side to side". Can you picture how thoroughness is all encompassing.

Attention Grabber Activity

Simon Says

For this activity, ask your students to perform each of the following tasks:

- Snap their fingers. Notice which finger, second or third, they snapped with. Now ask them to switch fingers.
- Fold their hands together, interlocking their fingers: Notice which thumb, right or left, is on top. Now ask them to switch thumbs.
- Cross your arms under your chest: Notice which arm is on top right or left. Now ask them to switch arms.
- Cross your legs above the knee: Notice which leg is on top, right or left. Now ask them to switch legs..

In each of these situations, you should find that it is uncomfortable to switch. Point out that there is no right or wrong way to perform any of these tasks and the positioning of right or left has no relationship to being right-handed or left-handed. The reason that one way feels normal and the other doesn't is a result of habit. The activity that is controlled by habit seems to come naturally. Developing habits that assist being thorough will make finishing tasks completely feel normal. Ask your students to list habits that can help in being thorough.

Introduction

Opposites:

Thoroughness vs Incompleteness

What does it mean?

Knowing what factors will diminish the effectiveness of my work or words, if neglected.

Translation:

French: Minutieux vs. Incomplet

Sign Language

Incomplete

Go to the root

Bible Connection

The story of Nehemiah who made thorough preparations to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem

- Watch Nehemiah VID (1:37)
- How the Jews thoroughly cleansed their home of leaven (Exodus 13:7) in preparation for the feast of unleavened bread

Bible Memory Verse

Luke 20:27

The I WILL's of Thoroughness

To practice Thoroughness I will:

- plan my work
- pay attention to details
- make a list so I don't forget
- finish what I start
- clean up along the way

Monday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Thoroughness:

Deut 6:5

Gen 1:1

Phil 1:6

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Divide the class into groups of 4-6 per group. Each group will need to write step by step instructions on how to do a simple task such as brushing your teeth or making a sandwich. After each group writes their instructions you can then demonstrate each set of instructions being careful to do only what is instructed so as to point out anything they may have missed. You may want to preface your testing as if you have been raised by apes living in the jungle and you have never brushed your teeth before. Be very literal so that you can spot if they say to rinse without saying to turn on the water and pour some in the cup. An alternate ending would be to have the groups exchange lists and act them out to look for missing details. If you have all of the groups do the same activity you can then do a group activity that compares each list of instructions and see if there are instructions that are in one but not the other. Are there any instructions that were left out of all of them? Then work as a group to combine all of the sets into one single thorough set of instructions. When completed, discuss when details like this need to be extremely thorough. Discuss using judgment to discern when to be detailed and when to summarize. For example, would you need to explain all the details about brushing your teeth when you tell your parent you brushed them and are ready for bed?

Discussion

If I am addressing each detail that influences the quality of my work, I am exhibiting the character quality of THOROUGHNESS. The opposite of this trait is viewed as INCOMPLETENESS... that can be a problem for me and for others who expect a complete and thorough job from me.

- Describe when you are very, very careful to be thorough and explain why that is.
- Explain a time when you, or someone you know, did not take time to be thorough and how it was a problem.

Sometimes our sense of THOROUGHNESS leads us to make a statement that describes just how "thoroughly" consumed our state of mind or body has become. It can be a positive or negative state. Finish the sentences. IF you do not recognize a word, look it up in the dictionary before completing the sentence. Be THOROUGH in doing a complete job that is your BEST work!

- I am THOROUGHLY worn out from ...
- I am THOROUGHLY confused by...
- I am THOROUGHLY surprised by...
- I am THOROUGHLY engaged in...
- I am THOROUGHLY disgusted by...

- I am THOROUGHLY puzzled by...
- I am THOROUGHLY intrigued by...
- I am THOROUGHLY inspired by...

Bible Connection

The story of the good shepherd who did not give up until the lost sheep was found (Luke 15:4)

Bible Memory Verse

Luke 20:27

The I WILL's of Thoroughness

Review

Tuesday Evening

1 Pet 3:15
Mark 8:38
Ps 16:8

Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Thoroughness in Chores

Start this activity by telling the students to pretend that they are going to hire a maid to do their chores for them. Each maid will be paid for how thorough of a job they do. Have them come up with specifics of what constitutes a very good, average, and poor job of doing typical chores at home. (Typically, when critiquing someone else's behavior their expectations are much higher!) Discuss the consequences of leaving out parts of a chore out such as not putting in a new can liner when you take out the trash and why that makes it a poor job.

Ask them to think about the type of job they do on their household chores. If they were being paid or evaluated on this same scale, where would they be? Would they keep their job or be fired? Why should their parents expect less than they expect of the imaginary maid they have hired?

Relate the exercise to grading homework papers and the rubrics you use to gauge for thoroughness. How can they be more thorough when they do their homework. When you assign the next homework assignment, relate it back to this exercise by giving them examples of good vs. poor work. Discuss what factors make doing the job less thorough? Did you put it off until you didn't have enough time to do it thoroughly? Were you too tired? Were you distracted by the TV? These can apply to chores or homework. Since the exercise started out by pretending they were hiring some one, relate this to job performance. Most teen jobs are a step up from household chores. The same rubrics that the class comes up with for gauging the performance of their maid are the same types of things that bosses use to evaluate employees for raises, promotions or even keeping the job. Pose this question: If you are a slacker in doing homework and household chores and then get a job, how easy will it be for you do a good job if you haven't been practicing being thorough and conscientious?

Discussion

Noah Webster, Hero of Thoroughness

Noah Webster, the author of the dictionary, is the hero this week who exemplifies thoroughness. Webster started writing the dictionary when he was 43, and began by breaking down the work into steps. Once he actually got to working on the project, he realized that in order to properly define a word, he had to research its origin and how it came to be in the English language.

Webster set aside the actual writing of the dictionary to do the necessary research into the origin of the words in the English language. This task took him years as he delved into the German, Latin, French, Italian, and other language roots of these words. He wrote another book in the process, *"A Synopsis of Words in Twenty Languages"*.

Once the research for the word origins was finished, Webster began again writing the dictionary. The project in all took him almost 30 years to complete.

Webster understood the importance of being thorough enough to put aside his work to complete the word origin research and not avoid the issue.

Bible Connection

Early Church Christians: (Acts 5:42) And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

Bible Memory Verse

Luke 20:27

The I WILL's of Thoroughness

Review

Wednesday Evening

Matt 28:19
Phil 4:13

Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

CAYG

Anyone who has worked at McDonald's knows what this acronym stands for: Clean As You Go. McDonald's strict policy on keeping your work area and utensils clean and tidy at all times is drilled into employees. The policy enforces cleaning and straightening at the soonest possible moment. Cleaning isn't an afterthought. It is an important step in the work instructions for food preparation. Once you master the concept, habit makes cleaning as you go feel natural. Many McDonald's employees report using the concept successfully in their own homes or dorm rooms. CAYG is a good habit to cultivate to increase thoroughness.

Smart Goals

SMART is the acronym used as a method of creating goals that are meaningful and practical. Each letter stands for a quality of a goal that will help make it more effective. **S** = 'Specific' General goals are harder to measure. The more

specific the better. Specific - I'm going to get at least a B on all of my spelling tests. Non-specific - I'm going to improve my spelling grade. **M = 'Measurable'** If a goal is not measurable it is difficult to tell if you have accomplished it or not. Measurable - I'm going to stop skipping breakfast. Non-measurable - I'm going to try and eat more healthily. **A = 'Achievable'** **R = 'Realistic'** Goals need to be within reach from where you are today. If a goal is not reachable right now, choose one that is reachable that is a stepping stone toward the more lofty goal. Breaking it down into smaller chunks may make success more likely. Achievable and Realistic - I'm going to exercise for 30 minutes 3 times a week. Not achievable or realistic - I'm going to weight train an hour a day. **T = 'Timely'** Timely requires choosing goals that are needed now and personalized to your needs. While improving grades is worthwhile, an overweight B student may benefit more from goals that improve health. Timely - I will track what I eat to better understand the mistakes I need to fix. Not timely - I will raise my science grade from a B to an A.

Plan Your Work and Work Your Plan

This phrase summarizes almost all of the I wills for Thoroughness. Have the students work on goal setting. Have them pick one goal to work on for the month. Have them test their goal for effectiveness and appropriateness by using the SMART tips. They should have their goal written down somewhere that they will see it daily. You can have them tape it to their desk, or on their planner. At the end of every week, ask them to assess where they are in relation to making their goal. Recognize that struggling is not a bad sign. Encourage them to stick to it. If half way through the month it is obvious that the goal was not appropriate, work with them to alter the goal to one that is more realistic. Reference Noah Webster's goal change while he was writing the dictionary. He had to take a "detour" and do the word origins first and then tackle his original goal.

Bible Connection

Jesus' teaching of "Counting the Cost" in Luke chapter 14

Bible Memory Verse

Luke 20:27

The I WILL's of Thoroughness

Review

Thursday Evening

1 Tim 2:5-6
Eph 2:8-9

Friday

Bible Memory Verse

Luke 20:27

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Luke 20:27

Bible Connection

Jacob: (Genesis 29) Served out an additional 7 years for Rachel

The I WILL's of Thoroughness

Review

Friday Evening

1 Cor 15:58
James 1:12

Determination, Endurance, Commitment

Monday

Introduction

Opposites:

Determination vs Faintheartedness

What does it mean?

Purposing to accomplish right goals at the right time, regardless of the opposition.

Translation:

Spanish: Determinación

Go to the root

From the Latin word *terminare* meaning “to bound, to limit, to prescribe”. Can you see how Determination sets limits to remain faithful to a task, minimizing distractions and focusing on the goal?

How do we Sign it?

Commit

Attention Grabber Activity

Aim High

For this activity you will need 4 paper plates. Mark one number on each plate: 5, 10, 15 20. Each student will receive 2 -3 pennies, buttons, or some small object. Mark a line on the floor with masking tape.

Place the first plate (marked 5) close enough to the line so that when standing behind the line, most students can throw the penny and have it land on the plate.

Place the three remaining plates in order farther away from the first plate so that the higher the value the farther the plate.

The 20 point plate still needs to be within a reasonable distance for the age and skills of your students. Use only 3 plates if 4 plates make the distance too far.

The last plate needs to be a challenge for the students; they should not be able to throw to that plate easily.

Start by asking the students to stand in a line behind the tape line. They will take turns throwing their pennies onto the first plate.

Once everyone has had a chance to do that, let them collect the pennies and try again, this time aiming for the second plate. When they master the second plate, they can move onto the third and so on.

When they have completed all of the plates you can ask them how difficult it would have been to start with the last plate. Help them to see that in order to achieve larger goals, you need to break it down into smaller goals and work up to accomplishing large tasks.

With the numbers on the plates, you can have the students keep score based on how many plates they hit. You can also number the plates 1, 2, 3, 4 if you don't wish to keep score. For much younger students you may want to use hoola hoops or box lids to provide larger targets.

Bible Connection

Noah (he was determined to obey God despite what his neighbors said) (Genesis 6-8)

Bible Memory Verse

2 Tim 4:7-8

The I WILL's of Determination

To practice Determination I will:

- Set goals
- Make sure your goals are right
- Ignore distractions
- Do not be discouraged by others
- Face problems head on

Monday Evening

Science Connection:

The Return of the Salmon - Salmon are hatched from eggs that are in the bottom of a river bed. Once hatched, salmon swim downstream to the ocean. When salmon are 4 years old they get the urge to swim back to the spot in the river where they were hatched to lay their own eggs. As you can imagine, swimming upstream is very difficult so salmon must practice Determination on the swim back.

Discuss some Bible verses about Determination:

Ruth and Naomi (Ruth was determined to stick by Naomi even though she was a stranger in the land) (Ruth)



Tuesday



Attention Grabber Activity

Cold Cash

This activity requires that you prepare special ice cubes ahead of time. Fill the tray half full and freeze. Place a dime, nickel or penny on the ice cube half and fill with water. Return to the freezer. Try to get the coin in the middle of the ice cube. Divide the class into small groups of 2 or 3. Each group gets an ice cube which they must melt in order to get to the coin. Use different valued coins so that they are not all the same. The rules for melting are that they may not touch their tongue or mouth to the ice cube and they may not hit it with anything or throw it at anything. (Be sure to give each group paper towels to avoid puddles in the classroom or do this activity outside.) When all of the groups have melted their cube enough to remove the coin discuss how this activity relates to be determined to reach a goal. Ask if they would do it differently if they had a second chance. Did they watch what other groups were doing and copy? If you had a lower value coin did you work as hard as groups that had higher value coins? Did you work harder when you first started or when you got closer? How does determination help you reach your goals?



Discussion

Being a person full of DETERMINATION allows you to go through life in a way that moves toward goals successfully. Your sense of DETERMINATION helps you solve the problems

along the way. Overcoming obstacles is just part of what we do in life. There always seems to be a problem that needs a solution.

- Describe a time when you overcame an obstacle and you realized it took a lot of DETERMINATION on YOUR PART.

Discussion

DETERMINED INDIVIDUALS usually have GOALS that help them prioritize what needs to be done next in life. What are two goal statements you can make for yourself that will require a high level of DETERMINATION?

There is a saying, "Where there is a will, there is a way." What are the ways you see yourself able to accomplish your goals?

Model of Determination

"Never give in, never give in, never, never, never - in nothing, great or small, large or petty - never give in except to convictions of honour and good sense. Never, Never, Never, Never give up."

Winston Churchill

Winston Churchill (1874-1965) failed sixth grade, but he didn't give up. He finished his schooling. He served in the military. He was a war correspondent before getting into politics. He was subsequently defeated in every election for public office until he became Prime Minister of England at the age of 62. As a world leader, he stood against Nazism during WWII. He was DETERMINED to work with others to stand strong for what was right.

- What do you think this great thinker and historical figure meant by saying, "never give in EXCEPT to convictions of honour and good sense?"

Could DETERMINATION ever prove to be a bad thing? How so? Can you think of an example?



Bible Connection

Daniel (he was determined to pray to God despite the king's new rule) (Daniel 6)



Bible Memory Verse

2 Tim 4:7-8

The I WILL's of Determination

Review

Tuesday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Determination:
1 Cor 9:24-27

Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Domino Determination

You will need dominos or any object that can be set up like a domino drop chain. You will need to set up 3 chains. The first chain should have some of the dominos too far apart for the chain to continue to fall. The second chain should have the middle of the chain off-set so that the second half of the chain does not fall. The third chain should have all of the dominos aligned so that they all fall consecutively.

Before tripping the domino chains, discuss goals and how determination plays a part in achievement. You may want to find an age appropriate story or just a few facts about Thomas Edison's determination in inventing the light bulb. He had an unbelievable number of failures before hitting on the right combination. Talk about how losing interest in a project makes it hard to complete. Demonstrate this with the first domino chain. Next, you can talk about how distraction or losing your focus on a goal makes it hard to achieve. Demonstrate this with the second domino chain. Staying determined helps achieve goals. Demonstrate this with the third domino chain.

Keeping with the theme of dominos, create a hand-out for the students that has space for writing a goal at the top. The main body of the page should be 3 large dominos drawn sideways. The first one has just one dot on the left side and blank on the right. The second domino has two dots on the left, blank on the right. The third should have 3 dots on the left and blank on the right. The students should identify a goal at the top of the page and write steps or activities that will help reach the goal on each of the right sides of the

dominos. Encourage the goals to be small enough that they can be achieved this month. At the end of each week have the students revisit these pages to see how on track they are.

Discussion

A Tale of Two Frogs

Two frogs fell into a can of cream,
Or so I've heard it told:
The sides of the can were shiny - steep,
The cream was deep and cold.
"O, what's the use?" croaked Number 1.
"Tis fate; no help's around.
Good-bye, my friends Good-bye, sad world"
And weeping still, he drowned.
But Number 2, of sterner stuff,
Dog-paddled in surprise,
The while he wiped his creamy face
And dried his creamy eyes.
"I'll swim awhile, at least," he said-
Or so I've heard he said:
"It really wouldn't help the world
If one more frog were dead."
An hour or two he kicked and swam,
Not once he stopped to mutter.
He kicked and kicked and swam and kicked.
Then hopped out, via BUTTER!

Author Unknown

Bible Memory Verse

2 Tim 4:7-8

Bible Connection

The story of the good shepherd who did not give up until the lost sheep was found (Luke 15:4)

The I WILL's of Determination

Review

Wednesday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Determination:
2 Chronicles 15:7

Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

For this exercise you will need an egg (hard-boiled is safer), a raw carrot and can of coffee. Show these items to the class and then ask each student to associate themselves to one of these items.

Ask all of the “eggs” to sit/stand together; ask all of the “carrot” people to sit/stand together, and do the same with the “coffee” people. Explain that problems are like boiling water and that different people react to problems differently. Ask each group how their item reacts to boiling water. (The egg becomes hardened, the carrots become soft, and the coffee changes the water into coffee)

Relate these reactions to the responses that people have to problems.

Explain that the groups they are in do not indicate how they react to problems. Ask each group to give examples of how each type of person would react to problems such as: forgot to bring home textbook for homework; or not making a sports team. The carrot went into the water strong, hard and unrelenting.

However after being subjected to the boiling water, it softened and became weak.

Carrot answers are the give up/do nothing kind of responses. The egg had been fragile before it was boiled. Its thin outer shell had protected its liquid interior. But, after sitting through the boiling water, its inside became hardened. Egg answers will take action but the wrong kind such as making fun of others.

The coffee was unique, however. After it was in the boiling water it had changed the water.

Coffee answers will endure and solve the problem.

Introduction to Endurance

Opposites

Endurance vs Giving up

What does it mean?

The inward strength to withstand stress and do my best.

Translation

Spanish: Perseverancia

Idioms

He that would have eggs must endure the cackling of hens - You must be willing to endure unpleasant, irritating things in order to get what you want.

What can't be cured must be endured - If you cannot do anything about a problem, you will have to live with it

Go to the Root

The primary Latin root of endure is *durare*, which means “to harden; to hold out; to make last”. To create the word Endurance, the Latin *durare* was coupled with the Latin preposition for “in”. Can you see how endurance is hardening from within?

Bible Connection

Discuss some Bible verses about Determination:
Galatians 6:9

Bible Memory Verse

2 Tim 4:7-8

The I WILL's of Endurance

To practice Endurance I will:

- not be a “quitter”
- accept both instruction and correction
- not waste my time, energy and talent on meaningless pursuits
- bend instead of break
- put my whole heart into everything I do

Story

Wilma Rudolph is not the Hero of Endurance because she was a long distance runner (that would be Determination). She was chosen for all of the stresses she endured on her way to fame.

Rudolph was the 20th of 22 children, born prematurely. As a child, she was often ill, including a crippling bout with Polio. She recovered and by age 12 could walk normally.

While playing high school basketball she was discovered by a college track coach and the rest is history. She holds a bronze medal from the 1956 Olympics and three golds from the 1960 Olympics making her the first American woman to win three gold.

Despite her success on the track and her fame from the Olympics, she still had to fight prejudice both for being a female athlete as well as African American. She used her success to open the doors for other female athletes and she fought segregation on many fronts in her hometown in Tennessee.

Wilma Rudolph died on November 12, 1994 at the age of 54 in her home in Nashville, Tennessee. She had been diagnosed with brain cancer. In 1997, Governor Don Sundquist proclaimed that June 23 be now known as Wilma Rudolph Day in Tennessee.

Thursday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Endurance:
James 1:4

Friday

Bible Memory Verse

2 Tim 4:7-8

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?
2 Tim 4:7-8

The I WILL's of Endurance

Review

Friday Evening

Opposites

Commitment vs Impulsiveness

What does Commitment mean?

Carefully deciding to do what is right and then sticking to my promise when the going gets hard

Bible Connection

Paul Commits Himself to Go to Jerusalem
Nehemiah fulfills his commitment to build the wall
Matt 5:37 / James 5:12

availability

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

Ready to Help Activity (PDF)

Introduction

Opposites:

Availability vs Self-centeredness (maybe get a clipart for each to stand opposed to one another)

What does it mean?

Making my schedule and priorities secondary to the wishes of those I serve.

Translation:

Spanish: disponibilidad

How do we Sign it?

Available

Bible Connection

Luke 10:30-37 - The parable of the Samaritan

Nature Story

Availability Nature Story VID (5:50)

Poem

Availability Poem VID (5:13)

Bible Memory Verse

Phil 2:20-21

The I WILL's of Availability

To practice Availability I will:

- put others ahead of myself
- find a way to help, not a way to hide
- be ready when I am called
- be glad for the chance to serve
- check with the right person before I make commitments

Monday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Availability:

2 Tim 4:2

Tuesday

Songs

Availability Song VID (11:08)

Poem

Availability Poem VID (5:13) - Review

Bible Connection

Read Mark 1:17-27

Almost everyone is familiar with the call of Peter and Andrew by Jesus to become two of the twelve disciples. It appears that they dropped what they were doing and immediately followed Jesus. This should cause us to recognize the fine character trait of availability, as there seemed to be no hesitance in joining Jesus.

What we need to recognize is what they were doing before Jesus called them. Too often we view being available for the Lord's use as sitting and waiting. You know your car is available because it is sitting in the garage, waiting to take you to church or to the store. It is available for your immediate use. However, this is not the availability that we see in the disciples.

They were doing work and tasks that had nothing to do with the ministry that God was about to call them to. They were just doing their own thing, fishing or collecting taxes, or any number of different tasks. What made them available was their willingness to immediately drop "their own thing" and do God's thing.

Saul of Tarsus was on his way to Damascus to further his ambition to be a leader in the Jewish religion. We're all familiar with the story of his conversion and how he began to preach the same gospel that he had once persecuted. Saul was available to be used of God, and his work for the Lord began in God's timing.

Availability is more of an attitude than an action. It is an attitude that manifests itself when we have our priorities right. It is an attitude that I will not hold anything tighter than I hold my commitment to the Lord.

If you think about the many different authors that contributed to the writing of the Bible, especially some of the minor prophets, who lived a whole lifetime just for a book of two or three paragraphs. Yet, who would not have accepted the honor of being used of the Holy Spirit to write the scriptures? They were written by men, most of whom were not priests or religious persons, just individuals committed to God and living their lives with availability.

The best way to be available when God calls is to practice availability when someone in your family calls. God doesn't always wait until it is convenient, and neither does your spouse, children or in-laws. Can you drop "your thing" and be available to them in the moment of need? If not, God may very well get the same reaction from you when He needs you!

Let's work on our attitude to always be available. Who knows what God may have planned right around the corner!

Bible Memory Verse

Phil 2:20-21

The I WILL's of Availability

Review

Tuesday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Availability:
1 Pet 3:18-20

Wednesday

Bible Connection

Discuss some Bible verses about Availability:

Matthew 4:20

Bible Memory Verse

Phil 2:20-21

Songs

Availability Song - Review

Poem

Availability Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Availability

Review

Wednesday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Availability:

Isaiah 6:8

Thursday

Bible Connection

Discuss some Bible verses about Availability:

Isaiah 40:27-31

Bible Memory Verse

Phil 2:20-21

Songs

Availability Song - Review

Poem

Availability Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Availability

Review

Thursday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Availability:
Matthew 16:24

Friday

Bible Memory Verse

Phil 2:20-21

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to me today? How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Phil 2:20-21

Songs

Availability Song - Review

Poem

Availability Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Availability

Review

Friday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Availability:
Ezekiel 22:30

Courage

Parents

Parents' prayer

Despite our best efforts to nurture courage in our children, only God can bring about lasting change in a child's heart. Before you begin leading your child through this study on courage, spend time alone with God interceding for His help. Ask Him to help you grow in courage, and to release His power in your child. Use the sample prayer below to guide you in praying for your child's character development. If you prefer to personalize your prayers even further, read through the additional verses provided under "Scripture-guided prayer" for direction and inspiration.

Sample prayer

Lord, you are the Lord who does whatever pleases You, in the heavens and on the earth, in the seas and all their depths (Psalm 135:6). It is with Your great might that You calm the wind and the waves and instill confidence in fearful hearts (Matthew 8:26-27). We place our complete trust in You, proclaiming, "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns!" because You promise to go before us, to be with us and that You will never leave us or forsake us (Revelation 19:6, Deuteronomy 31:8). In the battles of daily life, may my children see in me an unwavering faith and confidence in You Lord. I ask that they wouldn't see me relying on my own strength, but Yours. When I am weak, (and I've been feeling pretty weak these days) may my cry be, "O my Strength, I sing praise to You; You, O God, are my fortress, my loving God" (Psalm 59:17). Your Word tells us that our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms (Ephesians 6:12).

Please remind me to put on the full "armour of God" – the helmet of salvation, the belt of truth and the breastplate of righteousness. I need to carry the sword of the Spirit and the shield of faith so I can extinguish the flaming arrows of the evil one. Please fit my feet with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace and guide me to pray in Your Spirit, so I can pray wisely for our family (Ephesians 6:13-18).

As the challenges of life rock the very foundations on which stands, I ask that he/she would have an unshakeable trust in You. During times of trial, please help him/her to remember

and quote Psalm 118:6-7, "The Lord is with me, I will not be afraid. What can man do to me? The Lord is with me; He is my helper." As Satan tempts to trust in him/herself or others, rather than in You God, I ask that he/she would be reminded that, "It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man" (Psalm 118:8). My prayer is that would stand firm in his/her faith and be a man/woman of courage. I pray that would be strong and do everything in love (1 Corinthians 16:13-14). I ponder the depth of courage it took for Your Son Jesus to die on the cross. I pray that You would develop in a faith that he/she is willing to stand up for, a faith he/she is compelled to share, and a faith that will not renounce, despite consequences. Please keep strong to the end, so that he/she will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God, please give the assurance that You, who have called him/her into fellowship with Your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, are faithful (1 Corinthians 1:8-9).

Please help our family to remember that we can be strong and courageous, knowing that You are with us to help us fight our battles (2 Chronicles 32:7-8). Thank you for the assurance of Your faithfulness, that You keep Your covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love You and keep Your commands (Deuteronomy 7:9). When You call us to do something that requires courage, we ask that Your Spirit fill us with an unwavering faith in who You are and what You can do, so we can do it confidently. Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for parents

Read and pray through one or more of the selected Scriptures under each heading. Focus on listening to God and allowing His Spirit to direct you as you pray.

Character focus

Begin by thanking God for being a God of faithfulness, power and love.

Deuteronomy 7:9 | 2 Samuel 22:31-37 | 2 Chronicles 32:6-8 | Psalm 59:16-17 | 1 Corinthians 1:8-9

Heart search

Acknowledge when, where and why you lack courage.

Psalm 49:12-13 | Psalm 78:19-22 | Proverbs 28:26 | Isaiah 31:1 | Jeremiah 17:5-6

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have seen courage demonstrated in your family.

Family requests

Ask God to help you and your children live courageously, with your confidence being found in Him.

Psalm 86:2 | Psalm 143:8 | Isaiah 26:3-4 | 1 Corinthians 16:13-14 | 2 Thessalonians 3:3

Kids talk with God

Use this section to help your child learn to reach out to God in all things. The sample prayers all begin with "Dear God," however, you may use any other names for God your children are comfortable with (i.e. Jesus, Father God, Lord Jesus, Heavenly Father, Abba Father, Lord). If your child is ready to pray an original prayer, you may wish to use the Bible verses provided under "Scripture-guided prayer for children."

Sample prayers

Dear God, I know that You will help me to be strong and courageous, even when I'm scared. Amen.

Dear God, thank you that You promise to go before me and always be with me and that You will never leave me or forsake me (Deuteronomy 31:8). Amen.

Dear God, it's hard to be brave, especially right now. Please help me to remember that You will take care of me and help me to have courage. Amen.

Dear God, when I am afraid, please help me to put my trust in You, instead of myself. Amen.

Dear God, please give me the courage to shout as Nehemiah did, "Our God will fight for us!" (Nehemiah 4:20) Amen.

Dear God, when I am afraid, please help me to remember that You are great and awesome and that You will fight for me (Nehemiah 4:14). Amen.

Dear God, please help me to remember that with Your help, little guys can do big things too! Amen.

Dear God, I would rather not (name the situation that causes your child to be fearful, i.e. go to the basement). Please come with me and give me courage. Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for children

Read through one of the selected Scriptures under each heading and help your children pray based on the verse you read. Encourage them to listen to God and allow His Spirit to guide them as they pray.

Character focus

Begin by thanking God for being a God of faithfulness, power and love.

Deuteronomy 7:9 | 2 Samuel 22:31-34 | Psalm 59:16

Heart search

Acknowledge when and why you lack courage.

Psalm 78:19-22 | Proverbs 28:26 | 1 Peter 5:7

Gratitude

Thank God ways you have seen courage demonstrated in your family.

Personal requests

Ask God to help you trust Him and be courageous.

Jeremiah 17:7 | 1 Corinthians 16:13-14 | 2 Thessalonians 3:3

Speak a Blessing

Your affirmation will give tremendous encouragement to your children as they strive to be more courageous. Use this section as a reminder to "speak a blessing" when you see evidence of this godly characteristic.

- _____ is a courageous boy/girl.
- _____, you are showing courage/bravery.
- _____, how brave you are!
- You are courageous!
- I'm glad you're trusting God right now, _____.
- I'm glad you're trusting God through this challenge, _____.
- God is pleased when we stand up for what we believe in, _____.
- Awesome, _____! You remembered to find (or take) courage in God!

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

Shepherd's rod

Needed

- a stick (a freshly-cut sapling or a length of dowel 50-60 cm [20-24"] long and 1.5-2 cm [$\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ "] in diameter)
- an old kitchen knife or dull blade
- a small handsaw
- sandpaper
- felt-tipped markers
- ribbon or leather cording.

Instructions

1. If you are using a length of dowel, help your child sand each end so they are smooth and free of splinters. If you are using a sapling, remove the bark by scraping it off with a dull blade. Try not to mar the clean, white surface underneath.
2. Allow the peeled stick to dry overnight before sanding it or decorating it.
3. Once your "rod" is dry, help your child sand the rough sections. Write your preferred Bible memory verse on it, and decorate it with felt tipped markers or paint.
4. Cut a notch near one end using a saw. Wrap the end with ribbon or leather cording, winding it through the notch to help keep it in place.

Leaving some trailing ends to make a tassel. Use a low-temperature glue gun to secure the ribbon in place, if you wish. While your child is decorating their rod, tell them how a real shepherd used their rod and staff in Bible times.

Here's some suggested dialogue to help start your discussion:

When shepherds took their sheep out to graze, it was like being on a very long hike. The shepherds did not want to carry a heavy load, so they took only what they needed. One of the most important items they carried was a rod or a staff. The shepherds used the rod to protect their sheep from harm. If a fierce wild animal came to drag a sheep away, the shepherd could use the rod to protect their sheep. In Bible times, there were no fences to keep the sheep in one place; the shepherd and his sheep ranged all over the countryside. The shepherds used their staff to discipline sheep that were wandering away from the flock.

Have your child use their rod to care for and "herd" their stuffed animals. Choose one stuffed animal to be a bear or wolf that is preying on the other animals. Let your child "protect" their sheep by gently using their rod. Whenever your child plays with their rod, use the opportunity to review the "inscribed" memory verse with them.

Relevant Scripture

Psalm 23:4b
Psalm 91:14
Isaiah 40:11

Introduction

Opposites:

Courage vs Fearfulness

What does it mean?

Facing fear and loss in pursuit of what is best

Translation:

Spanish: Temor vs. Valentia

Go to the root

Root: c.1300, from Old French corage "heart, innermost feelings; temper"

How do we Sign it?

Courage

Bible Connection

Trusting in man or trusting in God?

Read

2 Chronicles 16 and Psalm 146:3-6.

Questions for discussion

1. Is it easier to trust something that you can see or something that you cannot see?
2. Who is stronger, a man or God?
3. Is a huge army of soldiers stronger than God?
4. Is anything or anyone stronger than God?
5. Why would anyone trust in man instead of God?
6. Can you think of any reason for Asa to trust in an army instead of God?
7. Why do you think Asa didn't ask God for help when he got so sick?
8. Read Psalm 40:4 and Psalm 146:3-6.
9. Who does the Bible say we should trust?
10. When are you tempted to trust people, instead of trusting God?

Key concepts

Asa was king of Judah and Baasha was King of Israel. They were fighting with each other. Ben Hadad, the king of Aram, was helping the Israelites. Asa talked with Ben Hadad and offered him money to "change teams" and start helping Judah instead of Israel. Ben Hadad agreed to do so. Once Ben Hadad started helping Judah take over Israelite towns,

the Israelites gave up working on their building project. (We can guess they needed to quit building and start protecting their towns.)

At this time a seer named Hanani (“seer” is another name for a prophet) came and talked to King Asa and told him that he had done a foolish thing, trusting in armies instead of trusting in God. Hanani pointed out that God had helped Asa fight against two other mighty armies called the Cushites and the Libyans. The seer said, “Yet when you relied on the Lord, He delivered them into your hand. For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him. You have done a foolish thing, and from now on you will be at war” (2 Chronicles 16:8-9). Asa became very ill, but stubbornly, he refused to go to God for help – he only went to doctors. Two years later, Asa died.

It is easy to be tempted to trust in people (who we can see) rather than in God who we cannot see, but the Bible makes it clear that those who trust God will be blessed.

Relevant Scripture

Psalm 40:4

Psalm 146:3-6

Bible Memory Verse

Joshua 1:9

God's Way vs My Way

God's Way

I am demonstrating godly character when:

- I trust God
- I stand up for what is right
- I am confident because I know that God is with me

And God is pleased!

My Way

When I am tempted to:

- Trust in myself instead of God
- Be fearful of standing up for what is right
- Follow the crowd instead of choosing to do right

I know that I need to go to God for help

Songs

Strong and Courageous.mp3

Monday Evening

The Big Guy's on our side

Read

2 Chronicles 32:1-22.

Questions for discussion

1. How did Hezekiah encourage the people who were about to go into battle?
2. Did it work?
3. What else did Hezekiah do?
4. What did God do for them?
5. What kind of battles do you fight each day?
6. If you fight these battles in your own strength, will you win?
7. Whose strength do you need in order to win the war against sin?
8. How do we ask God to come and help us fight?

Key concepts

Hezekiah was a king of Judah who was faithful to God because he did what was right and did his best to obey God. God gave him much success and life was going well for Hezekiah, until another king named Sennacherib decided to make war against Hezekiah and his people. Hezekiah encouraged his people by saying, “Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or discouraged because of the king of Assyria and the vast army with him, for there is a greater power with us than with him. With him is only the arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God to help us and to fight our battles” (2 Chronicles 32:7-8).

The Bible says that the people gained confidence from what Hezekiah said (2 Chronicles 32:8). The king of Assyria did not give up. He tried to discourage Hezekiah and his people by saying that he had defeated other nations. Sennacherib also made fun of God by saying, “Just as the gods of the peoples of the other lands did not rescue their people from my hand, so the god of Hezekiah will not rescue His people from my hand” (2 Chronicles 32:17).

Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah cried out to God in prayer, asking for help. God sent an angel to destroy the Assyrian army. The Bible tells us that God cared for them on every side (2 Chronicles 32:22). Instead of giving up, Hezekiah trusted God and God came to his rescue.

In our own lives we fight a different kind of battle. It's a battle against evil and temptation to do wrong. Examples include being tempted to disobey parents, to be unkind to friends or siblings, or to be selfish, wanting things our own way. If we try to “win” against sin without God's help, it will

be much harder to resist sin. We can fight effectively against sin when we pray like Hezekiah did and ask God to give us victory.

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Crush your fears

You will need plastic bags, crackers and markers or paint for this activity. Distribute the crackers (matza crackers work well).

Instruct the students to write or paint a symbol of something where fear holds them back from doing the right thing. You can use a single large plastic bag like a freezer bag that you can write on or each student can have their own bag. Have the students make suggestions of things that can help you conquer fears i.e think positively; picture success; do something small towards your goal; practice in private; find someone who agrees with you; don't hang around the people who feed your fear, etc. They can write these on their bags or you can write them on the single bag. After you have discussed these strategies place the crackers with the fears on them inside of the bag and seal it. Now the students can crush the crackers representing their fears. Each student can crush their own or you can pass around the bag for all them to crush. An alternate activity would be to take the crackers outside and let the students crush them with their hands or stamp them with their feet. (If you do it outside, be sure to clean up the mess so birds won't eat the markers or paint.) Ask the students if they feel more courageous now that they have named a fear and crushed it.

Songs

Strong and Courageous.mp3

Bible Connection

Little guy, big God

Read

1 Samuel 17.

This is a familiar story, so if your children have heard it many times, retell it in modern circumstances. For example, Goliath could be a bully who shows up at the park every day and frightens the other children by saying unkind things. David could be a child who has the courage to approach the child's mother and let her know what is going on.

Questions for discussion

1. Who was Goliath?
2. How did Goliath challenge the Israelites every day?
3. Why was everyone afraid to fight him?
4. Who was David?
5. Why did David think he could take on the giant, when none of the Israelite soldiers were brave enough to fight him?
6. What did David mean when he said "the armies of the living God"?
7. What did Saul say to David when David offered to fight the giant?
8. What was David's reply?
9. Was David's confidence in his own abilities, or in God?
10. What did David say when Goliath mocked him?
11. Who won the battle?
12. What kind of battles do you fight each day?
13. Can you fight these battles with your own strength?
14. Who is strong enough to help you win the war against sin?

Key concepts

Israel was at war with their enemies, the Philistines. Instead of both armies fighting, the Philistines suggested the battle be won or lost based on the outcome of one Israelite soldier fighting Goliath. Goliath was a massive Philistine soldier. Day after day the Philistine army sent Goliath out to taunt the Israelites, asking if anyone was willing to fight him. But all of the Israelites were afraid to fight him. Then one day a younger brother of some of the Israelite soldiers came to the battleground to bring food for his big brothers.

When this shepherd boy named David heard Goliath mocking the Israelite army, he began asking questions about what was going on. David was then brought to see the Israelite king, Saul. David told Saul that he was willing to fight Goliath. Saul questioned whether or not David could fight Goliath, but David explained that he had fought and killed a bear and a lion while he worked as a shepherd. "If God took care of me while I fought the wild animals, He can help me fight Goliath" (1 Samuel 17:37).

Saul offered David his armour (which did not fit) so David took just his slingshot and some stones and headed out to fight the giant. As David approached Goliath the big soldier mocked David.

David replied, "You come against me with a sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. Today the Lord will help me defeat you" (1 Samuel 17:45-46). David put a stone in his sling and fired it at Goliath, striking him in the forehead. The mighty giant fell to the ground. When the Philistines saw their hero was dead, they all ran away. David trusted in God and God gave him victory.

Every day we have our own battles to fight against temptation. Examples of ways that children can be tempted include disobeying their parents, whining when they don't get their own way, refusing to share or teasing a sibling. Just as Goliath was the enemy of the Israelite army, Satan is our enemy. The Bible says that Satan is like a lion on the prowl, looking for someone to defeat. If we ask God to help us say, "No!" to temptation, He can give us the same kind of victory He gave David. But if we trust in our own strength, it will be much harder to have the courage to do right instead of wrong.

Relevant Scripture

1 Peter 5:8

Bible Memory Verse

Joshua 1:9

Tuesday Evening

Courage in confronting wrong

Read

2 Chronicles 26:1-6,16-21.

Questions for discussion

1. What did King Uzziah do that was wrong?
2. Who was courageous enough to tell the king that he was sinning?
3. Did God support them when they confronted the king for doing wrong?
4. When might you have to confront someone who is doing something wrong?
5. What is the best way to confront wrongdoing?

Key concepts

Uzziah was king of Judah. This meant that he was the big boss of the entire country! The king made all the rules and everyone had to obey him. At first Uzziah followed God and

did what was right, but after he became powerful, Uzziah became proud. He decided that he didn't have to obey God's rules and chose to go into God's holy temple to burn incense. (This was a job God had given to the priests and only priests were to do it.) Azariah the priest, along with 80 other priests, went to tell King Uzziah that what he was doing was wrong. It took courage for them to do this because the king had the power to order anyone who angered him to be put to death. King Uzziah did get very angry. As he was raging at the priest, leprosy (a horrible skin disease) broke out on his skin. God had sent the leprosy. King Uzziah had to live alone for the rest of his life because he had leprosy; he could no longer be around other people or go into any part of the temple to worship God.

It's important to remember that it is God's job to judge (Romans 14:9-11, 1 Corinthians 4:5), while it is our job to encourage others to do right (1 Thessalonians 5:10-15). Galatians 6:1 explains that when we correct another person, we are to do it in a gentle way. This means that if we are confronting wrongdoing, we need to speak quietly and politely.

For example, if your friend suggests that you not allow your little brother to play with you, you could say, "Let's remember to be kind. The Bible says we are to treat others as we want to be treated ourselves." That would be much better than yelling, "You're being mean!"

Confronting wrong can also be easier if we support each other in standing up for what is right, like the priests did. If another child points out that someone is doing something wrong, you can support them by simply saying, "I agree with you; it's important to follow God's rules."

At times, there may be other children who make fun of you for choosing to follow Jesus and doing what is right. These are the times that you can remember that Jesus had people hurt Him too. He helps us feel joyful when things are hard by giving us His Holy Spirit.

Relevant Scripture

Romans 14:10
1 Thessalonians 5:11 , 15
Galatians 6:1

Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

I wanna hold the hand that holds the world

An outdoor walk with your children is a great opportunity to discuss fear and nature. Many people fear natural disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes or thunderstorms. To help a child who fears nature's power, remind them that God made the world and is in control of all that happens in nature. As you walk along, hold hands and explain that when we love and follow God, it is like we are holding His hand all the time. A fun song to sing as you walk along is He's Got the Whole World in His Hands.

Teach your children to repeat the phrase, "I'm trusting God to keep me safe. I'm holding the hand that holds the world." Read your choice of the verses listed below where God speaks of His power and control over nature. Balance your discussion by reminding your child that God doesn't want us to be foolish, and we should never knowingly put ourselves in harm's way. He wants us to be wise and to prepare for emergencies, so we can not only keep ourselves safe, but also be ready to help others.

Bible Connection

Better than water wings

Read

Matthew 14:22-33.

Questions for discussion

1. Why were the disciples afraid?
2. What did Jesus say?
3. What did Peter do and say?
4. Was he able to walk on the water?
5. When did he start to sink?
6. When are you tempted to trust in yourself instead of God?

Key concepts

Jesus' disciples were out in a boat during the night when a storm came up. The big waves were hitting the boat and the strong winds were pushing it farther from shore. The disciples were scared because of the dreadful storm, but then something scared them even more: they saw someone coming to them, walking on the water. They did not know who or what it was so they cried out in fear. Jesus called back, "Take courage. It is I. Don't be afraid" (Matthew 14:27). Peter then called out to Jesus, "Lord, if it's You, tell me to come to You on the water" (Matthew 14:28). Jesus told him to come. At first Peter could walk on the water, but then he looked around and saw the wild wind and the waves and got scared and started to sink.

Jesus didn't let Peter drown; instead He reached out and caught Peter. Then Jesus looked at Peter and asked him why he had doubted. When Jesus and Peter climbed into the boat together, the wind and the waves died down and the disciples worshipped Jesus saying, "You are the Son of God" (Matthew 14:32).

Peter was able to walk on water until he stopped trusting Jesus and became afraid. In our own lives there are times when we are tempted to do the same thing. When we forget that God is always with us and we become frightened by the situation we are in (dark rooms, unknown situations) or something we see (dogs or bees), we are like Peter. When we see or hear things that scare us, we need to remember to pray and to trust God.

Bible Memory Verse

Joshua 1:9

Songs

Strong and Courageous.mp3

Wednesday Evening

God is our protector

Read

Psalms 91 and Romans 8:28.

As you read Psalm 91, have your children raise a hand each time they hear how God protects His people. Challenge them to count the ways.

Questions for discussion

1. How many ways does the Psalm say that God protects us?
2. In verse fourteen, why does God say He will protect us?
3. When do we need God's protection?
4. Can you think of any ways that God has protected you from harm?
5. If we were to write a Psalm like this for our own lives, what things would we list?
6. God led Paul through some tough times and scary situations. In Romans 8:28, what did he urge all believers to remember?

Key concepts

We need to make sure that we are not foolish, and that we never put ourselves in a dangerous situation. Even when we are careful, however, there are some things that are outside our control. In Psalm 91 we find more than six things God protects us from. Today we don't have wild animals roaming the streets, but there are other ways we can be harmed. We can thank God that He will care for us on icy roads, during storms and when we are sick. When we love God and ask Him to be our Protector, He promises that He will always be with us. God also promises that, no matter how bad things may seem to us, He is always working "behind the scenes" to bring good out of every situation.

Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

The Courageous Egg

For this demonstration you will need a wide mouth clear jar, uncooked rice and an egg. Place the egg at the bottom of the jar and fill the jar with rice. Tell some age-appropriate stories about students being courageous such as sticking up for someone who is being bullied, not helping someone else cheat, not repeat a rumor, admitting something wrong that they did etc. Each time you tell a story, try to use the word courage as often as you can. Each time you mention courage or doing the right thing, tap on the rim of the jar. The egg will begin to rise to the top of jar each time you tap on the jar. Tell enough stories until the egg has risen all the way to the top.

Moral of the story: A courageous person will rise to the top and stand out from the rest!

Bible Connection

A rocking sailboat

Read

Acts 27:13-26.

Questions for discussion

1. Have you ever been out in a boat when there was a storm?
2. Can you imagine what it would be like? How would you describe it?
3. What might you be thinking?

4. Can you think of something that is as scary as a storm?
5. In the story, how bad was the storm?
6. How did God encourage Paul?
7. What did Paul tell the others on the ship to encourage them?
8. How can we discourage others when they are frightened?
9. What can we do or say to help others keep up their courage?
10. Your parents keep you safe, but who else watches over you?

Key concepts

Paul was being held prisoner because he was telling people about Jesus. It was decided that Paul would take a journey on a ship, from Caesarea to Rome where he was to be put on trial. Paul was to take the trip on a big ship, along with other prisoners and the sailors. After they had gone a short distance, the weather did not seem good for travelling and Paul advised the ship's crew to spend the winter in a town called Crete. They did not listen to Paul, but sailed on.

A storm the strength of a hurricane came along. The wind was so powerful that the sailors passed ropes around the ship to keep it from breaking apart. The raging water and winds continued for so long that many men on the ship gave up hope of ever being rescued or surviving. Despite the fact that the storm kept up, Paul told the people on the ship to keep up their courage and have faith that God would rescue them. Paul said this because an angel had visited Paul during the night and told him that he would stand trial in Rome. On the fourteenth night of the storm, (two weeks after it began!), the sailors finally sensed the ship was approaching land. They had come upon an island. Although the ship was wrecked, all the people remained safe. God had rescued them, just as the angel had foretold.

The word courage is part of the word "encourage." The word courage is also part of the word "discourage." We can encourage others by telling them that God cares for us. We can get discouraged ourselves when we stop trusting God and think about how frightening the situation we are in seems. We can discourage others by talking about the things they fear or teasing them, instead of encouraging them to trust God and reminding them of His love for us. The Bible tells us that we can be confident that God cares for us.

Relevant Scripture

Psalm 121:1-8

Bible Memory Verse

Joshua 1:9

Songs

Strong and Courageous.mp3

Thursday Evening

God is my air bag

While driving in a vehicle, discuss motor vehicle safety devices like car seats, seat belts and air bags.

Explain that seat belts are used to protect passengers from injuries if the vehicle has to stop quickly or is in a collision. Liken this to a parent holding a child's hand while crossing the street, or walking up or down stairs, or on rough terrain. Seat belts are protection that you can see and feel.

Next, tell your child about vehicles equipped with air bags. Explain that air bags are devices that you cannot see or feel, yet they are always there, offering protection if there is a sudden impact. This is the way God is – He is always with us, even though we can't see Him. He is ready to help or protect us any time we need His help.

Questions for discussion

1. Why do we wear seat belts?
2. What is an air bag?
3. Where is the air bag?
4. How is a parent like a seat belt?
5. How is God like an air bag?

Relevant Scripture

Psalms 13:5-6

Psalms 121:7-8

Friday

Bible Memory Verse

Joshua 1:9

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Joshua 1:9

Songs

Strong and Courageous.mp3

Activity

Backbone

Show the class a piece of paper and a paper back book. Stand the paper on its edge and challenge the class to make the paper hold up the book. See if they can come up with a way to make this happen. The trick is to tightly roll the paper into a tube about an inch or so in diameter. Now the paper will have no problem holding up the book.

Sometimes we don't think we have what it takes to be courageous and do the right thing. But just like the paper, we can turn our weaknesses into strengths if we work on it and create the backbone needed to hold up under pressure.

Friday Evening

The gracious hand of God

While driving in your vehicle or at another quiet time, have your children list some things they are afraid of. After they have listed some fears, let them know you are going to tell them a story about a man named Ezra who had to take a scary trip. Your story can include all or part of the summary provided below (taken from Ezra, chapters 7-8).

Once upon a time, a man named Ezra had to go on a lengthy journey through places where robbers and bandits lurked. Just how did Ezra get himself into such a scary situation? It all started a long, long time ago. Ezra lived at a time when the people of Israel had been taken captive and were living in a foreign land. In this other country, they were forced to serve the king of the land. After the Israelites had lived for

many years in this foreign land, God decided to allow the Israelites to return to Jerusalem, their special city where they had lived before being taken captive. The Israelites wanted to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem so they could worship God there again. A man named Artaxerxes was king at that time and the Bible says that "The king had granted him [Ezra] everything he asked, for the hand of the Lord his God was on him." King Artaxerxes gave permission for Ezra and anyone else to return to Jerusalem. He also sent gold and silver along with Ezra and instructed him to buy rams and bulls to offer to His God as a sacrifice in Jerusalem.

Artaxerxes also sent a letter with Ezra telling the governors of the areas where Ezra was going to give Ezra more money, wheat and oil and salt if he needed it. The king also told Ezra that it was his job to teach all of the other Israelites to follow God's laws as he did.

Ezra knew this was a big job and that the journey to Jerusalem would be dangerous. Ezra and the men going with him were also taking their wives and children and all that they owned. They did not travel in cars, but in wagons and on foot. The journey would take a long, long time and along the roads there could be thieves waiting to steal their possessions or enemies waiting to hurt them. Even though the journey would be scary, Ezra praised God anyway and thanked Him for the honour of serving Him. Ezra also said, "Because the hand of the Lord my God was on me, I took courage and gathered leading men from Israel to go up with me" (Ezra 7:28).

Ezra was tempted to ask the king for soldiers to protect them on their journey, but he was ashamed to do so, because he had told the king that God would take care of them (Ezra 8:22). Instead of asking for soldiers, they fasted and prayed and asked God to protect them on their journey. And God did! The Bible tells us that Ezra and his men and their families did arrive safely in Jerusalem.

Ezra said, "The hand of our God was on us, and He protected us from enemies and bandits along the way."

Questions for discussion

1. What do kids do when they feel afraid?
2. Do you feel safer when you are alone, or when you are with your parents?
3. Have you ever been in a scary place?
4. Has God ever given you a job to do? Read Matthew 28:18-20 (see below).
5. What important job did Jesus give His disciples?
6. Does Jesus expect us to do this job too?

Key concepts

Often when children are frightened, it makes them feel better to hold their mom or dad's hand. This is similar to what Ezra did. Ezra often said, "The gracious hand of God is on us." Just as kids feel safer with an adult they trust, Ezra

knew he was safe when he was following God. God did keep Ezra and His people safe. He will take care of us when we ask Him to as well.

Just before Jesus left to go back to heaven, He gave his disciples a job very similar to Ezra's job. Jesus told His disciples that they were to go and tell everyone how to obey everything Jesus had taught them. Then He reminded them that He would be with them forever! The job and the promise Jesus gave to His disciples is for all Christians. We can be confident, even when we are afraid, because we know that God will always be with us.

Return to the list of things your children said they were afraid of. List each one and then have your children say this rhyme with you:

I'm not afraid!
I've got it made!
With Jesus by my side,
I say to fear, "Bye! Bye!"

Use the rhyme to encourage your children to trust God when they are afraid. In the future, when your children are fearful, you can affirm them by telling them that the "gracious hand of God" is on them, just like it was on Ezra.

Relevant Scripture

Matthew 28:18-20



Flexibility

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

Flexi-Ball

Wad a piece of aluminum foil into a ball. Make it the size of a ping pong ball. Give several students some toothpicks and ask them to wrap them around the ball. Obviously, they can't. Next give them a handful of rubber bands and ask them to wrap those around the ball. This works much better. Give each student a rubber band. Pass the ball around and have each of them add their rubber band to the ball. As they do so, they should give an example of sometime in the past that they were flexible. For younger students, you may want to provide them a list from which to choose.

Introduction

Opposites:

Flexibility vs Resistance / Flexibility vs Stubbornness

What does it mean?

Willingness to change plans or ideas without getting upset.

Translation:

Spanish: Flexible vs. Testarudo

Go to the root

The Latin word *flexibilis* comes from the verb "flecto" which means "to bend". Can you picture a palm tree bending against a strong wind to remain standing?

Bible Connection

The story of Abraham who left his home and family in obedience to God's call (Genesis 12)

Bible Memory Verse

Col 3:2

The I WILL's of Flexibility

To practice Flexibility I will:

- not get upset when plans change
- respect the decisions of my authorities
- not be stubborn
- look for the good in changes
- not compromise what is right

Monday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Flexibility:

Phil 4:12-14

Rom 14:5-6

2 Tim 2:15

Personal Evaluation - How flexible are you?

- When plans are changed, do you get discouraged, or do you immediately look for reasons why the new plans are better?
- Do you quickly adjust to a change of direction, or does it require time for you to mentally or emotionally adjust?
- When you learn that you must move, does it cause anxiety in you, or do you rejoice in it as a further reminder that you are a stranger and a pilgrim in this world?
- Do your parents or employers have to explain instructions twice, or do you understand what they mean the first time?
- When God calls you to a ministry or work, do you resist and make yourself busy with other activities?
- When others suggest a better way to do something, do you try it or do you keep doing it the way you had been doing it?
- Do you misuse flexibility by having no daily plans or life goals?
- Is your life so encumbered with possessions and debt that it would be impractical or impossible to exercise flexibility at the leading of the Lord?
- Are the thoughts of your heart in harmony with the will of God so that changes are easy transitions?

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Flexible vs. Stubborn

Give each student a clothespin and several pipe cleaners. Have them bend the pipe cleaners into the shape of a stick-man. Let them draw a face on the clothespin. As you read through the following list, have them hold up the pipe cleaner-man if it is being flexible or the clothespin-man if it is being stubborn. You may also choose to use a rubber band, cotton ball or clay for the flexible and a rock, bottle cap or Lego for the stubborn.

- Crying when the rain cancels a picnic
- Playing indoor games when it is too cold outside
- Refusing to eat broccoli
- Trying new foods
- Throwing building blocks a w toy tower falls
- Trying a different approach when the first attempt fails
- Complaining about mom's radio station in the car
- Learning to appreciate different music styles

Discussion

Model of Flexibility: Bethany Hamilton, Hero of Flexibility

In April, 2011, the film *Soul Surfer* was released based on the 2004 biography of surfer Bethany Hamilton. The book chronicles her pursuit of a surfing title both before and after a shark attack in which she suffered the loss of her left arm just below the shoulder.

The movie identifies many of the adaptations she needed to make in order to return to daily living as well as return to surfing.

In July 2004, Hamilton won the Best Comeback Athlete ESPY Award. She was also presented with a special "courage award" at the 2004 Teen Choice Awards.

In 2005, Hamilton took 1st place in the National Scholastic Surfing Association National Championships, a goal she had been trying to achieve since before the shark attack. In 2008, she began competing full-time on the Association of Surfing Professional World Qualifying Series. In her first competition against many of the world's best women

surfers, she finished 2nd. The changes she faced didn't stop her. Hamilton used flexibility along with determination to not only survive but to excel.

Bible Connection

The story of Martha who failed the test of flexibility (Luke 10:38-42)

Bible Memory Verse

Col 3:2

The I WILL's of Flexibility

Review

Tuesday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Flexibility:

1 Cor 8:13

Ps 119:105

Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Squiggle Art

On a sheet of paper, draw some type of a squiggly line. Make a copy of the page so that each student has a copy. Instruct them to turn the squiggle into a picture of something. Encourage each child to turn the paper to see if a different perspective of the line allows them to picture it in a drawing. When they have completed their drawings, let them share them with each other to see how many different types of pictures can spring from a simple line. For younger students, you may want to demonstrate on the board first, asking for volunteers to make the line into something. If time allows then each student can do their

own. Point out how many different things could be made from the same line. Liken this to situations that call for flexibility. In most cases, there are multiple ways to overcome an obstacle.

Discussion

Character Definitions of Flexibility

- Learning the wishes of the one I am serving and adapting my priorities to meet them.
- Learning how to cheerfully change plans when unexpected conditions require it.
- Avoiding obligations that would hinder us from taking the best course of action.
- Not becoming attached to ideas or plans which could be changed by my authorities.
- Flexibility is not setting my affections on plans or places that could be changed by those whom I am serving

Bend or Break

Most tree trunks grow wider as they grow older. Each year they develop new growth rings, providing strength and rigidity to a tree. Palm trees, however, are an exception. They grow upward, adding a new growth *disk* each year. When storms come, the palm tree stands through great gusts of wind because of its ability to bend. Some older and taller palms actually bend all the way to the ground. This flexibility is anchored by roots that are thick and deep. With this combination of strong roots and a flexible trunk, the palm tree is able to withstand tremendous winds without being broken or uprooted. People should respond to the “winds of change” like the palm tree. They must bend to their authorities’ requests so that they don’t break, but stand firmly anchored on right standards so that they don’t become uprooted.

Bible Connection

The story of when two dreams required instant flexibility and thereby saved the life of a king (Matthew 2:12-13)

Bible Memory Verse

Col 3:2

The I WILL’s of Flexibility

Review

Wednesday Evening

Flexibility is not being wishy-washy or a lack of conviction

You are never flexible with absolutes. Absolutes are always absolute. They never change. Two plus two is always four. This is not only true with natural law, it is also true with spiritual law. God designed both. The Bible is the infallible, inerrant Word of God. Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today and forever.

Conviction is a must. We are commanded to be bold about conviction - the fundamentals of the faith - 1 Cor 15:58; Prov 14:26; 28:1.

Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

The Egg Vs. The Tennis Ball

Cover part of the floor with newspaper (or do this outside where you can hose down afterwards). Have one of your students drop a raw egg onto the newspaper. Have your students observe its reaction when it hits an obstacle. Now have them drop a Tennis ball (but not in the egg mess!) and observe its reaction to the obstacle. Discuss with your students how these two reactions demonstrate how to react when something gets in your way that changes your plans. If you are like the egg, you crumble and stop when your plan hits a snag. If you are like the Tennis ball, you bounce and get right back in the game.

Bible Connection & Discussion

Flexibility is the opposite of stubbornness and obstinacy

1 Sam 15:22; 2 Chron 36:16-17; Ps 95:8-11

Examples of Inflexibility, stubbornness and a resistant spirit

Children

Jeri only wanting what he liked and wouldn't try anything new to eat

Adults

The way the toilet paper is hung
Ronnie refusing to move when asked to move in church

An example of flexibility - a GPS

Recalculating

Bible Memory Verse

Col 3:2

The I WILL's of Flexibility

Review

Thursday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Flexibility:

The Stubbornness of Israel

Lev 26:19-21

Deut 9:27-29

Judges 2:19-21

Jer 5:23 NIV

Jer 7:24 NIV

Ezek 2:4 NIV

Friday

Bible Memory Verse

Col 3:2

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Col 3:2

The I WILL's of Flexibility

Review

Friday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Flexibility:

Don't forget to ask your children the questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? And How?

Discuss with your family what each verse teaches about the character quality of Flexibility, and give vital application of how this quality can be applied to your family.

(The synonym **Change** has been substituted for the word **Flexibility**.)

- change his countenance...Job 14: 20
- Because they do not change...Psalm 55:19
- with those given to change...Proverbs 24:21
- change times and law...Daniel 7:25
- change their glory into...Hosea 4:7
- now and to change my tone...Galatians 4:20
- there is also a change...Hebrews 7:12

Compassion

Monday

Introduction

Have the child lie on the newsprint and trace around his shape to make a silhouette.

Needed:

Newspaper
Permanent Markers
Band-Aids
Blindfold
Packet of seeds & Mature plant/flower of that species (or picture)

- What is “compassion?” *Compassion is kindness.*
- What actions show compassion?
- What does compassion feel like?
- What other words are related to compassion?

Have you ever wanted to help a friend who had fallen and scraped a knee or gotten a splinter in his finger? Have you ever ached inside when one of your friends was made fun of at school? Have you ever felt true sorrow when something really bad happened to someone you love? These are feelings of compassion.

Compassion is feeling as if you really know how another person is feeling because of your own personal experiences.

God wants us to be compassionate towards others. We need to notice when people are in need and develop compassionate hearts. When we have compassion for other people it makes us happy.

Opening Prayer

Father, help us to see others like You see them. Help us to look past ourselves and our own concerns and see the needs of others. Help us to have a heart that is really concerned about others. Help us to be more like You. In Jesus name, Amen!

Discussion

Let's pretend this is a person in our class. We'll call her Jenny. She is a visitor. But there is a big problem. Jenny is

very sad. Her life is all mixed up. She doesn't know where to turn.

[Draw a broken heart on the silhouette figure and tape the newsprint to a wall.]

See how Jenny's heart is broken. She hasn't told anyone else about her problems, but sometimes she looks so sad.

What could you do to help Jenny? (Tell her jokes to cheer her up. Ask her what the matter is.)

We all feel bad at times. It's easy to see when someone has fallen off his bike and scraped his knee. That kind of hurt is on the outside. But we all have hurts on the inside. Those are harder for our friends to see.

God wants us to help those who are sad, lonely, scared, shy, or feeling rejected. The Bible tells us that we must try to help them.

Zechariah 7:9

- What does this verse say we must do when people we know are hurting on the inside? (Show mercy and compassion to them; take care of them.)

Sometimes when we know someone is hurting on the inside, we are afraid to help. Or, maybe we don't know how to help.

Have you ever seen someone who looked really sad and you didn't know quite what to say or do? (For example, my neighbor, who's old, fell down and broke her arm and I didn't know how to cheer her up. My mom was sad one day and I didn't know what to say. My friend's dad moved away and he felt very lonely.)

Sad things happen to people we love. When these sad things happen, God wants us to show compassion for them. He wants us to show love to them in His name.

Jesus is our example of how to be compassionate. Can you think of some of the compassionate things that Jesus did? How did Jesus show compassion for people?

- Healed the sick
- Made the lame to walk and the blind to see
- Feed 5,000

In the last hours of His life, as He hung there on the cross, He showed compassion to His mother, and to the thief that was being crucified with Him.

Let's read one story of how Jesus showed God's love to someone in need.

Mark 7:31-37

- What did the people think when Jesus healed the man? (They were surprised. They told everyone about what Jesus had done.)

All through the books of Mathew, Mark, Luke, and John, we read about compassionate things Jesus did. He healed people. He held the children. He fed people who had no food. He taught them of God's love

Activity

Band-Aid Bluff

Today, we want to think about how we can help people who are hurting. To think of new ways to help people, let's play Band-Aid Bluff.

[Form two teams. Give each team a blindfold, permanent marker or pen, and enough Band-Aids so that each person has one.]

Let's try to heal Jenny's hurting heart. Which team can do the best job? This is how the game is played. Teams will take turns putting Band-Aids on the heart. The goal is to get your team's Band-Aids in the best places. But you must do it blindfolded.

The first team will think of a way to help someone who is hurting. For example, you might decide to tell that person you love them.

Write "I love you" on a Band-Aid. Then choose someone to put the Band-Aid on Jenny while blindfolded. Then the second team will write a saying on their Band-Aid and choose someone to put it on Jenny's heart.

[Help the first team to write a compassionate saying on a Band-Aid. Have the team explain what they would do to use their saying in a situation. Then blindfold the first player and stand her a few feet in front of the silhouette. Uncover half of the tape on the Band-Aid so the player can grasp the covered part. Then allow the blindfolded person to walk to the silhouette and stick the Band-Aid on it.

Give teams an equal number of chances to play. Some examples of compassionate sayings are:

- Can I help you with something?
- I will pray for you.
- Would you like to tell me about your hurt?
- I am your friend.
- I will spend time with you.

- I am so sorry you are hurting.
- I know an adult who can help.

When the game is over have kids sit in a circle.

- What does it feel like when someone helps you when you are hurting? (I feel calmer. I get happy.)
- What does it feel like to help someone who is hurting? (I feel good about myself. I feel like I did something God wants me to do.)

God planned for us to show His love to others by helping them when they are hurting. Not only does the hurting person feel better, others will see how much we love through our actions. Then we can explain to everyone that we are acting with love because we love God. We are showing God's love.

If Jenny was a real person, I'm sure she would be happier right now. Each of us would also feel happier because we had shown God's love.

Discussion

Developing Compassion

Phillip was a thirteen-year-old retarded boy whose family just started coming to church. His mother was concerned about how well Phillip would be accepted.

On his first Sunday in Sunday school, Phillip entered his new class. From the back of the room came a question, "Hey, who's the guy with the thick glasses and the weird eyes?"

Phillip had a breathing problem which meant that often he had to stick his tongue out in order to get enough air. Seeing Phillip, one of the boys in the class turned to his friend, stuck out his tongue and said, "Look guys. Guess who I am."

Later that day at home, Phillip told his mother that he did not want to ever go back to church.

- What wrong things did the kids in the class do?
- How would you feel if you were Phillip?
- If you were in this class, what would you do?
- If the class made fun of you, what would you do?
- If Phillip were a friend of yours, how would you feel?

Continue the story...

Phillip's mother decided to ask to speak to the class the next Sunday, without Phillip being present. The teacher allowed Phillip's mother to explain: "When Phillip was born, the doctors did not think he would live. He was born with an imperfect body that does not allow him to do as much as

some of you are able to do. He may not look like you, but he has the same kinds of feelings you do. He feels alone. He is a little afraid to be here, because he doesn't think he has any friends. I am concerned that without your help, he will never want to come back to church."

During the next few weeks there was a decided change in the attitude and actions of the class. One of the girls in the class was sick on a Sunday morning and was told by her mother that she would not be able to go to church. The girl protested, "But Phillip needs me."

- Tell about a time that you really felt for another person who was hurting or angry?
- Have you ever felt as if you were feeling another person's embarrassment?
- Has anyone ever treated you with compassion?

Discussion

How do we become compassionate?

[Show the children a packet of seeds and a mature plant (or a picture) of the same type of plant as the seeds.]

When we become children of God, He plants the seeds of the fruit of the Spirit within our hearts—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. In order for us to become truly compassionate, we must take care of and work with these seeds, just as we have to water and tend vegetable or flower seeds for them to mature.

Brainstorming Idea

- Who are some people that need compassion? [Teacher, let the children identify a family or a group of people in the community who might feel comforted by the student's expression of kindness.]
- How might we show compassion toward other people, animals, the earth, and oneself? [Have students write letters, make greeting cards, or do some other kind gesture for them.]

Wouldn't it be fun to do one, small, individual "random act of kindness" for someone and keep it a secret? You can practice compassion that way!

Colossians 3:12

Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.

Closing Prayer

Father, I'm so glad that You love me. Help me to show Your love to others who are hurting. Help me know what to say and do to make them feel better. And help me to tell them about You and Your love. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Bible Memory Verse

1 John 3:17

Songs

Fill Your Bucket.mp4 (3:58)

The I WILL's of Compassion

To practice Compassion I will:

- Stop to help
- Listen when others want to talk
- Give of my resources to help those in need
- Look for lasting solutions
- Comfort others without regard to race, gender, faith, age, or nationality

Monday Evening

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

Read

Luke 10:25-37

How would you describe the lawyer to whom Jesus told this story. Why do you think he wanted to "justify himself?" (Verse 10:29)

How might we explain the religious professionals' (the priest and the Levite) lack of compassion for the beaten-up stranger?

It's easy to condemn the priest and Levite, but what if 300 people were gathered in a synagogue in the next town waiting for the priest and Levite to lead a service? And perhaps some of these people were hoping for spiritual healing from the priest.

Where do you suppose that the Samaritan got his

compassion for the victim?

Jews of that day despised Samaritans, who were half-breed of Jews who intermarried with pagans. So why do you think Jesus made the Samaritan the hero in this story?

According to this story, what does compassion look like?

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Compassion Quiz

Needed

Index cards (3 per individual)
Dark colored marker

Instructions

Give each child 3 index cards. Mark one card "1" with a marker. Mark one card "2" and one card "3." As you read the following situations, have each child hold up a card which best represents how sad the situation makes them feel (1 = very sad, 2 = a little sad, 3 = not sad at all). Allow the children to talk about their feelings in each situation.

- Seeing a homeless person on the street
- Seeing a hungry child on television
- Hearing a baby cry
- Seeing a dead animal on the road
- Hearing a fire truck, police, or ambulance siren
- Hearing someone make fun of another person
- Watching the news
- Seeing someone hurt an animal
- Reading the newspaper
- Being separated from a loved one
- Seeing a hurt child
- Having a pet run away
- Seeing someone having car trouble
- Watching a fight at school
- Seeing litter in the streets

Songs

Fill Your Bucket.mp4 (3:58)

Introduction

Opposites:

Compassion vs Indifference (Hard-heartedness)

What does it mean?

Investing whatever is necessary to heal the hurts of others.

How do we Sign it?

Compassion

Bible Connection

God showed compassion on the wicked people of Nineveh

Beginning the Lesson:

Who is the worst, most wicked person you have ever known? (Let the children respond briefly)

Ask them to explain why they think the person is so wicked.) We know that God hates wickedness. So here is a question to think about: How does God feel about people who are very wicked? Does He hate them? Does He want to punish them?

Transition to the Lesson

Let's look at a Bible story about some people who were very wicked.

Let's look at a Bible story about some people who hated God, and hated God's people.

Let's look at the story of the wicked people of Nineveh.

God forgives the wicked people of Nineveh when they repent.

Read

Jonah 1:1-2, ch 3-4.

Main Ideas to Emphasize:

The people of Nineveh were very wicked people who hated God and hated His people. They deserved punishment, but God loved them. In His great compassion, He sent a warning first by His prophet Jonah. When Jonah preached, the people repented, so God did not punish them. God must punish sin, but God is compassionate and merciful. He wants to forgive us if we will repent of our sins.

God's heart is full of compassion, and He wants the hearts of His people to be like His own. He wants us to have kind,

loving feelings that results in kind, helpful actions towards them.

Questions & Discussion:

- Have we done some wicked things that need to be punished? Name examples.
- Do we deserve to be punished? (Yes, the Bible says we are all guilty—Rom 3:23)
- How do we know God wants to show compassion for us? (He sent Jesus to be our Savior, and He sent people to warn us and teach us His word, just like He did to the Ninevites.)
- How have you seen someone show compassion for another person?

If you are a believer in Jesus, God has shown compassion on you by forgiving you for all your sins. Now you can show compassion to others.

- How can you show compassion (show you really care) for others?
- How can you show compassion for such as
 - the mentally retarded?
 - the handicapped?
 - someone who is always dirty?
 - someone who brags a lot?
 - someone who is mean?
 - someone who is very poor?

Ask for ideas on specific ways to show compassion to members of each group.

Bible Memory Verse

1 John 3:17

The I WILL's of Compassion

Review

Tuesday Evening

In the book, *Victor's Dream*, we learn how God is always faithful. Jeremiah 29:11 says, "I know the plans I have for you, for good and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope." (NIV) Victor learned some valuable lessons from the life of Joseph. We can learn these same lessons. God used Joseph, through both his challenges and victories, to develop six godly character traits.

These character traits enabled Joseph to become the great leader that God intended him to be. Joseph's leadership saved his family and an entire nation. In the next lessons, we will learn about these six characteristics: Compassion, courage, confidence, character, commitment, calling. Today's lesson is COMPASSION.

We see many examples of compassion in *Victor's Dream*. As a foster child, separated from his parents and living in a group home, Victor sometimes felt sad and rejected. However, he had several people in his life who loved him, took care of him, and showed compassion toward him. God has put different people in our lives in which we could show compassion. Think about who you know that may feel sad or rejected, as Victor did. Think of ways you can show compassion.

We can learn to show compassion to others because God is compassionate to us. You are special to God and He loves you very much. The Bible shows us how much God loves us. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world, that He gave his only son for whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."

Jesus taught us about compassion by telling a story in the Bible. We call these stories parables. A parable is a story that has a lesson to be learned. Let's read Luke 10:30-37. Jesus ended this story with a command. He wants us to show the same compassion for others as the Samaritan showed to the man on the side of the road. Sometimes showing compassion is difficult, but compassion is an important characteristic if we want to be a great leader. Perhaps, one day, you will grow up to save a nation, just as Joseph did!

- What are the six characteristics of a great leader? (*compassion, courage, confidence, character, commitment, calling*)
- What are other words we can use for compassion? (*sympathy, caring, loving, serving, helping*)
- In *Victor's Dream*, what are some examples we see of compassion? (*the Conners cared for the children in their cottage, Mr. Conner encouraged Victor to be a leader, Coach Jacobs put his arm around Victor, Mrs. Conner made Victor's favorite meal, the Jacob's adopted Victor and his siblings, God showed his compassion on everyone, Joseph forgave his brothers*).
- Who were the people in Victor's life who showed him compassion? (*God, the Conners, the Jacob's*)
- What are some ways that other children can make fun of people? (*skin color, size, disability, appearance*)

- How does it make you feel when other children make fun of you or others? (sad, angry, frustrated, want to give up)
- What are some things that can cause people to feel sad or rejected? (*being made fun of, yelling, violence, loneliness*)
- In what ways has God shown you compassion? (*died on the cross, brought people in my life who love me*)
- What kinds of things can you do for others who need compassion?

.....

Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Compassion Pie

Needed:

Disposable pie tin, permanent marker, small magnet, glue

Working as a team, create a recipe for Compassion Pie. Allow children to take turns adding “ingredients” (such as ½ cup kindness, 3 teaspoons empathy, etc.). As a visual, you can write the recipe suggestions on a disposable pie tin, using a permanent marker. Glue a magnet on the back of the pie tin and place on the refrigerator as a reminder to show compassion to others.

Bible Connection

Jesus showed compassion in His ministry

Read

Mark 1:23-42

Review for Older Students:

- How do we know that God loved even the wicked people of Nineveh?
- They deserved punishment. How did God show them His compassion and mercy?
- What happened when Jonah preached to them?
- How did God respond?
- Why was Jonah angry?
- What is God's final plea to Jonah?

Younger Students:

- Who did God send to Nineveh to warn the wicked people?
- When they repented, what did God do?
- How did God feel about the people of Nineveh?
- How do you know God wanted to forgive the wicked people of Nineveh?

Beginning the Lesson:

Review-Last time we were together we learned that God showed compassion and mercy to the wicked Ninevites when they repented. Jesus also showed compassion in His ministry.

Mark 1:40-42, Luke 22: 47-51, Luke 23:33-34, 35-37, 39

Main Points of the Bible Lesson– Mark 1: 40-42

Jesus showed compassion by touching a leper and healing him.

Discuss:

- What kinds of people did Jesus show compassion for? (Be sure the following points are raised—the sick, the unlovely, the outcast, the lonely, His enemies.) What are some kinds of people that are hard for you to show compassion for? Why?

Ask some students to pray, asking God for His strength to show compassion to a specific person or a specific group of people this week.

Bible Memory Verse

1 John 3:17

Songs

Fill Your Bucket.mp4 (3:58)

The I WILL's of Compassion

Review

Wednesday Evening

Out of compassion the blind receive their sight
(Matt 9:27-31)

Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

Compassion Hand



Materials needed:

- foam sheet (any color; one per individual)
- scissors (if possible, one per individual)
- glue
- paint stir stick or tongue depressor (one per individual)
- washable markers

Instructions

1. Using a washable marker, draw the child's hand on a foam sheet.
2. Cut out the hand pattern.
3. Write the word "compassion" on the palm of the hand.
4. On each finger, write something you can do to show compassion.
5. Glue the hand to the end of the paint stir stick or tongue depressor.
6. Use as a daily reminder to show compassion to others.

Bible Connection & Discussion

Read:

Mark 2:1-12 (ICB)

Big Idea:

The Bible says we are to treat others the way we want to be treated (Matthew 7:12). This can be easy to forget, especially when things don't go our way. How do you want to be treated? Our first reaction many times is to consider only of our own feelings. But Jesus is telling us to show compassion and mercy to others...even if they don't deserve it. This was a "radical" thought not only in the days Jesus walked the earth, but today as well. Our natural instinct is to watch out for ourselves....to think about ourselves first. Putting others first happens when we show compassion and mercy....when we are considerate of others. The men in our Bible story showed compassion and mercy for their friend by carrying him to the roof and lowering him in front of Jesus. They probably wanted to be close to Jesus as well, but they must have known the possibility for their friend to be healed if Jesus could see him. And that was more important to them than whether or not they got to be close to Jesus. Just like the man's friends, Jesus had compassion and mercy for the paralyzed man and Jesus healed him. In this week's beatitude, the Bible tells us we will be blessed or happy when we are compassionate and considerate of others.

Me Attitude: "I don't need to worry about others!"

Be Attitude: Blessed are those who are compassionate and considerate of others

Situation:

Me and Be are attending a church group activity. A girl in a wheel chair is participating, however, she is not able to keep up with the kids and all the kids rush off without the girl. Me sees the girl and instead of helping her, he takes a left turn and goes out of his way to avoid her. He catches up with the others and never looks back. Be sees the same situation but goes over and joins the girl. They talk, he helps her maneuver around and they catch up to the others.

Bible Memory Verse

1 John 3:17

Songs

Fill Your Bucket.mp4 (3:58)

The I WILL's of Compassion

Review

Thursday Evening

Odd Man Out

by Kelly Weg

"Watch out!" Too late. The basketball sailed out of bounds, smashing into a surprised boy.

"Sorry." I said.

"No problem," he shrugged.

"My name's Jacob. You want to play?"

"What are you doing, Jacob?" interrupted Bret, the self-designated captain. "We've got enough players. We don't need him."

The school bell rang ending recess.

Speechless, I watched the guys clear the basketball court and head to class. Why were my classmates so rude to this new kid? Shifting my feet, I tried to break the awkward silence. "Maybe next recess."

"No sweat! By the way, my name's Andrew," he replied.

I hurried into school. A hand reached out of nowhere, grabbing my shirt and pulling me into an empty classroom. "What are you trying to do, Jacob?" It was Bret.

"What are you talking about?"

"Don't tell us you haven't heard about that new kid? He's got a disease," Bret's voice was almost a whisper. "Joel saw him sticking a needle in his arm in the boys' bathroom. He's got diabetes. Our teacher keeps a drawer full of snacks in case he gets dizzy. It's weird."

"Next time you decide to get friendly with diabetes boy, leave the rest of us out. We don't want to be catching what he's got."

The next morning on the school bus someone slid into the seat beside me. It was Andrew. I was trapped!

"I know everyone calls me diabetes boy. This isn't the first time people have freaked out."

I felt a little sorry for him. "How did you get it, anyway?"

"I was just kind of born with it," he said matter-of-factly.

"It's not that bad. I just have to keep an eye on my blood sugar. But all the pricking and poking with needles gets old . . ."

Yikes! I thought. I can barely stand getting a shot every few years.

Andrew kept his distance after that.

I wasn't the only one avoiding him. In class, he always worked alone. I wanted to change that.

At the dinner table one night, I was thinking about Andrew.

"Is it possible to get diabetes from somebody?" I blurted.

"Why do you ask?" my mom asked.

I told them about Andrew.

"Sounds like Andrew could use a friend," Dad said.

"Jacob, the first thing you should know is that diabetes isn't contagious, like a cold. You can't catch it. But Andrew has to be careful. If his blood sugar gets too low, he could get a little confused."

"Any disease can be scary if we don't know enough about it," my mom replied. "But from what we know, people with diabetes can live perfectly normal and active lives if they take care of themselves."

I couldn't wait to get on the school bus and ask Andrew to sit with me. I really wanted to be his friend.

I went to bed early that night.

"Jacob, didn't you hear your alarm? Mom stopped short and gasped. "Oh, Jacob, look at you!"

Looking into the mirror later, I was shocked to see that I resembled a strawberry. I was covered in hives and itched like crazy.

After staying home because of my allergic reaction to strawberries, Mom finally agreed I was well enough to go back to school. A few red blotches still covered my face, but I felt fine.

Kids started teasing me the moment I walked into school.

People treated me differently. When the lunch bell finally rang, I sprinted for the door.

"I got the basketball!" one of my classmates yelled. "Let's start a game."

"Count me in!" I shouted.

"Jacob, I think you should sit this one out." Bret took charge of the court. "We don't want you spreading those hives or cooties or whatever you got."

"But guys, you can't catch it from me!" I tried to protest, but they weren't listening.

I plopped down on the side of the court. Andrew surprised me by sitting down next to me. "I see you're back."

"Hi, Andrew." We hadn't talked since we had shared the bus seat. "The guys don't want me to play. They're afraid of me because of the rash." I shook my head in disgust and took a swig of juice from the bottle I had taken from my lunch box.

"I know how you feel," Andrew replied with a smile.

Without hesitating, I offered him my juice. "Want a drink?"

His eyes showed surprise. Grinning, he slowly took the bottle.

"Thanks."

That was the first of many things Andrew and I shared as best friends.

Discussion Questions

1. Who showed compassion in this story? Was it Jacob or Andrew? Or did both of them show compassion?
2. Have you ever known someone who has a chronic illness, disease, or disability of some sort? If so, do you treat them differently? How? What do you do that shows compassion?
3. If you had a chronic illness, disease, or disability, how would you want to be treated by others? Being safe is good, but even people with contagious sicknesses need compassion.

Friday

Bible Memory Verse

1 John 3:17

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to me today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

1 John 3:17

Songs

Fill Your Bucket.mp4 (3:58)

Friday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Compassion:
Leviticus 19:9-18, 33-37

Dependability, Faithfulness, Loyalty

Week 1

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

Car and Driver

This activity needs an open space in which to play. The students should be paired up. One person in each pair is blindfolded. (Toilet paper wound around the head makes a good disposable blindfold.) This person is “the car”. The person who can see is “the driver”. Drivers should stand behind their car and grip the tops of their shoulders so that they can steer them. Cars should put their hands straight out in front of them as the bumper. The object of the game is to move around the area (define limits) and not run into anyone or anything. Declare a slow speed limit so that driving is not reckless or too fast. Allow them to drive for 3 - 5 minutes depending on the size of the area and the rowdy factor. Call an All Stop and have the car and driver reverse roles. (Note: regardless of the type of blindfold you use, you can not reuse the blindfold as this can transmit eye infections.) Start the group again and allow them the same amount of time as before. When the time is up, ask the students which role they liked better, car or driver? How did it feel to be dependent on someone else? How did it feel to have others dependent on you?

Introduction

Opposites:

Dependability vs Inconsistency

What does it mean?

Fulfilling what I consented to do, even if it means unexpected sacrifice.

Translation:

Spanish: Seriedad Vs. Contradicción

Go to the root

De- is the Latin prefix meaning “down” or “from.” Combining this with the word pendere (“to hang”) creates a word

picture of the term dependable– something reliable enough “to hang from.”

How do we Sign it?

Depend

Bible Connection

Read & Discuss some Bible verses:

Timothy (1 Corinthians 4:17)

Lydia (Acts 16:14-15)

Bible Memory Verse

Ps 15:4

Story

A Reputation for Dependability

John and Horace Dodge were born in Niles, Michigan. They later commented, “We were the poorest little urchins ever born.” Hard work and engineering genius soon led to the invention of a dirt proof ball bearing, then the manufacture of a bicycle. The red-headed brothers acquired their own machine shop and in 1903 were solicited by Henry Ford to work for his business.

Soon their Detroit shop supplied car engines to the Ford Motor Company and transmissions for Oldsmobile cars. They amassed a fortune and in 1914 they introduced their own auto: a sturdily built Dodge.

John and Horace epitomized the American work ethic and were known for paying their debts and being fair with their workers and business partners. Capitalizing on their reputation, they used their name, “Dodge Brothers” followed by “Reliable, Dependable, Sound” to market their products. Devoted Dodge customers raved about the rugged construction, quality, and power of their vehicles.

Buyers consistently commented that this was a car that could be depended upon. In a Dodge marketing stroke of

genius, Theodore MacManus coined the word “dependability.” The new word began appearing in dictionaries in the early ‘30’s.



The I WILL’s of Dependability

To practice Dependability I will:

- keep my word
 - be careful what I promise
 - correct my mistakes
 - pull my share of the load
 - not have a bad attitude
-

Monday Evening

Lord Horatio Nelson

There stands a great monument in England’s Trafalgar Square. This landmark in the heart of London is of Lord Horatio Nelson, Great Britain’s greatest admiral and naval hero. Nelson was the arch foe of Napoleon.

Lord Nelson had been made commander-in-chief of England’s naval fleet in May 1803. He led from the flagship *Victory*. On October 21, 1805, just off Cape Trafalgar on the coast of Spain, Nelson hoisted the signal “England expects that every man will do his duty.” Then he sailed with 27 vessels against the combined French and Spanish fleets. A fierce battle followed. Nelson was mortally wounded by an enemy sharp shooter and was carried below deck. Living long enough to know of England’s victory, his last coherent words were, “Thank God I have done my duty.” Napoleon’s fleet of 33 warships was destroyed and Trafalgar became the decisive naval battle of the Napoleonic Wars. This victory gave Britain rule of the sea for over 100 years.

The poet, Robert Southey paid homage to Nelson with these words, “England has had many heroes. But never one who so entirely possessed the love of his fellow countrymen... With perfect and entire devotion he served his country with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his strength.”

We depend on our military and their commanders to keep our country, freedoms, and lifestyle safe. Their dependability and devotion are indispensable in preserving our liberty.

** Do you think Jonathan was Dependable? Read 1 Samuel 20:17

Attention Grabber Activity

Who do you depend on?

Give each student a picture of a simple outline of a person. On the inside, they should identify those people that depend on them. On the outside, write the people that they depend on. Both lists could include: bus driver, teacher, cafeteria worker, doctor, parents, coaches, referees, club leaders, teammates, classmates, etc.

For each of those whom they depend on, list what could happen if that person weren’t dependable. What would happen if the bus didn’t come every morning? Then turn it around and have them list what would happen if they themselves were not dependable, what would happen to those who depend on them? What if they didn’t do the work for a group project for school?

Model of Dependability

John and Horace Dodge, Heroes of Dependability

John and Horace Dodge were brothers, born in Niles, Michigan to Daniel Rugg Dodge who owned a foundry and a machine shop. Growing up, the boys were inseparable. Even as adults, they stuck together working as machinists in various machine and engine shops. After Horace had patented his invention of an improved ball bearing, the brothers formed a partnership to produce a bicycle that used the new ball bearing. The venture was quite successful and led to their own machine shop in Detroit. Soon after, they were making automobile parts for both Ford and Oldsmobile. In 1914, they started to manufacture their own auto. They used their name, “Dodge Brothers” followed by “Reliable, Dependable, Sound” to market their products. Customers were impressed with the high quality of their cars. A marketing campaign coined the word “dependability” for their advertising. The new word began appearing in dictionaries in the early 1930’s. In all of their manufacturing endeavors, the Dodge brothers modeled that working hard and building a reputation for dependability was a path to success in the manufacturing industry.

Bible Connection

The parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30)

- How does one person being late affect the day?
- How do you prepare for a sports practise?
- How does not being prepared affect a team?
- How do you prepare for keeping your promise to do a chore at home?
- How does not doing your chore affect the family?

Bible Memory Verse

Ps 15:4

** Do you think Ruth was Dependable? Read Ruth 1:16-18.

The I WILL's of Dependability

Review

Wednesday

Tuesday Evening

Sleeping Through the Storm

By: Author Unknown

Attention Grabber Activity

GOIN' ON A BEAR HUNT...

The "Goin' on a Bear Hunt" song is a favorite of campers and scouts. If you are not familiar with the song, try to "borrow" some older students who are scouts to lead the song. There are many versions of the song. One is compiled below that lists different ways of overcoming obstacles. The song is chanted as a repeat song so you or a group of scouts say each line, and the class repeats it while doing the motions. Scouts may know other versions so be sure to print this one so it includes the obstacles. After you have finished the song, review the obstacles. For each one, several solutions are thought of and then rejected until the right one comes to mind. Relate this to overcoming obstacles that prevent you from keeping a promise.

A young man applied for a job as a farmhand. When the farmer asked for his qualifications, he said, "I can sleep when the wind blows."

This puzzled the farmer. But he liked the young man, and hired him. A few days later, the farmer and his wife were awakened in the night by a violent storm. They quickly began to check things out to see if all was secure. They found that the shutters of the farmhouse had been securely fastened. A good supply of logs had been set next to the fireplace.

The young man slept soundly. The farmer and his wife then inspected their property. They found that the farm tools had been placed in the storage shed, safe from the elements.

The tractor had been moved into the garage. The barn was properly locked. Even the animals were calm. All was well.

The farmer then understood the meaning of the young man's words, "I can sleep when the wind blows." Because the farmhand did his work loyally and faithfully when the skies were clear, he was prepared for the storm when it broke. So when the wind blew, he was not afraid. He could sleep in peace.

Discussion Questions:

- What does it mean to be prepared for class?
- How does not being prepared affect your day?
- How can you prepare for the morning so that you can get to do school on time?

We're goin' on a bear hunt.

Gonna catch a big one.

I'm not scared.

I see a lake

Can't go under it

Can't go around it

Can't go over it

Gotta go through it.

Let's swim (Do swimming motions)

(Repeat Chorus)

I see a big mountain

Can't go under it

Can't go around it

Can't go through it

Gotta go over it.

Let's climb.

(Do running until you hit the top leaning backwards as you go up and leaning forwards as you go down)

(Repeat Chorus)

*I see a big log.
Can't go over it
Can't go around it
Can't go through it
Gotta go under it.
Let's crawl.
(Crouch down like you are going under a bridge)*

(Repeat Chorus)

*We're goin' on a bear hunt.
Gonna catch a big one.
I'm not scared.
I see a lake
Can't go under it
Can't go around it
Can't go over it
Gotta go through it.
Let's swim
(Do swimming motions)*

(Repeat Chorus)

*I see a big mountain
Can't go under it
Can't go around it
Can't go through it
Gotta go over it.
Let's climb.
(Do running until you hit the top leaning backwards as you go up and leaning forwards as you go down)*

(Repeat Chorus)

*I see a big log.
Can't go over it
Can't go around it
Can't go through it
Gotta go under it.
Let's crawl.
(Crouch down like you are going under a bridge)*

(Repeat Chorus)

*I see a cave.
Can't go under it
Can't go around it
Can't go over it
Gotta go in it.
Let's go (look side to side as you 'enter' the cave)
It's dark It's creepy.
Stop, I feel something.
It's furry. It's big. It has eyes.
IT'S A BEEEEEEEEEEEEAAAAAARRRRRRRRR!!!!!! (Really fast)
Get out of the cave (look side to side)*

*Go under the log (duck down)
Climb the mountain (run up and down)
Swim fast. (swim)
We're almost home.
Whew...we made it home safe!*

Bible Connection

How the Lord made Joseph to prosper (Genesis 39-40)

Bible Memory Verse

Ps 15:4

The I WILL's of Dependability

Review

Wednesday Evening

Faithfulness

Faithfulness ties in with Dependability.

Opposites

Faithfulness vs Unfaithfulness

What does it mean?

Having or showing true and constant support or loyalty

God's Way vs My Way

God's Way

I am demonstrating godly character when:

- I am faithful and loyal
- I can be trusted to do what I say I will do
- I am willing to put the needs of others before my own

And God is pleased!

My Way

When I am tempted to:

- be unfaithful
- not do what I have said I would do
- think only of my needs

I know that I need to go to God for help.

Bible Connection

Your money or your heart

Read

Matthew 23:23-26.

Note: You may choose to read a longer version of this story including Matthew 23:15-33.

Questions for discussion

1. Why was Jesus upset with the Pharisees?
2. What did Jesus say was more important to God than tithes or offering money?
3. Do you think God is more concerned about you giving money for offering at Sunday school or about how you treat others?
4. How can a kid be just?
5. How can you show mercy to others?
6. What do you think it means to be faithful?

Key concepts

Jesus was upset with the Pharisees because, on the outside, they made themselves look pretty good. They gave the required tenth of their spices and appeared to be righteous, but they did not have the proper attitude in their hearts. They did not practice justice, mercy or faithfulness. Instead, their hearts were full of self-indulgence, greed, hypocrisy and wickedness. To put this in kids' terms, God wouldn't care a lot about the money we put in the offering at Sunday School if we were not showing justice (being fair, taking turns), mercy (compassion for others who are not as fortunate) and being faithful (loyal to God and friends). Being faithful means that our actions match our words (1 John 3:18).

Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

Faithfulness to the sky

Go outside on a clear day. Talk about what it must have been like to live in Bible times when people spent most of their day outside. David was a special kind of farmer called a shepherd. Shepherds were always outside caring for their sheep! When David was outside and enjoying nature, he often wrote and sang praise songs to God called Psalms.

Read one or more of the verses listed below. Just as the sky goes on forever, so does God's faithfulness. Use the following questions to stimulate more discussion.

Questions for discussion

- How far away is the sky?
- Can you reach the sky?
- Can a bird?
- Can a plane?

Relevant Scripture

Psalms 36:5

Psalms 57:9-10

Bible Connection

Faithful priests

Read

Ezekiel 48:10-12

Questions for discussion

1. Which priests were faithful?
2. How were the other priests unfaithful?
3. *Read Ezekiel 48:10-12.* What was the discipline for the unfaithful priests?
4. What was God's reward to the Zadokites?

Key concepts

God was not happy with the priests who served sacrifices to idols and made the house of Israel fall into sin. There was also a group of priests called the Zadokites who faithfully served God even when the other priests led Israel astray. God decided He would no longer allow the other priests to come near Him to serve in the holy parts of the temple. He gave this job to the Zadokites. The other priests were allowed to do all the other work in the temple, except come into God's presence or be near any of His holy things.

God rewards those who are faithful by giving them privileges and honour. He is disappointed and angry with those who are unfaithful and disciplines them.

Bible Memory Verse

Ps 15:4

The I WILL's of Dependability

Review

Thursday Evening

Faithful friends (David & Jonathan)

Before beginning the questions for discussion, explain the history of David's friendship with Jonathan: Saul was the King of Israel. Unfortunately, Saul was not a king who pleased God, so God chose to give the honour of being the king to David (1 Samuel 15,16), a young man who worked for King Saul. David spent a lot of time in the palace and became very good friends with Saul's son Jonathan. After some time, King Saul became so jealous of David that he wanted to kill him. Even so, Jonathan remained David's best friend.

Questions for discussion

1. Do you have a best friend or some best friends?
2. Do you have a friend you love as much as you love yourself?
3. What would you give up for them?
4. Read 1 Samuel 18:1-4; 20:4. What does the Bible say that tells us that David and Jonathan were good friends?
5. Read 1 Samuel 19:1-7. What did Jonathan do to prove his love for David? Do you think this could have angered King Saul?
6. Would you speak the truth about one of your friends to defend him even if it might mean you could get yourself in trouble?
7. If someone was going to hurt your friend, would you be willing to defend him or her and risk getting hurt as well?
8. If another kid said that your friend was not allowed to play a game, would you be a faithful friend and say, "If you're asking not to play, then I am not going to play either"?
9. Read 1 Samuel 23:16-18. What did Jonathan do for David when he was in trouble?
10. What was Jonathan willing to give up for David?
11. Was Jonathan the kind of friend who you would like to have?
12. Was Jonathan the kind of friend who you would like to be?

Key concepts

Reading about the friendship between Jonathan and David shows us that true friends are faithful to each other even in difficult circumstances. Being a faithful friend means you are willing to give up your own valuable things for your friend. Jonathan gave up some of his physical possessions to David as well as his position as the next king of Israel. Jonathan also risked his life to defend David. Faithfulness means sticking by another person through hard times, not just in the easy times.

Friday

Bible Memory Verse

Ps 15:4

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Ps 15:4

Bible Connection

God is our rock!

The purpose of this activity is to illustrate that God is as dependable as a rock.

You will need to find a large rock or concrete wall, a park with sand in it, small sticks, drinking straws and a bottle that will squirt or spritz water.

1. Prior to going outside on a walk, print out Psalm 18:30-31.
2. While you are on your walk, allow your children to stand up on a big rock or concrete wall. Take the verses along and read them while the kids are sitting on the rock. Talk about how firm the rock is

and what a good foundation rock or concrete makes for a house.

3. Next, go to a park and have your children build and stand in a pile of sand.
4. To further extend the learning experience, have your children collect sticks and use them to build tiny houses using a firm and then a weak foundation. (If there are no trees around, you may need to take ice cream sticks with you to the park.)
5. Use "homemade" wind or rain to illustrate the difference between building on a strong or weak foundation. To do this, have your children blow air through a straw and squirt water from a water bottle onto their houses. As you are playing, use the questions provided to invite more discussion.

Questions for discussion

- How was the sand different from the rock?
- Which house withstood the rainstorm better, the one on a firm foundation or the one on the weak foundation?
- Would we trust God if the Bible said He was like a pile of sand?

Relevant Scripture

Psalm 18:30-31

The I WILL's of Dependability

Review

Friday Evening

Story

There lived in a forest a ferocious tiger who found pleasure in killing animals, even when he was not hungry. Every bird and beast used to avoid him.

Once the tiger killed an animal, and while eating it, a small bone stuck to his throat. This gave tremendous pain to him. He crying requested each and every bird and beast in the forest to take out the bone, and announced a reward for the job, as will be desired by the rescuer. But no one dared to come forward to help him, because they knew that the tiger was not at all dependable. As soon as the bone was taken out, he would kill his helper.

Seeing the deplorable condition of the tiger, at last a kind crane came near him and said, "See, your reputation is bad. No one believes you. If you promise me a reward and also

that you would not kill me as soon as I take out the bone, I am ready to help you."

The tiger said, "How can I kill a benevolent friend who would bring me relief from this pain? I promise not to kill you, and also promise to reward you according to your wish."

At this, the crane inserted his long neck into the tiger's mouth and with his sharp beak, he soon uprooted the bone. Then he asked the tiger to suitably reward him according to his promise.

The tiger replied, "You foolish crane, how do you dare to ask reward from a tiger? By the good luck of your forefathers, you've been able to save your life from me, or I would have eaten up, your head when it was inserted inside my broad mouth. And that is your great reward."

Bible Connection

God's Dependability

Read: Psalm 71:3

Preparation:

Dissolve 2 cups cornstarch in 1 cup of water. If the "goo" mixture won't form a ball when squeezed, add more cornstarch. The substance will immediately return to a liquid form after each time it is handled. You'll also need a fist-sized rock, a mixing bowl, and paper towels.

The Message:

(Gather the children in a circle, give each child a paper towel, and pass the rock around the circle.) As you hold this rock, say one word to describe it. (Shape a portion of the cornstarch mixture into a ball in the bowl. Pass the bowl to one of the children and watch what happens.) When you're given this bowl, shape the goo into a ball. Then place the ball back in the bowl and pass it on. Use the paper towels to wipe your hands.

One of the words we often use to describe rocks is "solid." Is this ball of goo solid? (Let the children give their opinions.)

It really isn't very dependable. Listen to what the Bible says about God. (Read the Scripture.) God is often called a rock. Since rocks are solid, what are some things they can be used for? Could the goo be used for those things? Why or why not? If God is like a rock and everything else is like the goo, what happens when we depend on God? when we depend on other things besides God?

(Close in prayer, thanking God for being so dependable.)

Dependability, Faithfulness, Loyalty

Week 2

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

"I won't be your friend"

For children who are dealing with an "I don't want to be your friend" scenario, read Psalm 18:25.

Emphasize that when we are faithful to God, He is faithful to us. He is a friend who will never leave us.

Explain to your children that people will end up being unfaithful sometimes, but God will never let us down.

Encourage your children to focus on being a faithful friend, instead of worrying about who is or who isn't their friend.

Remind them that in order to have faithful friends, they need to be a faithful friend.

Have your children act out scenarios that would likely occur on a day-to-day basis in their lives. Have your children practice being faithful friends who never say the words, "I don't want to be your friend."

When we are mistreated, we do not feel like being loyal in return. When one of your children is angry with a friend or sibling because he/she feels hurt by something they have said or done, have your child practice blessing the one who has hurt him/her (Luke 6:28). Have them pray for the person who has been unfaithful to them.

Relevant Scripture

Psalm 18:25
Luke 6:28

Bible Connection

Mordecai is a faithful follower of the king

Read

Esther 2:21-23; 6:1-11 and 7:10.

Questions for discussion

1. How were the officers who guarded the king's gate unfaithful?
2. How was Mordecai faithful to the king?
3. How was Mordecai eventually rewarded for his faithfulness?
4. If you were faithful like Mordecai, would you have liked to go for a ride on a horse and wear a special robe or is there some other way you would have liked to be honoured by the king?
5. How can you be faithful to your parents?
6. How can you be a faithful friend?

Key concepts

Mordecai was sitting by the king's gate when he overheard two of the king's officers who were the guards of his doorway, discussing how angry they were at King Xerxes. They were so angry with him that they made plans to kill him.

Mordecai overheard the plan and told Queen Esther about it. She reported to the king the plan made by the unfaithful guards and told him that Mordecai had given her the information. The king had the report investigated, and when he found out that it was true, he had the two unfaithful guards hanged on a gallows.

All of this was recorded in the book of history kept for King Xerxes.

Much later, when the king could not sleep one night, he had someone read from the record book. They read him the story of how Mordecai saved his life by exposing the assassination plan made by the two unfaithful guards. The king then asked what kind of reward had been given to Mordecai. When he found out that nothing had been done, King Xerxes asked his helper, Haman, what should be done for a man whom the king wanted to honour. Haman thought the king wanted to honour him, so he suggested the man should get to wear one of the king's royal robes and ride on a horse that the king had ridden with a royal crest on its head. Then, he suggested that one of the king's nobles lead the horse around the city saying, "This is what is done for the man the king delights to honour." In the end, Mordecai was honoured and rewarded for being faithful, and Haman was punished for his unfaithfulness (Esther 6:11, Esther 7:10).

Bible Memory Verse

Prov 3:3

Monday Evening

A family secret

Questions for discussion

1. Do you like secrets?
2. Do you want to hear a special secret? *Read Psalm 78:1-8 quietly. Precede the reading by saying, "I have a special secret to share with you. It is a special secret that parents shared with their children way back in the days of the Bible. For years and years, parents have shared this special message with their children. Would you like to hear it, too?"*
3. How has God has been faithful to our family?
4. If I said I would serve your favourite supper and then served something else, would you trust me? Or, if I said I would catch you when you jumped into the pool and then didn't, would you trust me?
5. Do you think you can trust God?

Key concepts

God is who He says He is and does what He says He will do. He is faithful to us and we can always trust Him.

As parents, we are faithful to do what we say we will do so that you, our children, can trust us. In turn, we expect you, our children, to be faithful children – doing what you say you will do, so we can trust you, too.

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Faithfulness in nature

This nature lesson explores the idea that some species of animals are so faithful, they mate for life. Some examples include wolves, dolphins and Canada geese. The geese are so faithful to each other that if one is shot down or injured, its mate will stay with it and endure hardship to help it survive.

Tell a story about a Canada goose pair that made their nest near a raccoon den by mistake. After making their nest and laying eggs, the mother goose sat on the nest to keep the eggs warm so they could hatch.

The first night, the raccoon attacked and broke the mother's wing, but the pair was able to drive it away. The second night, the raccoon returned and broke the mother goose's other wing, but still the geese would not leave their nest. The third night, the raccoon managed to kill the mother goose, but the father goose stayed on the nest. One morning, the baby geese finally hatched, and the father goose was able to help the goslings escape to the water where they were safe (This example is from the book *Character Sketches: From the Pages of Scripture Illustrated in the World of Nature*, by Institute in Basic Life Principles. Rand McNally, 1976. www.iblp.org).

Close by comparing the story of the mother bird sacrificing her life for her children with God's huge sacrifice of sending His Son Jesus to die on the cross so our sins could be forgiven.

Read 1 John 1:9, emphasizing that God is faithful and just and will forgive our sins! The questions for discussion can be used to solidify this lesson.

Questions for discussion

- What sacrifice did Jesus make for us?
- Have you ever made a sacrifice for a friend?

We don't necessarily have to die for our friends, but what could we sacrifice to show our friends that we are loyal?

Relevant Scripture

1 John 1:9

Bible Connection

Faithfulness rewarded

Note: These passages can be studied individually or together.

Questions for discussion

David: Read 1 Samuel 26:21-25 and 1 Kings 3:6.

1. How did David show he was a faithful servant of God and King Saul?
2. How did God reward this faithfulness?

Hezekiah: Read 2 Chronicles 31:20-21.

3. What did Hezekiah do to show he was a faithful servant of God?
4. How did God reward this faithfulness?

Abraham: Read Hebrews 11:8-12,17-19.

5. What did Abraham do to show he was a faithful servant of God?
6. How did God reward this faithfulness?

And for us!: Read Psalm 18:23-26 and Psalm 37:28-29.

7. How can we be faithful servants of God?
8. How does God reward faithfulness?

Key concepts

God honours those who are faithful! We are faithful to God when we obey His commandments and chose to do what is right. God shows His faithfulness to those who are faithful by protecting them. We can look at the way God cared for the faithful men and women of the Bible and trust that He will care for us, too.

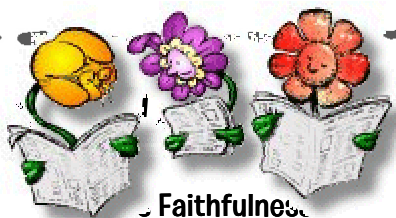
David: David did not kill Saul, the man God placed as king over Israel, even though Saul was trying to kill him. God rewarded David's faithfulness by allowing David to be king of Israel and his son Solomon to be crowned king after him.

Hezekiah: Hezekiah was faithful to follow God's commands. He removed idols and reopened the temple. The Bible says he trusted God. Hezekiah's faithfulness was rewarded through God giving him victory in battle and adding fifteen extra years to his life.

Abraham: Abraham was faithful because he followed God's directions to go to a far away and unknown land. Abraham also believed God would give him a son, even though he and his wife were very old. God rewarded Abraham's faithfulness by making his descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky.

Bible Memory Verse

Prov 3:3



Faithfulness
by Brian Carlisle

Mrs. Workman opened her oven door and removed the cake that was to be the center of celebration for her son, Greg. Today in school, Greg was to be honored in front of the entire school for his outstanding achievement of saving two young children who had nearly drowned in a nearby lake. Just one week ago, on his way home from school, Greg had witnessed the two children fall into the water and sink

below the surface. Casting all personal safety aside, Greg had dove into the water and pulled both children to safety.

Mrs. Workman placed the cake on the kitchen table and was just beginning to spreading the icing when Greg burst into the room and threw his books into the floor.

"Today was the worst day of my life!" Greg screamed. "I wish I hadn't even gone to school today!"

"Greg!" his mother called out in shock. "What happened? Didn't the school have the honor ceremony for you?"

"Yes," Greg nearly cried as he plopped into a kitchen chair. "But that is when my whole life began to come apart."

"What do you mean by that?" Greg's mother asked as she pulled over a chair beside him. "Calm down and tell me what happened."

"Well," Greg began, "after I received the award, I was walking back to my seat when Bob, the school bully, stuck out his foot and tripped me."

"Oh, my," Mrs. Workman gasped compassionately.

"I didn't completely fall, but people began to laugh at me." Tears filled Greg's eyes.

"Then when I went to sit down, Paul, my best friend, pulled the chair away and I crashed to the floor! Everyone in the auditorium began laughing at me!"

"That's terrible!" his mother exclaimed.

"But that's not all!" Greg continued. "From that time on, everyone in the school began making fun of me and calling me 'Show-off' and saying I had a big head and deserved the fall." Greg, heart-broken, looked into his mom's compassionate eyes. "Why did everyone turn into my enemies? Even my closest friends, Paul, Andy, and Kimberly laughed at me and teased me. I didn't do anything wrong! All I did was save two children's lives!"

"Greg," his mother began, "permit me tell you a little story about a man long ago, named Job.

"Now Job, the Bible says, was a righteous man and no fault could be found in him. But one day, Satan appeared before God, who was seated on his throne. Satan said that he had been walking up and down the earth. God replied with a question. God asked Satan if he had observed his servant Job. Job, God said, was a perfect and upright man, one who feared God and hated evil. In the whole world there was no one as perfect and righteous or as good as Job.

"To God, Satan gave a challenge. Satan accused that Job would not be faithful if he was allowed to test Job. Satan said that if he was allowed to test Job that Job would sin. So Satan asked God for permission to put Job to a test. God granted Satan permission and told Satan to do what he desired, but not to take Job's life. Happily Satan agreed and left to attack the good man, Job."

"But what had Job done wrong?" Greg asked with great interest.

"Not a thing," his mother replied. "Satan believed that he could make Job sin, but God knew that although Job was a rich man, that Job was also a godly man and that Job would never sin against God."

"What did Satan do?" Greg begged his mother to continue the story.

"In one morning Satan sent thieves to steal Job's cattle. He sent the Sabians to steal Job's cattle, 500 pairs of oxen and 500 donkeys, and kill the servants guarding them. Next fire fell from heaven and burned up his 7,000 sheep and the servants with them. As if that wasn't enough, more thieves, the Chaldeans, stole Job's 3,000 camels and killed his servants guarding them," Greg's mother began the story.

"That is terrible!" Greg exclaimed. "The news of all those terrible attacks had to hurt Job very bad!"

"They did, but that's not the end of the story," his mother interrupted. "No sooner did Job hear of these attacks than another servant ran up to Job and told Job that while all his sons and daughters were in a house, a great wind rose up and hit the four corners of the house and caused the house to crumble. All of Job's children were killed."

"What did Job do?" Greg nearly cried.

"The Bible said that Job tore his clothes, in mourning, shaved his head, and declared, 'Blessed be the name of the Lord!'" Greg's mother smiled.

"The Bible says that in all this, Job sinned not."

"Job won!" Greg cheered.

"Greg, this was only the beginning," his mother replied. "Satan struck Job with a disease and his whole body was covered with big sores that tormented Job. Then to add insult to Job's misery, Job's wife advised Job to 'just curse God and die! Even Job's close friends accused Job of having sinned and bringing this judgment upon him. No one defended or pitied Job."

"What did Job do?" Greg pleaded.

"Job never sinned. Job faithfully endured this great trial. Job had done nothing to deserve these attacks upon his family and himself except to live a holy and good life," his mother smiled. "You see, Greg, Satan and many evil people in this world hate it when they find someone who lives a godly life. They will do everything in their power to destroy that person and to cause them to become angry and to sin."

"Like what happened to me today, but only worse," Greg admitted.

"Yes, except what happened to you today was not nearly as bad as what Job had to endure," Greg's mother agreed.

"But this is not the end of the story of Job."

"In the end, Job received many blessings from God. The Bible says that God gave Job two times as much as he had before. He now had 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 pairs of oxen and 1,000 donkeys."

"Wow!" Greg exclaimed.

"But there's more," Greg's mother added. "Eventually all Job's friends and relatives came to realize that Job had not sinned. All came to Job and begged his forgiveness for their accusations against him. The Bible states they comforted him and gave him money and gold."

"Amazing!" Greg exclaimed.

"That's still not all!" Greg's mother smiled. "The Bible says that Job lived 140 years after this trial and had seven sons and three daughters who were the most beautiful in all the land." Greg's mother reached over and rubbed Greg's hair. "Because Job was a righteous man, Satan and his evil forces attacked him. But because Job refused to sin, God blessed Job far beyond his wildest expectations."

For a few moments, Greg sat beside his mother in deep thought. One by one he compared his problems to the problems of Job. Finally Greg looked into his mother's loving face. "Tomorrow when I go to school, I'm going to hold my head up and greet everyone with a smile and be proud that I am a Christian."

Greg's mother was about to respond when someone knocked on the kitchen door. There, standing outside of the house, was Paul, Andy, and Kimberly. They had come to apologize to Greg and to ask his forgiveness for not behaving like his friends.

"Come on in!" Greg's mother called. "As soon as I finish icing the cake, I'll get my Bible out and read you the story of Job. Actually Job is the name of a book in the Bible between the books of Esther and Psalms."

THINK!

- What kind of a man was Job?
- What had he done wrong?
- Name at least two things that happened to Job?
- Who told Job to curse God?
- Did Job become mad at God?
- Does the story of Job end with a happy or sad ending?
- In what special ways did God bless Job in the end?

REMEMBER!

Sometimes it may seem that everything is going wrong in your life and that maybe God has quit caring for you. But remember the story of Job and remember that God always cares and will always help you through your problems if you remain faithful to God and sin not.

.....

Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Friendship necklaces

Directions

- Purchase letter beads and make a necklace that says faithfulness or love. You can also buy beads depicting fruit to emphasize that love and faithfulness are both Fruits of the Spirit.
- Have each child refer to their necklace as their "friendship necklace," so it serves as a reminder to be a faithful friend. *If a child does not wear necklaces, he/she can make the necklace for a faithful friend, grandparent or one of his/ her stuffed animals (who is a faithful friend to him/her). Alternatively, they may wish to make a zipper pull for a backpack.*

Other ideas

Use this activity as a "faithfulness" play date and invite a friend over to make the necklaces.

Bible Connection

The good and faithful servant

Read

Matthew 25:14-30.

Questions for discussion

1. Why was the master happy with the first two servants?
2. Why was he unhappy with the third servant?
3. How can we be faithful servants to God?
4. What talents has God given you?
5. How can you use them to honour God?

Key concepts

God has given us talents and resources. We need to use them in a way that is pleasing to Him. He is pleased when we are willing to use our talents and abilities to bring honour to Him. One way to honour God with our talents is to make sure that whenever someone compliments our special abilities, is to give the honour to God by saying, "Thank you. God has made me with" ("strong legs," if someone compliments your running ability; "a creative mind," if someone compliments your creative writing or drawing, etc.). This way, we bring honour to God instead of ourselves.

Bible Memory Verse

Prov 3:3

Wednesday Evening

Praise for a faithful God

Read

Psalms 98

Questions for discussion

1. In what ways is God faithful to us?
2. How would you like to praise God for His faithfulness?

Key concepts

God shows His faithfulness to us by loving us, caring for us and offering us salvation. He is worthy of our praise. Other verses about God and His faithfulness include Exodus 34:6, 1 Corinthians 1:9, Psalm 86:15, Psalm 89:8, Psalm 111:7-8, Psalm 117:2 and Psalm 146:6-10.

Sing to the Lord another new Psalm

Read through Psalm 136 and have your children say "God's love goes on forever," every time you pause at the end of

each verse. Then have them list ways God shows your family that His love goes on forever.

After listing ways that God is faithful, read through your list, creating your own Psalm of praise by having your children say, "God's love goes on forever," each time you pause. Pray together, thanking God for His faithfulness. You may even choose to put your Psalm to music. Then, you can really sing a psalm, praising God for His faithfulness (Colossians 3:16).

Relevant Scripture

Psalm 136:1

Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

Pair up the students. If there is an odd number, you can have three work together but they will need three circles. Each pair will draw two large overlapping circles on a piece of paper. (A Venn Diagram) The intersection of the circles needs to be large enough to write in. Each should label a circle with their name. The students will work together, identifying things about themselves such as hobbies, interests, family traditions, etc. As they take turns identifying something about themselves, they will record them in the circles. If it something that the two share, then it is written in the section where the circles overlap. If it is something that only pertains to one or the other, it is written inside of their circle but outside of the overlap. Challenge them to come up with something that doesn't apply to either of them and that should be written outside of both circles. If time allows, pair up the pairs and let them compare their diagrams.

Twin Races

Pair up the students. Each pair will need a piece of paper and a pencil. In three minutes, they are to come up with as many things that they have in common as possible. Things that all students have in common such as has 2 eyes, does not count. When the time is up, have each pair count their items. Have each pair share their list.

Questions for Processing Venn Diagrams and/or Twin Race:

- How did you find things that were alike?
- What kinds of things did you have in common?

- Did you find more in common after listening to the other pairs' answers?
- Did you find out things you didn't know about some of your classmates?
- How does it make you feel to know you have things in common with classmates?
- When you know there are similarities, does it make accepting differences easier?
- If you had nothing in common with your classmates, how would you feel?
- Since you do have so many things in common with your classmates, how do you feel? (connected)
- How do you treat people that you feel connected to?
- Are you more loyal to individuals and groups if you feel connected to them?
- What would it be like if there were no differences?
- How do our differences make our classroom interesting?

Discussion

Loyalty ties in with Dependability and Faithfulness we've been learning about.

Opposites

Loyalty vs Unfaithfulness

What does it mean?

Using difficult times to demonstrate my commitment to those I serve.

Translation

Spanish: Lealtad vs. Infidelidad

Go to the Root

The French word *leial* came from the Latin word *legalis* meaning „legal or „faithful, and inspired the Middle English term *loyaltee* which was later replaced sometime in the 1400s with the spelling *loyalty* which we know today.

Nathan Hale-Hero of Loyalty

"I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country." This quote is attributed to Nathan Hale, when he was executed in New York City for spying on the British during the Revolutionary War. He was 21 years old. Several accounts of his hanging describe his great composure in the face of death and his eloquent speech before his demise. Whether he said those exact words or a similar quote is not recorded. However, there is no doubt as to his Loyalty to the Independence of America. At the time, Americans were divided in their allegiances. The Patriots were fighting for freedom from Britain and the Loyalists were remaining true to the crown.

Bible Connection

Loyalty Brought Ruth an Unbelievable Gift

Needed:

- pack of matches
- a pocket knife
- 5-pound bag of flour
- an old, worn out shoe

Let's pretend we live in a land where there was a great famine. There is no electricity, very little food, and somehow, we have to stay alive. We have only one penny. But the country is so poor that anyone with even a dollar is considered very rich indeed. You could buy a whole house with a dollar. We have all the water we need, and we can catch food in the wilderness like the pioneers did. We have our choice of what we can buy with this penny. What should it be?

Put out a pack of matches, a pocket knife, a five-pound bag of flour, and an old discarded shoe without a mate.

What could we do with a pack of matches? We could light a fire and cook the meat. However, if someone knows how to rub two stones together, the matches would be unnecessary.

What could we do with a pocket knife? Kill animals to eat. Cut vines and wood to make a trap for trapping animals. You could cut open infected wounds and give a person a chance to live.

What could we do with a five-pound bag of flour? You could create instant food just by adding water, but the food might not last very long and then you've spent all your money.

What could we do with an old shoe? You could use it to walk farther to check your traps so your feet don't wear out. However, there is only one. And it would only fit a few people who have feet that size.

Lay all the items on the table.

I want to show you how these items are like friends. A lot of people say that TRUE friends are hard to find. It's like we live in a world with a "friend famine" going on because it's so hard to find a friend like Ruth. Her sister-in-law Oprah wanted to be with more interesting people than Naomi, find a hot husband, hang with people her own age who were popular. Even though it looked like there was nothing in this for Ruth except for her love for Naomi, Ruth decided to be loyal.

Hold up the matches.

These matches are like some people. You've heard the expression, "Wow, he's hot," or "Wow, she's hot." That means they're beautiful...or popular, and other hot people hang with them, and if you make friends with somebody because they're hot, it can mean lots of fun. For a short time.

Light a match and hold it up with the flame lit.

The problem is that hot burns out really fast. Friendships made for popularity or other self-centered reasons tend to burn out quickly. Or easily...

Blow out the match with just a little breath.

Hold up the bag of flour.

Some people you could hang out with are like this bag of flour. There's instant gratification in them. You can have your fun right away. Maybe...people have fat houses or "phat" trampolines in their back yards or a great big closet of computer games. Problem: No matter how good a toy is, you get tired of it. The fun goes away; then you're on to someone else if you pick your friends that way.

Put the flour down.

Pick up the knife.

Now, some friends look really useful to you. They have what you'd call a "sharp tongue." Nobody messes with them because they don't want to be bullied or be made a fool of. If you hang with them, nobody will mess with you either. The problem with "sharp tongued" people is that at some point, that sharp tongue will turn on you. Guaranteed. Have you ever heard one friend gossip about another? Be assured: That person will gossip about you, too.

Lay down the knife.

Granted, we have all sorts of people we hang out with. There's nothing wrong with being pretty, being popular, having lots of stuff—if God gives you those gifts, or having friends who are "sharp" enough to keep the bullies at bay. But in picking a true friend? It's important to look very, very carefully.

Pick up the old shoe.

Don't get carried away with people's looks, people's stuff, or people's cool behavior. You have look beneath all of that. Look around it. Look through it. And look at the kids nobody else would notice. You just might find the good kid who will last.

Reach in the shoe and pull out a dollar. Hold it up.

In a world where only a dollar would make you very, very rich, you might find wealth in the strangest places. In a world where lifelong friends are difficult to find and difficult to keep, look where others might not and then be loyal. The paybacks can be surprising.

Bible Memory Verse

Prov 3:3

The I WILL's of Loyalty

To practice Loyalty I will:

- serve my family and teachers
- encourage other in hard times
- not mock authorities
- point out the good in others
- honor my country

Thursday Evening

Abraham's Big Test

(Genesis 22:1-19)

Isaac grew up to be a fine boy. Abraham was very thankful to God that He gave him a son whom he really loves. One day, God spoke to Abraham and said "Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about."

The next day, Abraham, Isaac and two other servants went on a journey. They brought with them enough wood for the burnt offering. They walked 3 days and when they were near Moriah, only Abraham and Isaac continued onto Mount Moriah.

Isaac brought the wood for the burnt offering on his shoulders while Abraham carried the knife and fire. Probably wondering, Isaac asked "The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"

Abraham only replied "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." When they reached the place, Abraham built an altar, laid the wood on it, bound Isaac and laid him on the altar.

Abraham was about to strike Isaac with the knife when he heard the voice of the angel of the Lord call his name

"Abraham! Abraham! Do not lay a hand on the boy. Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son."

Then Abraham saw a ram caught in the thicket and he sacrificed that ram instead of his beloved son, Isaac. God again spoke to Abraham "because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you..." How happy Abraham must have been when he, his son and his two servants went back home.

Discussion

1. If God (your mom or your dad) asks you to do something difficult, would you do it? Why?
2. What did God tell Abraham to do in our story? Was it easy or difficult?
3. How did Abraham respond? Did he follow God? Was it easy? What do you think Abraham felt?
4. What is loyalty? (complete devotion / faithfulness / staying by someone no matter how difficult things are). How did Abraham show his loyalty to God in the story?
5. How can you be loyal to God?
6. How did God reward Abraham's loyalty?

Friday

Bible Memory Verse

Prov 3:3

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Prov 3:3

The I WILL's of Loyalty

Review




Friday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Loyalty:

John 15:13

Micah 6:8b



Diligence

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

Bounce Back

For this activity you will need foil, 2 hard-boiled eggs (or raw if you are daring), and a superball. You can do this demonstration yourself, or you can ask the students to do it while you narrate. First spread the foil out on the floor at the front of the classroom. Show the students the egg and the ball. Ask the class to predict what will happen if you drop the egg.

Then, drop the egg onto the foil. The shell will crack, at the very least. Next show the second egg and ask what will happen if the egg is thrown with great force at the paper. Then do it. Now do the same with the ball (but not on the foil), first dropping and then throwing. The ball will bounce back. When you're finished, wrap the eggs in the foil, and then you can throw them in the cafeteria trash cans not your classroom can...

Discuss the difference by explaining that when "egg people" hit an obstacle, they splatter. The harder they hit, the harder they splatter, giving up on their goal. When "super ball people" hit an obstacle, they bounce back. The harder they hit, the harder they bounce back. (When the going gets tough, the tough get going!)

Introduction

Opposites:

Diligence vs Slothfulness

What does it mean?

Investing all my energy to complete the tasks assigned to me.

Translation:

Spanish: Diligencia vs. Pereza

Go to the root

Diligence is a descendant of *diligere*, a Latin word meaning "to value highly". It is formed by combining *dis* ("apart") and *legere* ("to choose"). Diligent individuals choose to make the most of their abilities and their energies.

Nature Story

Diligence Nature Story VID (5:36)

Poem

Diligence Poem VID (5:07)

Bible Memory Verse

Col 3:23

The I WILL's of Diligence

To practice Diligence I will:

- finish my projects
- do a job right
- follow instructions
- concentrate on my work
- not be lazy

Monday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Diligence:
The parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

House of Cards

A house of cards is created by stacking one card on top of

another one card at a time, to create a structure. There are many different types of card houses on record, including ones up to 75 card stories tall, and even one that is a replica of Cinderella's Castle in Disney World! Card stacking is hard, though, as with the slightest breeze or jostle of a surface, the entire thing could be lost in the shuffle. Diligence is key when trying to create a house of cards, as it will give one the will to see the project through.

Have students bring in packs of cards from home and try it out in the classroom. How tall did the house of cards get? How many times did they have to start over because someone wasn't being diligent? How can you apply the aspects of building a house of cards to life?

Songs

Learn the Diligence Song VID (8:50)

Poem

Diligence Poem - Review

Model of Diligence

The Lights go on!

In 1879, America witnessed the dawn of a new era - the age of electric light. Before then, the only light sources available after sunset were candles, oil lamps, or gas lamps. Thomas Edison worked diligently to make the age of electric light possible.

When he was young, Thomas was fascinated by the telegraph, a machine that sent coded messages over wires. Thomas started to experiment with electricity and look for new ways to use its power.

Eventually, r. Edison started his own laboratory to do his experiments. One evening, he stared at what looked like a small piece of string. The string gave im an idea that he was anxious to try.

He went out to the main shop and started to experiment with string as a light bulb filament. The string began to glow until ... POOF! It burst into flames. Another experiment had failed, but Mr. Edison would not give up.

Minutes turned to hours, and hours turned into days. Northing worked, and Mr. Edison's eyes hurt from staring at

the bright flames. How nice it would be to relax all day with no work and lots of ... POOF!

Another filament burst into flames, nad Mr. Edison snapped back to the present. A lazy life was not for him. He was about to develop one of the greatest inventions the world has known. There was work to do, and Thomas Edison could not afford to slack off.

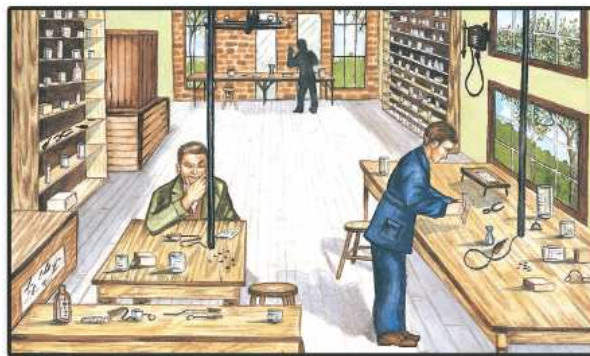
Mr Edison learned from every burnt filament. He worked hard to find a string that would glow long enough to produce a steady light. After more than a thousand experiments, Mr. Edison discovered that a carbon filament baked in a special oven might work.

His men blew a special glass bubble into just the right shape and carefully placed th carbon filament inside.

Mr. Edison turned on the electricity, and the new filament lit up! The men stared at the light. They waited and counted the seconds. The new filament kept burning for almost two days!

"Great!" houted Mr. Edison. "But the job is not finished until we make it burn longer."

Thomas Edison and his men went back to work until their light lasted as long as they wanted. After years of hard work, Mr. Edison finished what he set out to do, and ushered in the age of the electric light bulb.



Thomas Edison is considered to be the most abundant inventor in history, holding more than 1,000 patents in the US alone. Some of his most famous inventions are the phonograph, moving-picture camera, and of course, the light bulb! Thomas Edison was a man of great brilliance, but he didn't get the design right on the first try. He kept trying to find out just how to make his design successful, and his diligence did pay off. One of his more famous quotes about the light bulb is, "I have not failed 700 times. I have not failed once. I have succeeded in proving that those 700 ways will not work. When I have eliminated the ways that will not work, I will find the way that will work."

Just as Thomas Edison did with the light bulb, we need to apply diligence to the tasks at hand. You never know what you may accomplish.

Bible Connection

Read about Jacob’s Diligence (Gen 31:40)

Bible Memory Verse

Col 3:23

The I WILL’s of Diligence

Review

Tuesday Evening

Read about Ruth’s Diligence (Ruth 2:17)

.....
Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Threadbare

For this activity, you will need two popsicle sticks or small twigs, and a couple spools of thread. Students can pair up, or this can be an individual activity. One student should hold the two sticks in front of them, while another student ties one circle of thread around the sticks. Each student should take one stick and then attempt to pull them apart. The thread should snap pretty easily at this point. Repeat the thread tying, but this time tie two circles of thread. It should be a bit harder to snap the thread. Repeat the thread tying, adding one more loop of thread each time, until the thread will not break.

Now make a list on the board of good and bad habits, like doing homework versus not picking up after yourself. Habits are a lot like the thread. The more times we act with diligence, the stronger the habit is, the stronger the inclination to act with diligence when we are facing a challenge.

Discussion

The Daffodil Principle

The Daffodil Principle’ by Jaroldeen Asplund Edwards is a story about an actual place, a daffodil garden near Running Springs in California. An entire mountainside covered in daffodils, a flower that only blooms 3 weeks out of the year. This field did not come about on its own. One woman with her two hands planted each of the 50,000 bulbs, but it took her over 40 years to do it.

An excerpt from the end of the story reads:

“The principle her daffodil garden taught is one of the greatest principles of celebration. That is, learning to move toward our goals and desires one step at a time—often just one baby-step at time—and learning to love the doing, learning to use the accumulation of time. When we multiply tiny pieces of time with small increments of daily effort, we too will find we can accomplish magnificent things. We can change the world ...

‘It makes me sad in a way,’ I admitted to Carolyn. ‘What might I have accomplished if I had thought of a wonderful goal thirty-five or forty years ago and had worked away at it *one bulb at a time* through all those years? Just think what I might have been able to achieve!’ My daughter summed up the message of the day in her usual direct way. ‘Start tomorrow,’ she said.”

This story demonstrates how diligence, when applied to any task, can create amazing results.

Bible Memory Verse

Col 3:23

Songs

Diligence Song - Review

Poem

Diligence Poem - Review

Thursday

Bible Connection

Discuss some Bible verses about Diligence:

Hezekiah (2 Ch 31:21)
Nehemiah (Neh 4:6)

Attention Grabber Activity

Make an Ant Bible Verse Picture

Needed

Paper, black washable ink, crayons, large gritt sandpaper, and a black marker.

The I WILL's of Diligence

Review

What to do:

1. Have your children draw an anthill on a piece of paper or use the printable pattern. ([KJV Pattern](#) or [NIV Pattern](#))
2. Have them color the picture, and then place sandpaper behind the picture and rub the edge of a crayon over the surface to make the bumpy sand effect.
3. Then have them press the tips of their fingers on an ink pad and press them on the paper to make the ants, and then add legs and antennae with a marker.

Wednesday Evening

Discussion

1. Why do you think exhibiting DILIGENCE is viewed as a GOOD TRAIT?
2. Describe when it has been easy or a challenge to be DILIGENT.
3. Think about ideas about what to do to "keep on, keepin' on" when it's a challenge.
4. What are some benefits of working hard?
5. Why should you do your best, even if no one else is watching?
6. Showing diligence means
 - a. you work all the time
 - b. you never get to play
 - c. you work to the best of your ability
7. Diligence means enjoying every minute of your work: TRUE or FALSE?
8. How can you be diligent, even if you don't enjoy your work?
9. Why do you think beavers are a good example of diligence?



Ant Craft for Kids Made from Spoons and Pipe Cleaners

Needed

Black or Red Plastic Spoons, Black or Red Pipe Cleaners, Low Temp Mini Glue Gun, Scissors, Wiggle Eyes

How to Make a Plastic Spoon Ant:

1. Cut the cupped end of one spoon off leaving a short neck. Glue the cupped part onto the end of another spoon so that the end of that spoon is in

the middle of the cupped part as shown in the diagram.

2. To make the middle part of the ant thicker you can use the handle of the spoon you cut in half. Cut the handle to fit in the middle of the ant and glue it on.
3. Use three pipe cleaners to make the legs winding them around the middle of the ant. Then wind another pipe cleaner in between the legs to make the middle part thicker.
4. To finish glue on googly eyes.



Bible Connection

Bible Reference

Proverbs 6:6-8

Preparation

Before class set up a trail in a separate room or down the hall. You can use stickers or pieces of paper. At the end of the trail hide pieces of paper with one each of the following words written on them. "We can do our work without being told to do it." Write numbers on the backs of the paper in the order of the sentence so you will know where to place each word.

Have you ever stopped to watch a colony of ants next to their anthill? What did you see? Let your children share their thoughts.

You probably saw the ants all scurrying around in all different directions going in and out of the anthill, bringing in bits of animal parts, seeds, and other things and bringing out little rocks and plant materials. They all seem to be doing something, don't they?

Did you ever see any of the ants just sitting around watching the other ants work? Did you ever see an ant just sitting there waiting for someone to tell him what to do? No. Every colony of ants has a queen ant, but she doesn't tell them what to do. She doesn't organize them or give them pep talks. She's too busy laying eggs. She lays eggs all day long.

All the ants in the colony have a job to do. There are lots of things to do in an ant colony. Some of the ants help take care of the larva or baby ants. The anthill has to be kept clean and in good repair. New quarters have to be built as the colony grows. The anthill has to be protected. Some of the ants have to go out and find food and then carry it back to the nest. All the ants have a job to do and they do it. They don't worry about whose doing what or how hard they're working. **They see something that needs to be done and they do it.**

They don't need someone to tell them it is time to get to work, or remind them what has to be done. They just do whatever they can to keep the colony going. What would happen if the ants didn't do this? They probably wouldn't get much done. What if a little ant saw some garbage or trash laying on the floor of the colony and she said to herself, "I didn't put it there, so I'm not picking it up. I didn't make the mess, so I don't have to clean it up." The colony would soon become clogged with garbage, wouldn't it? God made the ants. He gave each one a job and they do it. They don't need someone telling them what to do all the time. **They just do it.**

Did you know that the Bible tells us that we can learn from these little ants? That's right. (Open your Bible and read the verse.) In Proverbs 6:6 it says, "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise." Now we are going to find out what the ants can teach us and how we can be wise. (Write on the board "What can we learn from the ants?" An ant has left us a scent trail and the answer to this question. (Show the children the beginning of the trail. Have one child at a time follow the trail and bring back one piece of paper with a word on it. While a child is following the trail have the other children try to figure out the answer to the question by reading the words that the children have already found. You can also ask them what they think we might be able to learn from the ants. Continue until all the words are brought back and they know the answer.)

Ants don't have anyone to guide them and tell them what to do. They don't have someone watching over them to make sure they do their jobs right. They know what they are supposed to do and they do it. They don't need someone to make sure they do it and do it right. This verse is telling us that we should be more like the ants. When we see something that needs to be done, we should do it. We shouldn't have to wait for someone to tell us to do it. If you see a crayon on the floor, you should pick it up. You know crayons don't belong on the floor and they can get stepped on and squished if they remain on the floor. Even if you didn't use the crayons, you should still pick it up because it needs to be picked up. You don't have to wait for your teacher to tell you to pick it up. You can be wise and decide for yourself that that is the right thing to do.

Thursday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Diligence:

Paul (1 Thess 2:9)
Onesiphorus (2 Tim 1:17)

How many of you have chores? What kind of chores do you have? Let the children respond. Do you wait for your mom or dad to tell you to do your chores, or do you do them because you know you have a job to do? Your parents shouldn't have to tell you to do your chores everyday. You should try to remember what you are supposed to do and do it without someone having to tell you to do it or remind you everyday. The older you get the more jobs and responsibilities you will have. Your parents can't remind you every day to do everything you are supposed to do. A wise child will try to remember what he is supposed to do and do it without having to be told. Can you think of some things that you are supposed to do that you can try to remember to do without having your parents tell you each time? (Let the children respond.) Here are some examples: Make your bed, brush your teeth, comb your hair, pick up your toys when you are done playing, clean off the table after you are done eating, do your chores, etc. When you do these things without be told, you are being wise like the ant.

What are some of the jobs Jesus wants us to do? Show people we care, listen to others, share our faith, invite a friend to worship, help to keep the church clean, etc. Do we have to wait for someone to tell us to do these things? No, if we are wise we just do them because they need to be done.



Bible Memory Verse

Col 3:23



Songs

Diligence Song - Review



Poem

Diligence Poem - Review



The I WILL's of Diligence

Review



Friday



Bible Memory Verse

Col 3:23



Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Col 3:23



Songs

Diligence Song - Review



Poem

Diligence Poem - Review



The I WILL's of Diligence

Review



Friday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Diligence:

Apollos (Acts 18:25)

Titus (2 Cor 8:22)



Initiative

Monday

Introduction

Opposites:

Initiative vs Unresponsiveness / Initiative vs Idleness

What does it mean?

Recognizing and doing what needs to be done before I am asked to do it.

Translation

Spanish: Iniciativa vs. Ocio

Go to the root

The word initiative is derived from the Latin word *initiare* which means “to begin, to originate”. Can you see how initiative is getting something going?

How do we Sign it?

Start
Idle

Bible Connection & Discussion

King David Looks for Ways to Help Build the Temple

Bible Story from 1 Chronicles ch 17, ch 22, 28:11-12, 2
Chronicles 2:1, 5, 3:2, 5:1, 7:1

Lesson Aim

At the conclusion of this lesson my students will know that David did all He could to prepare to build a Great Temple for the glory of God. In the same way, God wants us to look for opportunities to do good and use every opportunity He gives us.

Introduction Story

Kotoko dreamed of being a football star. He liked to play football, and he was very good. He was so good that a football recruiter heard about. The recruiter worked for a big university. His job was to find young people who were

very good at football and who also worked hard in school and in life. He had the authority to offer such young people a scholarship. This meant they would play for university football team, and they would go to university—for free! What an opportunity for Kotoko! This was his big chance! The recruiter came to Kotoko’s town. He watched Kotoko play football. He agreed that he was very good. The next day he went to talk to Kotoko’s teachers and to watch him in school. He asked the teachers how hard Kotoko worked in school. They had to hang their heads. They could not think of a good answer to give. The truth was, Kotoko did not make much effort in school. The recruiter decided to watch Kotoko at home. He came to Kotoko’s house as a guest.

Kotoko still did not know he was a recruiter for the University. The recruiter watched Kotoko with his family. All the other family members were working hard to prepare the meal, but Kotoko did not offer to help. When he dropped something on the floor, he did not try to pick it up himself. Instead he ordered his little brother to do it.

The next day Kotoko found out that the visitor was a recruiter. He was very excited. He felt sure he was going to get a scholarship. But the recruiter left that afternoon without offering him a scholarship. He never did get to go to University. He got angry at the recruiter, so he never even finished secondary school. He never became a football star.

He felt angry about that, so he refused to do anything. He never got a good job. He was poor his whole life. Kotoko always felt he had been cheated. But had he been cheated, or did he cheat himself?

Transition to the Bible Story

Kotoko’s story reminds me of a man in the Bible who had a big ambition. He wasn’t able to do the thing he wanted to do, but his reaction was very different from Kotoko’s. This man was King David, and we find his story in the Bible in 1 Chronicles ch. 17.

Main Points in the Bible Story:

1. David wanted to build a house for God. 1 Chronicles 17:1

He wasn’t just sitting around waiting for something to happen. He was thinking of what he could do to bring honor to God. He had a good idea—build a beautiful Temple to honor God.

2. At first Nathan the prophet (his spiritual advisor) thought it was a good idea. 1 Chronicles 17:2 (Action: Have everyone shake their heads “Yes.”)
3. That night God told Nathan He did not want David to do this. 1 Chronicles 17:3-6
 - a. This must have been a disappointment, but God had a reason that we will learn later. Often in life we face disappointments and setbacks even when we are trying to do the right thing. (Action: Have everyone shake their heads “No” and say “No, not you!”)
4. God told Nathan to tell David that He (God) would build a house for him (David) (meaning a family) 17:7-11, especially the end of verse 10.
 - a. David’s family would be the key in eventually fulfilling his dream. (Action: Repeat rhythmically with dancing, “You won’t build a house for Me. I will build a house for you. It will be a family!”)
5. God said David’s son would build the Temple for God 17:12
 - a. David would not build the Temple, but his son would build it. (Action: Repeat rhythmically like rap: “When I build you a family, your son will build a house for Me.”)
6. David responded by worshipping God and accepting His decision. 17:19-20 (Action: Have all the students bow as if in prayer, saying “OK, Lord, whatever You say.”)
7. Even though David could not build the Temple, he looked for ways to help. He prepared many wonderful materials so that his son Solomon could build it. 1 Chr. 22:2-5, 28:10.
 - a. He had stones cut for the Temple (22:2), had nails, doors and other hardware made (verse 3), cut lumber (verse 4), and made abundant preparations (verse 5).
 - b. (Action: Divide students into three groups. One pretends they are cutting stones.
 - c. The second pretends they are sawing lumber. The third pretends they are making preparations by storing up the things David has made for the Temple.)
8. David found other ways to help. He helped by encouraging his son Solomon to build it. 1 Chr. 22:6-19. He received the plans from God and gave them to his son Solomon. 1 Chronicles 28:11-12.
 - a. He shared his vision for a magnificent Temple with his son Solomon, explained why he could not build it (he was a man of

war, but God said His house should be made by a man of peace). He charged his son to build the Temple.

- b. (Action: Repeat rhythmically: “I couldn’t do it, but you, my son, do it!” You might also have two students act out this part, one being David on his deathbed and the other Solomon as a young man.)
9. David’s dream came true. After his death, Solomon used the materials his father had prepared to build a magnificent Temple for God. 2 Chronicles 2:1, 5, 3:2, 5:1, 7:1.
10. Solomon built the Temple and finished it.
 - a. He prayed to dedicate it, and the glory of God filled the Temple.
 - b. (Action: Have students repeat rhythmically: “The Temple was amazing! Wow!”)
 - c. Action: Have students wiggle their fingers down through the air to show the glory of God filling the Temple.)

Points to Re-emphasize as you close the story:

- David took initiative in seeing a good thing to do and trying to do it. He desired to build a beautiful Temple to honor God.
- However, God said David’s son would be the one to build it. This was a setback.
- David still showed initiative rather than passivity. He did all he could to prepare for the Temple.
- The Temple was built after David’s death using the materials he prepared for it. His dream came true.
- God wants us to use initiative—to look for good things to do and do all we can to achieve them.

Learning Activity (Game):

Give several students a card to show the class. On the front of each card is a picture of a student. On the back is a story to read to the class. The student may read the story or may hold it up for you to read it. The story tells whether the student shows initiative or passivity. If they vote that he shows initiative, they shout in unison, “Initiative! Initiative! Winner! Winner! Winner!” If they vote he shows passivity,

They chant in unison, “Passive! Loser! Woe is me! Nothing much good ever happens to me!”

(The answers are in a small envelope at the bottom of each card.) If the student is passive, they should tell what the student can do to show more initiative.

Stories for the cards:

Matilda would love to be a good cook like her mother. She watches her mother prepare the family's meals, but she never offers to help.

(Passive. She can develop her cooking skills by showing initiative and offering to help her mother prepare the meals.)

Kwame wants to be a diplomat or work for the United Nations. He found out that a teacher in town knows French. Every chance Kwame has he visits the teacher and begs him to teach him a few phrases. Even when the teacher asked him to fetch firewood in exchange for the lessons, Kwame did it gladly.

(Initiative! Kwame will be a winner because he is using the opportunities he has to learn as much French as he can.

Later on, when he has a chance to take French in school, he will do well because he started early to learn what he could.

Knowing French will help Kwame get into university and someday get the job he wants.)

As **Adjo** walks to school every day, she notices all kinds of trash lying on the ground. Adjo never bothers to pick it up because it isn't her job.

(Passive. Adjo's village never gets any neater because like Adjo, everyone else also feels it isn't their job to pick up trash. Worse, she is developing a habit of looking at a need and walking by without doing anything about it. Adjo only does what she has to—nothing extra. Nothing extra good ever happens to her either.)

Adjei finds maths challenging and difficult. It takes him a long time to do his assignments, but he always completes them and does his very best. He refuses to copy someone else's work because he wants to learn to understand what he is doing.

(Initiative! Adjei never found maths easy, but he passed his exam because he had worked so diligently instead of taking the easy way out by cheating. Adjei was able to go on in school and his classmates respected him because they knew he was not a cheater.)

Mary wants to be a writer. She is trying to prepare for that by reading all the books she can. She does not have enough money to buy books of her own, but she borrows books from teachers and community leaders. She is always careful to take good care of them and to return them on time.

(Initiative! Mary is showing initiative by doing what she can to prepare herself to become a writer. She is becoming familiar with different writing styles, good grammar, and different ways to present ideas. Her vocabulary is growing through her reading. She will be ready at the first opportunity to learn how to write.)

Application:

Ask the students, what is one way you can show initiative at school?

At home? At church? This week, look for one way to show initiative.

Invitation (optional, according to situation):

Do you know that God saw that we were in a big problem because of our sin, and He took the initiative to save us?

The Bible says we all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). There is nothing we can do to save ourselves. God took the initiative to save us. He sent His own Son from heaven into the world to become our Savior. His Son Jesus Christ died for our sins and rose again triumphantly from the dead. Many people saw Him for 40 days. Then He went back to His Father in heaven.

He's alive today. He can save you today if you will call on Him and ask Him to be your Savior. If you've never done that before and today you are ready, just pray a prayer something like this, and mean it with all your heart:

Father in heaven, I believe You sent Your Son Jesus to be my Savior. Jesus, thank You for dying to take away my sins. Thank You for rising from the dead. I ask You now to be my Savior. I ask You to come into my heart and life. Take away my sins. Give me new life in You. Thank You for saving me just now. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 12:21

The I WILL's of Initiative

To practice Initiative I will:

- Do what is right before being told
- Not put off until tomorrow the things I can do today
- Contribute to the success of the whole team
- Be a part of the solution rather than the problem
- Look for ways to help others

Monday Evening

WAD

Well-defined
Attainable
Deadline

These are all qualities that a true goal should have. Have your students come up with a goal to be achieved by the end of the week and write it on its own piece of paper, and then share it with the class or a partner. They then keep this paper in a place that will constantly remind them to work on this goal. If by the end of the week the student has achieved the goal, they can WAD up the paper and throw it at a target. This demonstrates taking initiative in achieving your goals helps you hit your target. If the student does not achieve the goal that they have written, they then have the opportunity to modify their goal to be more achievable. Do this every week this month. At the end of each week, have your students ask themselves these questions:

- Was it easier to achieve the goal because you wrote it down and shared it with someone?
- Why is it important to use initiative when trying to achieve a goal?
- Next time you have a goal that you want to achieve, will you use this method to help you achieve it?

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Wishes vs. Goals

Divide the board into two columns and label each one as wishes and one as goals. Have the students write lists on the board of wishes and goals. After the lists are done evaluate each item and whether it truly belongs in the column it is in. For example, wishes are things you want to come true but you have no control over—"I wish that it doesn't rain at recess." Goals are items you have control over—"I want to be doctor."

Move each item into the correct category as it is evaluated. Remind your students to evaluate their goals with these same guidelines when they set goals in their lives.

Discussion

Model of Initiative

Edward Vernon Rickenbacker achieved many things in his life, and without his initiative, he would have accomplished none of them. After the death of his father in 1904, 13-year-old Eddie began working any job he could to support his family. As machines became his passion, he taught himself everything he could about engineering, and even enrolled in a correspondence course to learn more. Soon he was racing cars for the machine company he worked for. He is credited as the first man to go a mile a minute, and was then nicknamed "Fast Eddie." He raced in the Indy 500 5 times before he joined the Army to fight in World War I. When he returned from the war in 1920, he started his own motor company, the Rickenbacker Motor Company. The cars his company produced were specifically engineered to be racing automobiles. His were the first cars to have four-wheel braking, which is now the standard.

Without Eddie Rickenbacker's initiative in following his passion for engineering, the four wheel brake system would not exist as we know it. Minutes from downtown Columbus, OH, there is an airfield named after him, Rickenbacker International Airport, which is dedicated to cargo and charter air traffic.

Bible Connection & Discussion

A Sick Woman Looks for a Way to Find Healing

Bible Story from Luke 8:43-48

Lesson Aim

At the conclusion of this lesson my students will know that the woman with the issue of blood was healed because she proactively sought Jesus rather than passively waiting for something good to come to her. In the same way, God is pleased when we do not passively wait for good to happen, but proactively look for opportunities to make it happen.

Introduction

Emmanuel's family was very poor. It was hard for them to find enough to eat. All of Emmanuel's friends were from poor families, too. Every day he listened to them complain. Nothing good ever happens to us! We don't have enough food to eat! Why doesn't God love us? Why doesn't He bless us like other people. Emmanuel wondered a lot about that, too.

Transition to the Bible Story

Emmanuel's story reminds me of a woman in the Bible. We read about her in Luke ch. 8. The Bible doesn't give her name, but we do know she had been sick for a very long time—for 12 long years.

Main Points in the Bible Story

This story is short and can be effectively taught using the 4 Point Active Method:

Read, Question, Act Out, and Sing. Do these four for each of the 7 points. (Readings given are from New King James Version).

1. The woman had an issue of blood that couldn't be stopped. Luke 8:43a

READ: Luke 8:43a "Now a woman, having a flow of blood for twelve years"

QUESTION:

Who was sick? (A woman.)

What was the problem? (A flow of blood that couldn't be stopped)

How long had she been sick? (12 years)

ACT OUT:

The students should pretend they are weak and feel sick. They should complain loudly, "12 years I've been sick!"

SING:

"A woman had been sick for a long, long time. She felt so very bad."

2. She had used up all her money on doctors but no one could help her. 8:43b

READ: Luke 8:43b "who had spent all her livelihood on physicians and could not be healed by any."

QUESTIONS:

What was all gone? (her livelihood or her money)

What had she spent it all on? (doctors)

How much help had she found? (No help. She could not be healed by any.)

ACT OUT

The students should pretend they are paying one doctor after another. Then they should open their hands to show that their money is all gone.

SING:

"She paid many doctors till her money was all gone. Oh, oh, oh!"

3. The woman came up quietly behind Jesus and touched the border of his garment.

Luke 8:44. She showed initiative to press through the crowd to get to Jesus.

READ: Luke 8:44 (She) "came from behind and touched the border of His garment. And immediately her flow of blood stopped."

4. QUESTIONS:

Where was she in relation to Jesus? (behind him)

Where did she touch Him? (on the border or hem of His garment)

What happened when she touched Jesus? (the flow of blood stopped. She was healed.)

How fast did it happen? (Immediately when she touched Him.)

ACT OUT:

Let two students act out the woman touching Jesus and being healed.

SING:

"She touched Jesus' garment, and whom! she was healed!"

5. When she touched Jesus' garment, immediately she was healed. 8:44
Jesus stopped and asked who touched him. 8:45-46

READ: Luke 8:45-46

QUESTIONS:

Did Jesus know she had touched His garment? (Yes. He asked who touched Him.)

Why do you think everybody denied it? (There was a big crowd around Him and lots of people might have touched Him.)

Who spoke up and said what they all were thinking? (Peter)

How did Jesus know somebody touched Him? (He perceived power going out from Him).

ACT OUT:

Let a group of students act this out. One acts the part of Jesus. Many others are pressing around in and bumping into Him. In the midst of them, the woman reaches out and lightly touches the hem of His garment. Jesus turns around and says, "Who touched me?"

SING:

"Who touched Me? Somebody touched Me. Power is gone out of Me!"

6. The women fell down before Jesus and told how she pressed in to touch Him and how she was healed. 8:47

READ:

Luke 8:47 "Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling; and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately."

QUESTIONS:

Why did the woman come forward and confess? (She saw that she was not hidden.)

Did she feel confident or scared? (Scared. She came trembling.)

What position did she take before Jesus? (She fell down before Him.)

What two things did she tell? (1. The reason she touched Him and 2. How she was healed immediately.)

Did she do this privately or publicly? (Publicly. In the presence of all the people.)

ACT OUT:

Have all the children act out bowing down before Jesus. Have them repeat, "I touched You, Jesus, and I was healed."

SING:

"I touched Jesus, and I was healed."

7. Jesus commended her faith and the initiative she showed. 8:48

READ:

Luke 8:48

QUESTIONS:

How did Jesus address her? (He called her Daughter.)

What encouraging words did He give her? (Be of good cheer. Your faith has made you well. Go in peace.)

How did the woman show initiative? (By pressing into the crowd to touch Jesus)

Did Jesus approve or disapprove of the initiative she showed? (He approved. He said it showed her faith.)

How was she helped through the initiative she showed? (She was healed.)

ACT OUT:

Repeat, holding up one finger for each phrase Jesus said:

- Daughter,
- Be of good cheer.

- Your faith has made you well.
- Go in peace.

SING:

She took the initiative, and Jesus made her well!

Points to Re-emphasize as you close the story:

The woman took the initiative to press in to touch Jesus. Her initiative was rewarded. Jesus healed her and commended what she had done.

Application:

What is a need in your life? How will you take the initiative to do something about it?

(Listen to their ideas.) If they are slow in giving ideas, give an idea of your own for an area in which YOU need to show more initiative.

Invitation: (optional, according to situation):

Aren't you glad that God took the initiative to save us? He knew there is nothing we can do to save ourselves. He took the initiative to save us. He sent His own Son from heaven into the world to become our Savior. His Son Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay the punishment for all our sins. He didn't stay dead. He rose again triumphantly from the dead. Many people saw Him alive. Then His work on earth was done, so He went back to His Father in heaven. He's alive today. He can save you today if you will call on Him and ask Him to be your Savior. If you've never done that before and today you are ready, just pray a prayer something like this, and mean it with all your heart:

Father in heaven, I believe You sent Your Son Jesus to be my Savior. Jesus, thank You for dying to take away my sins. Thank You for rising from the dead. I ask You now to be my Savior. I ask You to come into my heart and life. Take away my sins. Give me new life in You. Thank You for saving me just now. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 12:21

The I WILL's of Initiative

Review

Tuesday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Initiative:
Abigail while still Nabal's wife (1 Sam. 25:1b-35)

Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Puzzles

You will need several small puzzles, one for each group. Allow time for each group to assemble the puzzle. When they are done, ask the groups what they did to start the puzzle. Did they set up the lid with the puzzle picture to guide them? What pieces did they assemble first? If they chose the edges or corners - why? Has that worked for them in the past? What did they do with the remaining pieces? Did each piece always fit in the first place they tried? What did they do if it didn't fit?

Working a puzzle can teach us a lot about taking initiative. First, you need to have a goal or guidelines, just like the picture of the puzzle. Sometimes you rely on experience to tell you where to start and other time you just have to try something to get started. Once you get started, it is sometimes hard to stop!

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 12:21

Bible Connection

Nehemiah rebuilding the wall (Neh. 1-2)

The I WILL's of Initiative

Review

Wednesday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Initiative:
The story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37)

Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

Jump Rope

Bring in a jump rope and choose 2 volunteers to turn the rope. Now you will need one person who knows how to jump in and jump while the rope is turned for them. Watch how the jumper watches the rope and waits for just the right time to jump in. It may take several turns of the rope for the jumper to judge the speed of the rope to plan just the right timing on jumping in. Sometimes the jumper waits too long and then it seems impossible to jump in. Sometimes the jumper misjudges the rope and doesn't get in correctly. Sometimes a jumper needs the rope to just sway for them to get in and then the overhead turns can begin. Initiative is like jumping rope. You need to assess the situation before you jump and then you just jump in!

There are three types of people in the world:

- those who make things happen,
- those who watch things happen,
- and those who wonder what happened.

We desperately need more people in the first category.

Bible Connection

Zacchaeus making restitution (Luke 19: 1-10)

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 12:21

The I WILL's of Initiative

Review

Thursday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Initiative:
The Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30)

Friday

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 12:21

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Rom 12:21

The I WILL's of Initiative

Review

Friday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Initiative:
The rich young ruler too initiative in coming to Jesus
(see Luke 18).

PERSONAL EVALUATION

- Do you show initiative by rising early in the morning and seeking the Lord?

- Do you take initiative to seek direction for your life in God's Word?
- Do you show initiative in memorizing and meditating on Scripture?
- Do you show initiative in asking forgiveness and being reconciled with your enemies?
- Do you display initiative in building and using a prayer list?
- Do you take initiative in setting aside times for fasting?
- Do you take initiative to honor the Lord's Day?
- Do you take initiative in sharing the Gospel with others?
- Do you exemplify initiative by keeping your home and car in good repair?
- Do you take initiative to search out the fatherless and the widows in your church and neighborhood, and discover what their needs are?
- Do you exercise initiative in learning how to write down the truths that God is teaching you?

Resourcefulness, Conservation

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

Re-purpose

Divide the class into groups of 4 or 5 students per group. The task for each group is to come up with a new use for something that is in the classroom and create a commercial for their new item. You can give each group a different item or the same item or you can let them choose anything they want.

Before they get started, give them an example of your own. Perhaps chalk board or white board erasers can become building blocks or a pencil can be a straight edge for drawing. Create an exciting infomercial demonstrating your new item. Give it a new name. When each of the groups are done, have them perform their infomercial to the class. After they have all shared their new ideas, talk about how they had to “think outside the box” in order to find the creativity needed to re-purpose an item.

Challenge them to find a real solution for an item the next time they go to throw something away.

Introduction

Opposites:

Resourcefulness vs Wastefulness

What does it mean?

Making wise use of what others might overlook or discard.

Translation:

Spanish: Ingenio vs. Derroche

Go to the root

The Merriam-Webster’s Encyclopedic Dictionary identifies the root of the word Resource as from the French word, ressource, meaning to arise anew. Can you visualize this when you picture old car tires being shredded and used for

playground padding or a previously owned game being played by a new family?

Idiom

Necessity is the mother of invention: to be resourceful because the situation demands it.

MacGyver it: Invent creative solutions using everyday items.

If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again: Failure is one way to learn.

How do we Sign it?

Resource
Conserve
Waste

Bible Connection

“When Jesus fed five thousand people, what did they do with the scraps?”

John ch. 6 vs. 1-13

Introduction:

Ask two children to volunteer who like to put on skits. You give them instructions as they go along. First ask two of the children to come up. One will be a king or a rich man and the other may be his servant. The king’s servant presents him with many valuable gifts that visitors are sending to him, but the king wastes all of them, throwing them on the floor as if he does not value any of them. At the conclusion of the skit, ask the children if the king showed conservation or wastefulness. Let several children briefly explain how the king was wasteful.

Transition from Introduction to Bible Story:

You may not be a king and you may not be rich, but God has given every one of us resources. We have goods that came from Him and belong to Him. God just lets us use them for awhile while we are on this earth. We have a choice to make, whether to use God’s resources wisely or to waste them.

Does the Bible have anything to say about conservation or wastefulness? Let’s see. Let’s look at John chapter 6.

Bible Story Outline:
(Activities suggested in parentheses after each point)

1. Jesus went over the sea of Galilee (in a boat), with crowds following Him because He had been healing the sick. (vs 1-2) (Have everyone pretend to get in boats to follow Jesus, then sit in the rocking boats as they follow Him.)
2. Jesus went up into a mountain and sat down with His disciples, with a great crowd of people following Him. (vs. 3) (Skip vs. 4 as it does not move the story forward.) (Have everyone pretend to be climbing a mountain as they follow Jesus.)
3. Jesus asked Philip where they would buy food, but He knew already what He would do. (vs. 5-6) (Let the children turn to one another and ask, "Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?")
4. One of the disciples, Philip, said it would cost too much to feed all the people. (vs. 7) (Let the children look at you, shake their fingers and answer, "There's not enough money to feed all these people!")
5. Another of the disciples, Andrew, said the only resource available was one little boy's lunch. (vs. 8-9) (Let the children hold up five fingers and say, "Five little barley loaves", then hold up two fingers and say, "Two small fishes." Then shake their heads and say, "Not enough! Not enough! Not enough!")
6. Jesus asked them to sit down in groups. There were about 5,000 men. (vs.10) (Ask the children to squeeze together in groups of any number that is convenient for the seating arrangement. Count them up and pretend that there are 5,000 of them.)
7. Jesus took the boy's lunch and gave God thanks. He recognized that the food we eat comes from God. (vs. 11a) (Have the children pretend to hold the food in their hands and bow their heads. Have them say together, "Thank You, God...for this food...You have given us.")
8. He distributed the food to the disciples and they gave it out to the crowds. (vs 11b) (Have the children pretend they are putting food into baskets.)
9. The little food became more and more—it was multiplied. (This is implied, since they all ate & were filled.) (Have the children keep on putting more and more food into more and more baskets.)

They all ate and were filled. (vs. 12 a) (Have the children rub their tummies as if they are full and satisfied.)

10. Jesus told the disciples to gather up the fragments that remained, that nothing be lost. (Today's memory verse) (vs. 12b) (The children should turn to one another and say, "Gather up the fragments....that nothing be lost!")
11. They gathered up 12 baskets of fragments. (Vs. 13). (Have them pretend to stack up the baskets of food that remained, counting each basket as they put it down.)

Concluding Discussions:

Discuss: What do you think they did with the fragments? The Bible doesn't say, but it does say Jesus didn't want anything to be lost. They didn't have refrigerators, so they could not have kept it for a long time. Maybe they ate it later in the day, or maybe they gave it out to others in need. Either was a good and helpful use of the resources.

Discuss: What did Jesus do that showed He understood that our food comes from God? (He gave thanks, vs. 11a). Food is just one example of a resource that comes from God. What else does God give us? (Sun, air, earth, plants, animals, families, schools, teachers, books, paper—every good thing we have is a resource from God).

Discuss: Since Jesus did not want the scraps of food to be lost, what do you think He would say about the other resources God has given us?

Discuss: What are some ways that students might waste God-given resources? (Let them respond. What are some ways that students could conserve those resources and use them wisely for good? At ECM's International Office we would like to receive a report on the details of this discussion.

Application:

What God-given resources have you been wasting? (Let the children respond, or just let them think about it. In older classes you might ask them to write down their ideas.) Let's pray about this right now. Let's ask God to help you conserve those resources and use them for good, that nothing be lost. (Teacher, pray for the students that they might become good stewards of God's resources and not be wasteful. Pray that they would be able to use all God gives them for good. If the students have mentioned specific areas where they need to change, pray for those areas.) In older classes, you might ask several students to pray. Guide their prayers along the lines suggested.

If God has shown you a way you can be less wasteful and a better steward of His resources, try this week to do the thing He showed you. I will ask next week about your progress.

Invitation:

There is another resource that it would be a shame to waste. That resource is salvation in Jesus Christ. Jesus, God's Son, died to pay the punishment for all our sins. He rose again. He finished His work and went back to heaven. He's alive today. He wants to give you eternal life, and He can save you if you call on Him. Today, if you have not yet called on Jesus, if you have not yet asked Him to save you, why not do it today in your heart? Don't waste the greatest resource God ever gave us. Let's bow our heads silently for a moment. In this moment of silence, if you have not yet asked Jesus into your heart and life to be your Saviour, would you call out to Him in your heart and ask Him in right now?

Songs:

Since conservation not waste may be a new thought to the children, these songs are best sung at the conclusion of the lesson.

[Sing to the tune of "Oh Be Careful Little Eyes"]

O be careful how you use what God gives (Please be careful!)
O be careful how you use what God gives (Please be careful!)
For the Father up above is looking down in love
So be careful, very careful every day.

Sing to the tune of "Just Because He Loved Me So"

Everything I have is His
Everything I have is His
My God gave it all to me
To use it carefully
Everything I have is His
(Make up your own tune)
Use it! Don't waste it!
It all belongs to God
Use it all for good today
It all belongs to Him

I WILLs OF Resourcefulness

To practice Resourcefulness I will:

- see value in objects, ideas, and people.
- repair, reuse, and recycle.
- make wise use of my time, talents, energy, and mind.
- give away or sell the things I do not use.
- not litter.

Bible Memory Verse

Luke 15:10

Monday Evening

Manna From Heaven

Text:

Exodus 16:1-31

Highlighted Verse: *Then the Lord said to Moses, "I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day."*

Main Themes:

God provides for our needs and the food we eat
We should only take what we need from the gifts God gives us

Lesson:

Exodus 16:1-31 - Look for a Children's Bible paraphrase of this story.

After reading, ask a few basic questions to make sure they understood the story.

Activity:

Have children sit in circle. Tell them to imagine they are the Israelites. They are hungry and complaining. God comes in a cloud and tells them that they will have food in the morning. They close their eyes and go to sleep, excited to see what they will wake up to. Make sure everyone's eyes are closed and then place bananas in the center of the circle, one for each child (or cut them in half, leaving the peel on, and each child get a half). Then tell them to wake up and gather the food that God has given them.

Most likely, one child will take more than one banana, leaving another child without a banana. This is a good opportunity to remind them that God provides enough for each person to have some, but not enough that anyone can be greedy and take more than they need.

Discussion Questions:

- What kind of food did God bring you?
- God wants you to know where this food came from, so that you remember how blessed you are to have it. Where did this banana come from?
- *There will probably be some confusion about how to answer this question. You should explain that the manna that God gave the Israelites came from*

God, but that our food doesn't just appear that way anymore. Someone grew these bananas. Where did they grow? You will need to know this question, so pay attention when you buy the bananas so that you have a good answer. It will likely be a South American country. Point out that the bananas have traveled a long way to get to us.

Activity:

Do the circle activity again, but this time, have the children wake up to a pile of french fries.

Again, ask the same questions:

- What kind of food did God bring you?
- God wants you to know where this food came from, so that you remember how blessed you are to have it. Where did this french fry come from?
- Does it come from a plant?
- Where does the plant grow? In a tree? In the ground? In what state or country?

Activity:

Do the circle activity again, but this time, the children wake up to a pile of cheese pizza. (You can cut bite-sized pieces.)

Again, ask the same questions:

- What kind of food did God bring you?
- God wants you to know where this food came from, so that you remember how blessed you are to have it. Where did this pizza come from?
- Does pizza grow on trees? Does it sprout up from the ground?
- What are the parts inside the pizza? (crust, sauce, cheese)
- Where does the crust come from? (wheat grows in fields and is ground into flour)
- Where does the sauce come from? (tomatoes grow on plants and are cooked and smashed to make sauce)
- Where does the cheese come from? (cheese comes from milk which comes from cows. And cows eat grass!)

God didn't want the Israelites to be hungry and not have food. But that doesn't mean that God said they could eat as much as they wanted. Throughout the Bible, God and Jesus make sure that people have food to eat, but they also warn about taking more than we need. How can we make sure that we don't run out of food and that we don't disobey God?

In this story in Exodus, we learned that we should always know where our food comes from. We should try to eat the food that God made for us, instead of eating food that God made for someone else.

Let's pray:

God, thank you for creating bananas and potatoes and wheat and tomatoes and all the other foods we eat. Help us to remember how blessed we are to have food. Amen.

When you go home, ask your parents to help you figure out where the food in your house came from.



Attention Grabber Activity

Be Prepared

Demonstrate the milk jug lamp.

Fill an empty clear plastic gallon milk jug with water. Strap a flashlight or headlamp to the jug, shining inward.

The water will diffuse the light enough to act like a lamp. Being resourceful can mean being prepared for emergencies and thinking creatively when one occurs.

Discuss the type of emergencies that can happen in your home. For Cincinnati weather, we can have floods, tornados and even a hurricane. You can lose power or water due to storms. What kinds of things do you need to have on hand to be prepared for these types of emergencies?

How can you be resourceful in using things wisely to conserve when they are in limited supply? You may even want to involve the parents in this activity by having students ask their parents what things they have done to be prepared such as having bottled water, flashlights with extra batteries, battery powered radio with extra batteries, safety candles.

Ask what things they may have done to be resourceful in previous emergencies.

Some examples maybe playing a board game by candle light when there is no electricity to power TV and game consoles. You may want to end the discussion by creating a list of things to keep handy during such emergencies <http://lifehacker.com/5896796/make-an-ambient-lamp-out-of-a-milk-jug>

Model of Resourcefulness

MacGyver - Resourcefulness Hero

Angus MacGyver is the definition of this month's quality of resourcefulness. MacGyver was a fictional character from the action adventure series of the same name that aired on ABC from 1985 to 1992.

"The story arc of *MacGyver* follows the intelligent, optimistic, laid-back, resourceful secret agent Angus MacGyver, played by Richard Dean Anderson. He prefers non-violent conflict resolution where possible, and refuses to use a gun. MacGyver works as a problem solver for the fictional *Phoenix Foundation* in Los Angeles. Educated as a scientist he is used as a resourceful agent able to solve a range of problems. MacGyver's main asset is his practical application of scientific knowledge and inventive use of common items—along with his ever-present Swiss Army knife. The clever solutions MacGyver implemented to seemingly intractable problems—often in life-or-death situations requiring him to improvise complex devices in a matter of minutes—were a major attraction of the show, which was praised for generating interest in the applied sciences, and particularly engineering, as well as providing entertaining story lines."

Even though the show has been off the air today's students may have seen it in reruns or be familiar with the terms "MacGyverisms" or "to MacGyver".

Bible Connection

1. Gathering

Take children outside (natural area if possible) and ask them to stand or sit a semi-circle, if possible facing a natural area. Read the Scripture Reading based on Genesis 1:1-2:3. After the reading the account of the first day, ask children to call out things that remind them of what God created on the first day. Repeat the process for each day of creation, encouraging children to be creative in their answers. Then, read Genesis 2:15, "The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till and keep it." Ask children, what is our responsibility toward creation?

2. Activity

Give each child a small ball of clay or play dough. Ask each person to make a model of something God created. With the whole group sitting in a circle, ask each child to tell about their creation. Then ask the following questions: How does it feel

to create something? How would you like other people to treat your creation?

3. Think

Tell the children that God's world is suffering because people have not treated God's creation with respect. We are selfish and wasteful with the goodness of the earth. If feasible, draw the earth on a blackboard or dry erase. *[at NCP, we often draw the earth "upside down," and ask if there is a sign on planet earth from outer space that says "this side up"—it's a moment to educate about who draws the maps and what it feels like to be on the top or bottom.]* Ask the children to think about the creature they created—what are some things we do to the earth that might harm this creature? Quickly draw in these harmful practices as they are mentioned.

There are things we can do to help repair the damage and heal the earth! Divide the children into four groups. Assign each group one of the Environmental Problems on the handout (make copies on one-side-used paper; tell the children it is copied onto used paper to save trees). Have the groups read the information, then come up with one or more ways they can help solve the problem described. Have the whole group come together, and ask each small group to report on the problem they studied and tell what solutions they discussed. When each small group is finished reporting, ask the other participants whether they can think of any additional solutions to the problem.

4. Respond

Read to the group the action items listed on the Lifestyle Survey and let students respond or comment. Ask them what other things we can do to care for God's world. Give each student a copy of the Lifestyle Survey (copied on blank side of used paper). Ask them to fill out the survey. Together discuss what other things their family might do to care for God's world. Suggest they post the Lifestyle Survey on their refrigerator or other visible location in the house.

5. Closing Prayer

"O God, Creator of the Universe, you have made all things and called them good. We thank you for the beautiful earth that we call home. Yet people have damaged your good works. We have trampled the flowers, cut the trees, and dirtied the water and air. We are sorry, and we want to make peace with your world. Teach us how to take care of your creation. Amen."

Bible Memory Verse

Luke 15:10

Tuesday Evening

Four Environmental Problems

AIR

Did you know that one gallon of gasoline makes twenty pounds of carbon dioxide when it is burned? We burn gasoline and other petroleum products when we drive cars, mow our lawns, heat or air condition our houses, or run our factories. Where does all that carbon dioxide go? It goes straight up into the air where it collects in the atmosphere. Some carbon dioxide is needed in the atmosphere to trap the heat from the sun to create a nice, warm environment for life on earth. But what happens when too much collects there? As a result, the earth's climate is changing, causing dangers to water supplies, food production, plant and animal life, and human life. Ask the group to talk about what is happening to the polar bears in the Arctic. (As the ice melts, polar bears are sometimes drowning as they swim from one ice flow to another, as now these are further apart. Polar bears aren't as fat now as they used to be when they start to hibernate. Why is this a problem? Polar bear cubs used to have a 65% survival rate—now it's 43%.)

How can we cut down on the amount of carbon dioxide that is produced by using less gasoline, natural gas, and fuel oil?

ANIMALS

God made so many different kinds of living things that we haven't yet found or named them all (in fact, of perhaps 10 million species of plants and animals, we've only discovered and named about 1.5 million). Wild animals live everywhere, not just in some far away forest. Whenever a new house or mall or movie theater or playground is built, it takes up the space where some animals had made their home. Sometimes the building pushes out the plants that provided the food for animals. Some kinds of animals cannot find new homes or enough food to eat. When that happens, the animals will die. There are many entire groups of animals and plants that can no longer find the space, food, and water they need to survive. Global Warming is also endangering many of the world's species of plants and animals.

How can we protect animals and plants that are in danger of extinction?

LAND

In the United States each person produces about four pounds of garbage each day. No other country can match us in garbage production. (A guessing game: how many water bottles do we throw away in the US every day: 40,000, 40 million, 40 gazillion? Laid end-to-end, these bottles would reach from the Washington Monument to the Grand Canyon—and back!) Where does all our garbage go? Most of it is buried under the ground. Some of the garbage that is buried in the earth poisons the ground and the water. Many neighborhoods in this country are running out of places to dump and want to send their garbage to other neighborhoods or even to other countries. The only problem is that nobody wants our garbage. Unfortunately, much of the garbage ends up in the neighborhoods of poor people. There are ways of cutting down on the amount of garbage we make by buying fewer things in the first place, by reusing things we do buy, and by recycling more, but many people don't want to take the extra trouble.

Are there some things in most people's garbage that could be used again or given away? Give examples of ways to reduce what we buy, reuse what we buy, and recycle what we buy. Does your church have recycling bins? Does it purchase paper made of recycled paper? Does it use disposable plates and cups in the church kitchen? (see "Glass v. Styrofoam" on the NCP website for more info)

WATER

Water is free - right? Well, that's been our attitude for so long that we think nothing of taking long showers, watering our lawns, washing our cars, filling our swimming pools. But in many parts of the world, and even in our own country, clean water is becoming scarce and expensive. Imagine not having enough water to drink, or having to worry about deadly diseases in your water supply. Those are problems many people face. (Half the schools in southern Sudan don't have any water at their school, so children have to bring water from home. Sometimes children miss school because they don't have a container to bring water to school.) Our rivers and lakes are being polluted by garbage and by poisonous chemicals that are being dumped into them. Americans use 1800 gallons of water each day per person; only 65 gallons or so is used around the house—the rest comes from the food we eat (600 gallons or so to grow or raise it, or raise the feed to feed it—a quarterpounder can require 500 gallons of water to raise the grain to feed the cow to create the hamburger!), water used to run power plants to provide electricity (900 gallons), and other industrial uses.

What can you do to reduce the amount of water that is used in your house?



Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Trade Show Time

Organize a TRADE show for your classroom grade or school. Pick an item that kids can trade such as books, games or toys.

Anyone who brings in an item can pick a similar item from the collection. You may need to create rules about what is not acceptable (books in poor condition) and how to calculate an “even” trade. Students do not need to trade with each other.

All items are collected over several days. Students bringing in items on the first day are the first to choose, etc. As each student brings in something to trade they are given a coupon or the number of trades they get in return is recorded. You may want to consider a two-fer strategy: Get 1 book for every 2 books you bring in. This assures that those to pick last at least have a choice. Leftover items can be donated.

When the trading is complete, process the activity by asking students what would have happened to the items that were recycled if they hadn't been traded.

How do they feel about getting “new” stuff? Would they want to do it again next year? Are there other items that can be traded?

Bible Connection

God's Gift of Daily Bread: Remembering that Enough is Enough

Text: Exodus 15 and 16

Main Themes:

- God is the source of all we need to survive
- God provides for us according to our needs, not for us to take in excess
- Taking more than we need of the resources available to us is a failure to trust God

Take a moment to remember the Exodus story. Ask the group to collectively retell the story.

The Israelites had been living in Egypt, where the Pharaoh had made them slaves. Moses and his brother Aaron had demanded that the Pharaoh let the Israelites go, but he had refused. To convince Pharaoh, God sent ten plagues. The Israelites were set free after the tenth plague when the first born of every Egyptian family died. The Israelites fled Egypt but the Pharaoh questioned his decision and chased after them. They escaped when Moses parted the Red Sea and the Egyptians were drowned in the sea. As soon as they finish celebrating God's goodness in delivering them from their captors (see the Song of Moses and the Song of Miriam in Exodus 15:1-21), the journey into the wilderness begins.

Reflect on the how you might feel if you and your family found yourselves in the midst of a great wilderness (you might remember camping trips) with hundreds of other families and very little camping equipment, food, or clean water.

Within three days of entering the wilderness, the Israelites begin to complain. In Exodus 15:23-25, the people complain that the water is too bitter to drink, and the Lord meets their needs by giving Moses a way to make the water sweet and drinkable.

Anticipating that this will not be the last time that the Israelites will complain, God makes a deal with the Israelites in Exodus 15:25-26. God “puts them to the test,” telling the Israelites that they must “listen carefully to the voice of the Lord your God, and do what is right in his sight, and give heed to his commandments and keep all his statutes.” If they do this, God promises “I will not bring upon you any of the diseases that I brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord who heals you.” God's requirements are made clear. The Israelites must listen carefully to God's instructions and commandments. Likewise, the benefits of doing so are quite clear. Life in abundance belongs to those who obey God.

You have been camping in the wilderness for over a week now. The excitement of the adventure is beginning to wear off. You realize that this is not a vacation, but a new way of life. What anxieties would you feel?

Just a few verses later, as expected, the Israelites are back to complaining (Exodus 16:2-3). They have not yet learned to trust that God will provide what they need if only they will remain faithful. These complaints, these endless worries about where their next meal will come from, sound all too familiar. They are understandably nervous about their fragile situation, but God wants them to *turn their focus away from worrying and toward obedience.*

In Exodus 16:4-5, God lays out a plan for meeting the needs of the Israelites. In verses 6-12, the message is delivered to

the Israelites, reassuring them that God has heard their complaints and will meet their needs, day by day. In verses 13-19 demonstrates God's faithfulness and wisdom. Each person has what they need, with no one having excess and no one facing a shortage. God designed the gift of manna in this way, so that all would have enough and no more. Trusting in God's promise to provide them with *daily* bread, no one needed to possess more than a day's supply.

Wow. What a relief to have bread. But there was only just enough today. Who knows if there will be enough tomorrow? Perhaps it would be prudent to save a little to the side for an emergency. While everyone else is resting on the Sabbath, I will go and gather a little extra. I will give my children an extra serving, to see the smiles on their faces and pad their bellies in case times get tough again. In what ways do you take more than you need from God's bounty?

Unfortunately, some of the Israelites did not trust God's promise nor take seriously God's commands. They thought that they would be wise to save some of the manna for the next day in case there was not more to be gathered. But their wisdom was foolishness. God kept the promise of daily bread, and the manna they had foolishly saved "bred worms and became foul" (Ex.16:20). Likewise, on the seventh day, some of the Israelites desired more manna than that which God had already provided, so they went out to gather more, despite Moses' instruction that they were not to gather on the seventh day, the day of rest. Their greed, their desire for more-than-enough, led them to disobey God's commands.

But eventually, the people did learn. They learned how to be obedient and trust in God's daily provisions. For forty years, then, the Israelites lived on manna, the bread of heaven. Their ability to survive from day to day was entirely dependent on God, on the promise that each sunrise would bring enough manna for the day to come. The Israelites understood where their food came from. Their relationship with God and their daily bread were one and the same. They must have been distinctly aware of their own fragility and dependence, but also distinctly aware of God's faithfulness and glory.

Exodus 16:10 is the first time in the Bible when the people *actually see* the glory of the Lord. What does it mean that the glory of God first appears when God tells the people that they are to trust the Lord to provide food? Does it seem strange to you that the first time God appears in glory, it is to talk about meat and bread?

The Israelites did eventually settle in a new land. They no longer relied on manna, but grew crops and raised animals. The relationship between obedience to God and having enough to eat remained strong. New commandments were

given to the Israelites to fit their new circumstances. They were commanded to till the land for only six years and to let the land rest in the seventh year (Leviticus 25:1-7). The law required that they not harvest the corners of their fields, but instead leave this part for the poor and for travelers who would be allowed to glean food from these places to sustain them on their journey (Leviticus 19:9-10). In this way, God continued to provide enough food for everyone.

Closing discussion questions:

- Where does your food come from? Do you know? How could you find out?
- Do you wake up in the morning and look outside to see if the Lord has once again blessed you with enough to eat? How would that change your attitude toward waking up each morning?
- Do you know if the crop was good this year? Do you know where your food was harvested?
- What is your relationship to the food you eat? How is God a part of that relationship?

Take-Home Activity:

Plant some herbs in your backyard or in a windowsill. Create a family ritual of waking up each morning and checking on the progress of your plants. Say a simple prayer together. Use this one or write one of your own.

Creator God, Thank you for the blessing of daily bread. Enough is enough. Amen.

Commit as a family to only seasoning your food with these herbs, so that you can taste God's blessing in every meal and learn to be a part of the ebbs and flows of God's creation.

You could also commit to a day or a week when you keep track of where all your food came from. Not the name of the grocery store, but the location of the farm where the food was grown or the animal was raised. It may be difficult at first, but will be a fun family activity. Farmer's markets are a great Saturday morning family activity that will help you stay connected to the miraculous provision of daily bread.

Bible Memory Verse

Luke 15:10

Wednesday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Conservation:

Jeremiah 2:7

Thursday

Introduction

Conservation ties in beautifully with our theme of Resourcefulness

Opposites

Conservation vs Wastefulness

What does it mean

The wise and careful use of God-given resources for good and helpful purposes

Bible Connection

Text: Leviticus 26

Main Themes:

- Humanity's relationship with God is intimately connected to the land
- Being good stewards of the earth is one of the commands given to us by God
- The consequences for humanity's disobedience to God are born out through the land
- Repentance and obedience lead to healing and restoration

Verses 1-13:

The chapter opens with a recitation of the good works of God and a description of humanity's intended relationship with God.

Questions:

- How is the relationship between God, humanity and creation depicted?

- What does it mean that the fruitfulness of the land is tied to following God's statutes and commands?
- Is there any significance to the fact that God's promise to provide rains and food is followed by an assurance of peace in the land?

Verses 14-39:

The list of penalties for disobeying God's commands raise the difficult questions about God's justice and character discussed in the introduction. Current economic and political climates should also be held in mind. Consider that the U.S. is borrowing money from China to buy oil from the Middle East to burn in ways that are destroying our environment. Consider also that droughts and flooding are creating millions of climate refugees, forcing populations to compete for dwindling agricultural resources and creating destabilized regions where terrorism can thrive. Lastly, consider that the spread of diseases such as malaria is on the rise globally in part because of changing environmental conditions. Keep these modern day issues in mind as you discuss the following.

Questions:

- Do we spurn God's statutes and abhor God's ordinances when we do not properly care for creation? Read Gen 2:15, Lev. 19: 9-11, 25: 24, Micha 6:8
- What does it say to us that in the midst of all the destruction that will befall humanity for its disobedience, God notes that the land will have its Sabbath?
- Does this passage connect punishment with how we treat the land?
- Do any of these punishments resonate with current global issues?
- Given what we know about the interconnected nature of climate change, poverty, disease, political destabilization etc, is it possible to view these punishments less as God's vengeance and more as an inevitable result of living outside of the relationship with creation that we were commanded to have?
- What do these verses reveal about the nature of God and human disobedience?

Verses 40-46:

Redemption is possible. God will not forsake God's people or abandon them to punishment forever, but repentance is necessary.

Questions:

- Is restoration possible? What must humanity do?
- What does repentance look like in terms of our relationship to creation?

- Does a right relationship with creation put us back in right relationship with God?

Bible Memory Verse

Luke 15:10

Thursday Evening

To Till and Keep

Text: Genesis 2:15-21

Highlighted Verse: *The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it (v 15).*

Main Themes:

- God created the world and everything in it
- We are supposed to care for God's creation

Introduction:

Begin by reviewing the story of creation with your class, briefly sketching the seven days of creation. If the class is old enough this can be done as a group quiz to see if they can name what happened on each day. For younger children visual representations could be helpful (i.e. a picture of the sun and moon etc). Remind the children of what God thought at the end of each day - creation was pronounced good. Explain that God created the whole world and everything in it and cares very much about all of creation.

Lesson:

Read Gen. 2:15-21 with the class. Explain that after God created the world, God put Adam in the Garden of Eden to care for the earth and the animals. Again, depending upon the age group, visual depictions of animals, Adam and Eve, and a garden could be helpful. Ask the children if they know of any ways they can help take care of the earth. Explain the ideas of reduce, reuse, recycle and why they are important. Use props (ex. an old spaghetti sauce jar that can be used to hold screws or nails; a newspaper and soda can that can be recycled). Talk about how they can save water and energy by turning off running water and lights when they re not using them, such as when they are brushing their teeth or when they leave a room. Show them an energy efficient light bulb and explain how it can be used to save energy. If your church does anything to promote creation care (recycle bulletins, use energy saver appliances, have recycling bins) explain those actions to the children. Invite them to use their imaginations to come up with ways they can help protect God's good creation.

Activity:

Plant seeds that the children can care for and watch grow.

Materials:

- Soil
- A place to plant: individual pots, a large planter, or perhaps there is a good place on the church property to have a small garden or flower bed
- Seeds: *Consult a local gardener or florist to help you evaluate important factors such as whether the plants will grow primarily indoors or outdoors, what will grow best during the time of year you do this lesson, the amount of care the plant will need, and how long they will take to grow in order to make the best choice for your class.* Some suggestions: many herbs, such as basil, and beans sprout quickly and are easy to care for. Good flowers include certain varieties of sunflowers, borage, and cosmos.
- Water

Have the children plant seeds so they can practice caring for part of God's creation. Individual plants could be sent home with each child with instructions on how to care for it. It may be more fun and instructive, however, if this is a class project the children can return to every week and that they can watch grow together (in this case it would be especially important to know what, if any, care the plant would need on more than a once a week basis). If the chosen plant is an herb, vegetable or fruit you can explain how God cares for us by providing food for us to eat and we are supposed to care for other creatures and plants. You can even write Gen 2:15 on the side of the pots or planter as a reminder of this lesson.

Alternate Activity:

Have the children draw pictures of God's good creation and ways they can care for it. Older children can look through magazines and cut out examples of things God made and glue them into a collage.

Materials:

- Crayons
- Markers
- Paper
- Glue
- Magazines
- Scissors

Friday

Bible Memory Verse

Luke 15:10

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Luke 15:10

Friday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Conservation:
John 6:12/ Psalm 24:1a

Scripture Reading based on Genesis 1:1-2:3

Reader 1: In the beginning when God was creating the heavens and the earth, the whole universe was covered in darkness.

Reader 2: Then God said, "Let there be light!" And there was light. God called the light Day and the darkness Night. That was on the first day.

All: And God said, "It is good."

Reader 3: On the second day God made the sky.
All: And God said, "It is good."

Reader 4: Then God gathered together all the waters of the earth, making the huge oceans, the lakes, and rivers. And dry land appeared, continents and islands, mountains, prairies, and hills.

Out of the earth sprang up trees and plants, too many kinds to count. That was the third day.

All: And God said, "It is good."

Reader 5: God said, "I need to separate the day from the night and the summer from the winter."

So God made the sun and moon, the stars and the seasons, all on the fourth day.

All: And God said, "It is good."

Reader 6: On the fifth day God said, "Let there be swarms of living creatures in the water and in the sky." And God filled the seas and the sky with all kinds of fish and birds and insects and reptiles.

All: And God said, "It is good."

Reader 7: And God filled the land also with creatures, snakes, and bugs, dogs and armadillos, toads and hippopotamuses, and all other creatures.

All: And God said, "It is good."

Reader 8: And on the sixth day God made human beings, women and men and girls and boys, and said, "Please take care of all the things I have created."

All: And God said, "It is good."

Reader 9: And on the seventh day, God rested from all the work of creation.

All: And we said, "It is good—way to go, God!"

Enthusiasm

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

Cotton Ball Relay

Arrange the students in at least two rows at one end of the classroom. Place an empty container for each team at the opposite end of the room. Place a bowl with 15 cotton balls and a spoon in front of each team.

Instruct the students to take the spoon in hand and place a cotton ball on it. When you give the signal to start, they must take one cotton ball (without touching it with their hands) and drop it in their own team's bucket. Have them walk quickly back and give the spoon to the next person in line. The first team to transfer all their cotton balls, wins.

Supplies: cotton balls, bowls, spoons

Bean Bag Relay

Arrange the students as in the "Cotton Ball Relay" and give the student in front of each row a bean bag. Instruct students to place the bean bag on their heads (no hands may be used to hold the bean bag) and walk to a designated finish line and back. Direct them to hand the bean bag off to the next teammate in line. Continue the game in this way until all the students on the team have gone. The first team finished, wins!

Up and Over Relay

For this relay, students can remain in their desks or sit in rows across the room. Place an object (such as a ball, clean eraser, or bean bag) on the floor at the far end of each row. When signalled to begin, the children should pick up the object with one hand, pass it to their opposite hand, and place it on the floor for the next student to pick up and carry across to the student after that. The first team to move its object down the entire row and place it on the floor wins the game.

* For and only child, have him complete the three activities against time

Introduction

Opposites:

Enthusiasm vs Apathy

What does it mean?

Expressing joy in each task as I give it my best effort.

How do we Sign it?

Enthuse, Excite

Nature Story

Enthusiasm Nature Story (VID) (4:55)

Poem

Enthusiasm Poem (VID) (8:14)

Bible Connection

The story of Caleb in Joshua 14, who at 85 years of age fought with giants.

Bible Memory Verse

1 Thess 5:15, 19

The I WILL's of Enthusiasm

To practice Enthusiasm I will:

- be an energy-giver
- smile
- treat every job as important
- put my whole heart into what I do
- not be discouraged by failure

Monday Evening

1. Why should you put your whole heart into what you do?
2. An enthusiastic person...
 - a. frowns a lot
 - b. nags and complains
 - c. gladly helps others
 - d. tries half-heartedly
3. What type of person do you want to be? q Energy-Giver q Energy-Waster q Energy-Taker
4. An enthusiastic person is always loud and energetic: TRUE? or FALSE?
5. How does the humpback whale show enthusiasm?

Discuss some Bible verses about Enthusiasm:

- Be “eager to serve” (1 Peter 5:2)
- Be “eager to do what is good” (Titus 2:14)
- Have an “eager willingness” to finish the work of faith we’ve begun (2 Corinthians 8:11)

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

The Big Picture Activity (Make a Puzzle)

Story

The Colonel of Kettle Hill

“CHAAAAARGE!!” Bullets flew in every direction as the Rough Riders sprang from their cover on the San Juan Heights. It was June 1898, and American troops were fighting the Spanish army on the island of Cuba. Spanish troops had dug in on top of one of the hills and their constant fire forced the American troops to seek cover.

The Rough Riders were a group of volunteers led by Colonel Theodore Roosevelt. A young soldier ran up to the colonel and handed him a note that said, “Take your men and attack Kettle Hill.” Theodore knew how important it was to capture that hill for the Americans to make any progress.

He jumped up and shouted, “Follow me, men!” Mounting his horse, he charged up the hill.

As the Spanish troops fired their guns, Theodore swung his hat and shouted to his men as they charged through tall grass and over rocks. Bullets whizzed by as he encouraged his men. As the Rough Riders reached the top of the hill, the Spanish troops retreated. The Rough Riders were victorious!

Theodore was not always this strong and energetic. As a child, he was often sick. One day his father had an idea. What Theodore needed was exercise! Theodore and his parents set up a routine, and every day he worked hard to build his muscles. Soon he was playing outside and doing things he could never do before. He ran through the woods, climbed mountains, and played lots of sports.

One of his favorite activities was hunting. On one trip, his guide caught a bear and brought it to him to shoot. But Theodore didn’t want to shoot an animal that wasn’t wild. A newspaper reporter wrote a story with a cartoon about Theodore sparing the bear. People liked the story, and someone made a stuffed bear and called it a “Teddy Bear”! Theodore Roosevelt eventually became the 26th president of the United States. He was known for his cheerful smile, hearty laugh, and energetic personality. Despite his busy schedule and many responsibilities, his enthusiasm never changed from that day as Colonel of Kettle Hill.



Poem

Enthusiasm Poem - Review

Songs

Enthusiasm Song (VID) (5:59)
My God is So Big
Trust and Obey
Jesus Loves Me

Bible Connection

Israel was at war with the Philistines and had just suffered a terrible defeat, losing 4,000 men. The elders asked among themselves why the Lord had allowed this to happen. They could see that God was not helping them so they tried to think of a way to get Him back on their side. They remembered that the Ark of the Covenant was nearby in the town of Shiloh. The Ark of the Covenant was where the Ten Commandments were kept and where God's spirit was said to dwell. So the elders dispatched men to bring the ark back to the camp.

When the men saw the Ark, they let out such a huge roar that the ground shook beneath them. When the Philistines heard this and realized that the Ark had come into the Israelite camp, they began trembling with fear saying, "A god has come into the camp. Who can stand against such a powerful god." They told themselves they would have to fight extra hard or they would all be taken as slaves. So the Philistines fought with all their might and slaughtered the Israelites with an even bigger defeat than before. This time they killed 30,000 men. They also captured the Ark of the Covenant, and brought it back home to the town of Ashod. But the Philistines didn't realize, at the time, that capturing the ark would turn out to be a big mistake. When it arrived in Ashod, the calamity began...

Bible Memory Verse

1 Thess 5:15, 19

The I WILL's of Enthusiasm

Review

Tuesday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Enthusiasm:

Colossians 3:23
Philippians 1:18

Attention Grabber Activity

- Bring a brick. Put the memory verse on a card and attach it to the brick.
Bring grapes for a snack. Remind that children that Nehemiah was the king's cupbearer.
Using foam blocks, LEGOs, or wooden craft sticks, build the wall of Jerusalem. You should be able to find the outline of Jerusalem in Nehemiah's time online or in a Bible Atlas. Build it on cardstock and label the gates.

Discussion

Presentation

The Great Wall of Nehemiah English.pdf

Discussion

- Note: The twentieth year of Artaxerxes' reign was 445 BC. Ezra arrived in Jerusalem 13 years before Hanani's report to Nehemiah.
What trouble was occurring in Jerusalem according to Hanani? How did Nehemiah react? What does this tell us about his character and dedication to God? (Nehemiah 1)
Nehemiah spent four months fasting and praying before approaching the king. He prays again in Nehemiah 2:4 before answering the king. How did the king respond? Why do you think Nehemiah prayed for so long? (Nehemiah 2)
Did Nehemiah ride into Jerusalem and announce his intentions, or did he take time to investigate the situation first? (Nehemiah 2)
Note: The twentieth year of Artaxerxes' reign was 445 BC. Ezra arrived in Jerusalem 13 years before Hanani's report to Nehemiah.
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this tell us about his character and dedication to God? (Nehemiah 1)

- Nehemiah spent four months fasting and praying before approaching the king. He prays again in Nehemiah 2:4 before answering the king. How did the king respond? Why do you think Nehemiah prayed for so long? (Nehemiah 2)
- Did Nehemiah ride into Jerusalem and announce his intentions, or did he take time to investigate the situation first? (Nehemiah 2)
- How would you describe the rebuilding effort? Was it chaotic or organized? Were just a few people involved, or was it a community project? (Nehemiah 3)
- How was the work on the wall jeopardized? Did the Jewish people quit? What arrangements did they make so the work could continue? (Nehemiah 4)
- What additional resistance did Nehemiah encounter near the end of the wall project? How did he respond? (Nehemiah 6)
- How long did rebuilding the wall take? (Nehemiah 6:15)
- What did Nehemiah do once the walls were finished? (Nehemiah 7:1-4)
- How was the work on the wall jeopardized? Did the Jewish people quit? What arrangements did they make so the work could continue? (Nehemiah 4)
- Read Deuteronomy 15:1-15. How were the Israelites to treat each other when one of them was in financial distress? How were they treating each other when Nehemiah arrived? How did they respond to his rebuke? (Nehemiah 5)
- What did Nehemiah sacrifice because of his love for the Lord and His people? (Nehemiah 5)
- What additional resistance did Nehemiah encounter near the end of the wall project? How did he respond? (Nehemiah 6)
- How long did rebuilding the wall take? (Nehemiah 6:15)
- Who listened to the reading of the Book of the Law of Moses? Who helped the people understand what was read? How did the people respond to what they heard? (Nehemiah 8)
- What did the majority of the covenant renewal ceremony focus on? (Nehemiah 9:5-25) What did they confess next? (Nehemiah 9:26-31) What did they ask of the Lord? (Nehemiah 9:32-37) What did they promise? (Nehemiah 9:38)
- What did Nehemiah do once the walls were finished? (Nehemiah 7:1-4)
- Once the walls were constructed who did Nehemiah focus on? (Nehemiah 7)
- Who listened to the reading of the Book of the Law of Moses? Who helped the people understand what was read? How did the people respond to what they heard? (Nehemiah 8)
- What did the majority of the covenant renewal ceremony focus on? (Nehemiah 9:5-25) What did they confess next? (Nehemiah 9:26-31) What did they ask of the Lord? (Nehemiah 9:32-37) What did they promise? (Nehemiah 9:38)
- What did the people agree to do as the terms of the covenant? (Nehemiah 10)
- Do you remember the allotment of the land in Joshua chapters 13-21? How does this division of the land in Nehemiah 11 sound in comparison? Do the Jewish people sound as though they were strong and prosperous?
- Look up the word 'remnant' in the dictionary.
- What did the people agree to do as the terms of the covenant? (Nehemiah 10)
- Do you remember the allotment of the land in Joshua chapters 13-21? How does this division of the land in Nehemiah 11 sound in comparison? Do the Jewish people sound as though they were strong and prosperous?
- Look up the word 'remnant' in the dictionary.
- Note: This list of priests covers from the time of Zerubbabel to the time of Nehemiah. How were the people faithful in their worship over that time? (Nehemiah 12)
- What terms of the covenant from Nehemiah 10 did the people break? Were these reoccurring sins for the Israelites? (Nehemiah 13)
- How can you guard your own heart against straying from the Lord?

- Note: This list of priests covers from the time of Zerubbabel to the time of Nehemiah. How were the people faithful in their worship over that time? (Nehemiah 12)
- What terms of the covenant from Nehemiah 10 did the people break? Were these reoccurring sins for the Israelites? (Nehemiah 13)
- How can you guard your own heart against straying from the Lord?
- Write down a few sentences about the trials Nehemiah faced. Did he give up? How did he look to God for help?

Their enemies were so angry that the Israelites continued to repair the walls that they planned to fight against Israel. (Nehemiah 4:7-8) But the Nehemiah and the Israelites prayed to God. They also put guards on duty day and night, but the workers started get tired and weak. They became fearful because their enemies were planning to attack them. So Nehemiah placed people behind the lowest part of the wall which was the area where they were the weakest. Nehemiah stationed the Israelites family by family. "They had their swords, spears, and bows with them." (Nehemiah 4:9-13 NlrV)

Nehemiah spoke to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people. He said, "Remember the Lord. He is great and powerful. So fight for your brothers and sisters. Fight for your sons and daughters. Fight for your wives and homes." (Nehemiah 4:14 NlrV) God wants us to, "Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer." (Romans 12:12 NlrV) The enemies of Israel heard that their plans had not worked because "God had blocked their evil plans." (Nehemiah 4:15 NlrV) The Israelites returned to their work. They rebuilt the walls. Every man did his own work. Half of the men worked and half were given spears, shield, bows and armor. Each builder had a sword at his side. The men who carried the supplies worked with one hand. They had a weapon in the other hand. The man who blew the trumpet stayed with Nehemiah. Blowing the trumpet was a sign that they needed to fight. Nehemiah told the nobles, the officials, and the rest of the people that it was a big job, the territory was big and they were separated. He told them that if they heard the trumpet to go to that place. Nehemiah told them, "Our God will fight for us!" (Nehemiah 4:16-20 NlrV) They worked from sunrise until the stars came out a night. Every man kept his weapon with him, even to go to get water. (Nehemiah 4:21-23) It took 52 days to finish rebuilding the walls. The enemies of Israel became afraid. They realized that God helped Israel finish the work. (Nehemiah 6:15-16) God will help us, too. (Hebrews 13:6)

Bible Connection

The story of Nehemiah who enthusiastically rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem

Nehemiah served King Artaxerxes. One day when he was giving the king his wine, he was the cupbearer, the king asked Nehemiah why he was sad. Nehemiah told the king it was because he wanted to rebuild the walls around Jerusalem. The king allowed Nehemiah to go and gave him letters to give to the governors of the land so that Nehemiah could travel safely. Nehemiah asked for logs so that he could make the gates of the fort that was by the temple and some for the house he would live in. God was with Nehemiah and He helped him, the king agreed and gave Nehemiah the things he requested. (Nehemiah 2:1-8) Nehemiah went to Jerusalem. For three day he looked to see what needed to be done to rebuild the walls and the gates. Then Nehemiah invited the officials, the priests, and the nobles to help him rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. He told them how God had helped him and how the king gave him the things he needed. They agreed to help Nehemiah rebuild the walls. (Nehemiah 2:9-18).

But Nehemiah and the Israelites had enemies who laughed at them and made fun of them. They accused them of turning against the king. But Nehemiah said, "The God of heaven will give us success. We serve him. So we'll start rebuilding the walls." (Nehemiah 2:19-20 NlrV)

The Israelites started rebuilding but their enemies were very upset and very angry. They made fun of the Israelites. (Nehemiah 4:1-3) Nehemiah prayed to God. So the Israelites rebuilt the wall and repaired it until the wall was half as high as they wanted it. "The people worked with all their heart." (Nehemiah 4:4-6)

Bible Memory Verse

1 Thess 5:15, 19

Songs

Enthusiasm Song (VID) (5:59)
My God is So Big
Trust and Obey
Jesus Loves Me

Poem

Enthusiasm Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Enthusiasm

Review

Wednesday Evening

Continue the discussion about Nehemiah

- When their enemies made fun of them and planned to attack them, Nehemiah prayed. God took care of them. Talk about the importance of prayer.
- Nehemiah asked the king for permission to go rebuild the walls, for letters so that he could travel safely, and for wood to rebuild the wall and the house he would live. That was no small request. Talk about how God asks us to do "big" things which show us that it is God at work.
- Talk about how God helps us and cares for us by providing for our needs: parents to care for us, place to live, food to eat, etc.

Discuss some Bible verses about Enthusiasm:

2 Timothy 2:15

Thursday

Story & Bible Connection

Godly Enthusiasm

Read

Rom 12:9-12

Former Secretary of Defense, Melvin Laird, has called the Polaris Submarine a "priceless asset" in the Cuban Missile Crisis. The man responsible for the development of the Polaris was Rear Admiral William Raborn, Jr. He carefully recruited his top management personnel. When they came on the job he would give them and their families a patriotic

pep talk on the importance of their assignments. On those occasions when it appeared that someone was not doing his best, he would call him into his office for what he termed, "rededication." One officer, recalling one of those emotional sessions, said, "When I walked out, I knew I was ready to die for someone. I didn't know whether it was for the admiral, the president, my mother, or the head of the Boy Scouts, but brother, I was ready to die if necessary!"

Now that's what I call enthusiasm! Enthusiasm has been defined as "energy that boils over and runs down the side of the pot."

One of the exciting characteristics of the New Testament Church was that they really enjoyed what they were doing and did it with fervor. But just in case they needed reminding, Paul exhorts them here in Romans 9:11 to never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor. This is what I call "Godly enthusiasm." As a matter of fact, the word enthusiasm comes from two Greek words, en (in) and thous (God). One who is enthusiastic is "in God."

ENTHUSIASM IS A FRAGILE THING. It can be destroyed very easily. In his book, Spirit of St. Louis, Charles Lindbergh recounts the trip home from his solo trans-Atlantic flight. After several days on board ship, he went up on the bridge during a severe storm. He watched it for a while and then said, "I didn't know the sea was so big. I didn't know it was so vast. If anyone had told me I wouldn't have tried it."

Vince Lombardi: "If you aren't fired with enthusiasm, you will be fired with enthusiasm."

ENTHUSIASM, that certain something that makes us great—that pulls us out of the mediocre and commonplace—that builds into us power. It glows and shines—it lights up our faces—

ENTHUSIASM, the keynote that makes us sing and makes men sing with us.

ENTHUSIASM—the maker of friends—the maker of smiles—the producer of confidence. It cries to the world, "I've got what it takes."

ENTHUSIASM—the inspiration that makes us "wake up and live." It puts spring in our step—spring in our hearts—a twinkle in our eyes and gives us confidence in ourselves and our fellow men.

ENTHUSIASM—it changes a dead pan salesman to a producer—a pessimist to an optimist—a loafer to a go-getter.

ENTHUSIASM—if we have it, we should thank God for it. If we don't have it, then we should get down on our knees and pray for it.

Of all the people on the face of the earth, Christians ought to be the most enthusiastic. Why? Well, consider the blessings of God:

- Eternal life through His Son
- The Holy Spirit living within us
- The Bible, God's love letter
- Adopted into His forever family
- Answered many of our prayers
- Protected us from harm
- Provided our basic needs
- Filled us with His love, joy, and peace
- Given us many Christian friends
- Prays for us as our Advocate

Friday

Bible Memory Verse

1 Thess 5:15, 19

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

1 Thess 5:15, 19

Bible Memory Verse

1 Thess 5:15, 19

Songs

Enthusiasm Song (VID) (5:59)
My God is So Big
Trust and Obey
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Poem

Enthusiasm Poem - Review

Poem

Enthusiasm Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Enthusiasm

Review

The I WILL's of Enthusiasm

Review

Thursday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Enthusiasm:
Ephesians 6:7-17

Friday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Enthusiasm:

- Be "eager for the gifts of the Spirit" (1 Corinthians 14:12)
- Wait in "eager expectation" for God (Romans 8:9)

Acceptance

Parents

Parents' prayer

Although we can try to develop character in our children through various methods and programs, only God can bring about permanent change in a child's heart. Before you begin leading your child through this study on acceptance, spend time alone with God interceding for His help. Ask Him to help you grow in the area of acceptance, and to release His power in your child.

Use the sample prayer below to guide you in praying for your child's character development. If you prefer to personalize your prayers even further, read through the additional verses provided under "Scripture-guided prayer" for direction and inspiration.

Sample prayer

God, you alone are holy, yet You readily accept everyone. Your kingdom is totally inclusive. Thank you for Your unconditional love. "How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!" (1 John 3:1) Being perfect, You would have a right to be choosy about who You adopt as part of Your family, but You accept all of us, regardless of our race, age, gender or appearance. Thank you for offering forgiveness and salvation to anyone who asks for it. I am humbled by Your unbiased love and my lack of ability to love like You do. I tend to pay less attention to , exclude , choose not to be around those who and generally avoid people who are . I cannot claim to have Your love in me, nor is Your love evident in me, if I am not accepting of others. Please forgive me for not loving and accepting others as You do (1 John 4:11).

As I pray for my child, , I ask that You would help him/her readily accept others. I ask that would intentionally include other kids at playtime, be quick to put an arm around a child who is feeling left out, and be willing to stand up for someone who is being teased. Please give him/her a heart of love that warmly accepts others just as they are. When is tempted to judge others, or to exclude those less fortunate, less talented or those who are just different, remind him/her of Romans 15:7: "Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God."

Finally, I ask that You would give our family opportunities to be around people who are different and to care for those

who often experience rejection. Let us be the avenue for Your love to be expressed to them. God, we have not seen You, but Your Word says that if we love one another, Your love is made complete in us. Please live in us so our family members are able to love others as You have loved us (1 John 4:11-12). Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for parents

Pray through one or more of the selected Scriptures under each heading. Focus on listening to God and allowing His Spirit to direct you as you pray.

Character focus

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate His love and willingness to accept you as part of His family.

Psalm 103:8-13 | John 1:12-14 | Acts 10:34-36 | 2 Peter 3:9 | 1 John 3:1; 4:9-10,16

Heart search

Acknowledge where and how you are not accepting of others.

Matthew 7:1-2 | Romans 14:9-10 | Ephesians 4:2-3 | James 4:12 | 1 John 3:18; 4:19-21

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have seen acceptance exhibited in your family.

Family requests

Ask God to help you and your children to be as accepting of others as He is.

Romans 14:17-19 | John 13:34-35 | John 15:9-14 | 1 John 2:5-6 | 1 John 4:11-12

Kids talk with God

Use this section to help your child learn to reach out to God in all things. The sample prayers all begin with "Dear God," however, you may use any other names for God your children are comfortable with.

If your child is ready to formulate their own original prayer, use the Bible verses under "Scripture-guided prayer for children" for inspiration.

Sample prayers

Dear God, I am tempted to exclude . I don't like it when he/she does . Please give me Your love for him/her. Help me to love despite how he/she behaves. Amen.

Dear God, I want to be like You! Please help me to love others as Jesus did. Amen.

Dear God, I am tempted to dislike . Please give me Your love for him/her. Amen.

Dear God, please show me if I have not been sharing Your love with others. Amen.

Dear God, please help me show others that I am Your child by being kind to them. Remind me that I can do this by including others during playtime and by including someone who is left out. Amen.

Dear God, please show me if there is someone who needs my love and acceptance. Amen.

Dear God, I am sorry that I have not been accepting of . Please help me to show him/her that I have Jesus' love in my heart. Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for children

Read through one of the selected Scriptures under each heading and help your children pray based on the verse you read. Encourage them to listen to God and allow His Spirit to guide them as they pray.

Character focus

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate His willingness to accept you as part of His family.

John 3:16 | Acts 10:34 | 1 John 4:12,16

Heart search

Acknowledge when and how you do not accept or include others.

Matthew 7:1-2 | Ephesians 4:2 | 1 John 4:20

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have been accepting of others.

Personal requests

Ask God to help you, your siblings and parents to be accepting of others, just as He is.

John 13:34-35 | 1 John 4:21 | 1 John 2:5-6

Speak a Blessing

Your affirmation will give tremendous encouragement to your children as they strive to grow in the area of acceptance. Use this section as a reminder to "speak a blessing" when you see this godly characteristic in your son or daughter.

- is a boy/girl who readily includes others in games and fun.
- Thank you for including (another child) in your playtime. It makes others feel special when we accept them.
- _____, great job showing love by (including/accepting someone).
- _____, God is proud of how you showed His love to your friend/brother/sister by the way you (list the action that demonstrated acceptance).

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

Kick-off craft

Create a poster to help remind your children to practice being accepting of others. Try to have your children complete the poster early in your lessons on acceptance, then display it as a focal point in your home.

A very special tree

Directions

1. On poster paper, draw a tree, add branches and leaves, and have your children colour them. The tree can be as simple or as elaborate as you like. You may also choose to go outside and collect small branches and leaves to add colour and texture
2. While you are collecting supplies and recording information, talk about how family members are "family" because of a blood relationship: families share the same "blood" or genetics. The other way we become part of a family is through marriage or adoption. The family of God is similar. God calls the Church His "bride" (Revelation 19:7-8). He also refers to those who are part of His family as adopted "sons" (Ephesians 1:5). Membership in

God's family is possible because of a different blood connection. Jesus shed His blood when He died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins, making it possible for God to forgive us for our sins.

3. Also discuss the fact that no two leaves are exactly alike, and no two people are the same either. Explain that God made all of us different on purpose. Our job is to accept others even when they are different, loving them just the way God made them. Discuss how boring life would be if everyone were exactly the same.
4. Write your selected memory verse on your family tree. Use the family tree as a reminder that we need to accept others as Christ accepted us into His family (Romans 15:7). You can also use the family tree to serve as a reminder that when we are part of God's family, we are called to love others (John 15:17).

Other ideas

If it is winter and collecting leaves outside is not an option, have your children cut out snowflakes instead. After all, trees are decorated with snow in the winter! Snowflakes, like leaves, are all different. Tie in the discussion on individual differences detailed above.

Introduction

How do we Sign it?

Accept

Bible Connection

God's children

Read

Galatians 3:26-29.

Prior to reading this story to your child as per the summary below, you will need to prepare one simple prop. Find a glass jar with a screw-top lid. Put dirt inside the jar and also make it dirty on the outside. If you wish, draw a face on the outside of the glass using permanent markers.

Questions for discussion

1. Why do you have a bath?
2. When do you dress in nice clothes?
3. How can we wash the inside of the jar?
4. What do we need to have washed away before we can become a member of God's family?

5. How does God wash the sin from our insides?
6. Why did Jesus take the punishment for our sins?
7. Who does God accept into His kingdom of heaven?
8. How did God show His love for us?

Key concepts

God is ready to welcome anyone into His family. It doesn't matter what colour our skin is, where we live, who our parents are or if we have been good or bad. It doesn't matter if we are men or women or even children. God loves everyone. However, just like we take a bath and dress in clean clothes before we go someplace special, we need to have our sins washed away before we can become part of God's family. We can wash the outside of our bodies yourselves, but we all need God to wash the sin out of our insides before we can become one of God's children (Psalm 51:7, Hebrews 1:3, 1 John 2:2).

At this point, have your children help you give the jar a "bath," washing the dirt off the outside of the jar. Once it is clean, point out that an ordinary bath doesn't wash the inside.

God needs to wash our sins away because He cannot be around any sin at all (1 Thessalonians 1:9, Romans 8:5-8). The Bible tells us that the "wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). This means that all of us who sin deserve to die for our sins. We all have sinned and we all deserve to die (Romans 3:23).

Fortunately, God loves us so much that He doesn't want us to die (1 Timothy 2:3-4, 2 Peter 3:9). He wants us to be a part of His family and live with Him in heaven someday (2 Peter 3:13). So God sent His Son, Jesus, to show us how much He loves us (John 3:16). Jesus took the punishment for our sins.

He died so that all the wrong things we have done can be forgiven (Romans 5:8, 1 Corinthians 15:3).

Take the lid off the jar and explain that, when we ask Him, God washes our sins away. Fill the jar with some water, swish it around and pour out the dirty water.

Now God has washed all the sin away. When we pray and ask for God to forgive our sins, He does forgive us and we become one of His children. In the Bible, it says, "Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12). Everyone who believes in Jesus and asks Him to forgive their sins is accepted as a member of God's family.

God's Way vs My Way

God's Way

I am demonstrating godly character when

- I accept others, even if they are different
- I include others in play and conversation
- I show others that I am interested in them

And God is pleased!

My Way

When I am tempted to:

- choose not to include others in play or conversation
- judge others
- tease or laugh at another person

I know that I need to go to God for help.

Bible Memory Verse

1 John 4:12

Songs

Jesus Loves the little Children
Love Your Neighbor.mp4
I Can Be Your Friend.mp4

Monday Evening

Loving and accepting everyone

Read

Luke 5:27-32 and Luke 6:27-31.

Questions for discussion

1. Why did the people judge Jesus?
2. What did they think He was doing wrong?
3. What do some of your friends do wrong?
4. Does God love them?
5. How can you be like Jesus and be a “doctor” for your friends when they sin?

Key concepts

When Jesus was on earth, tax collectors were very unpopular because they sometimes made people pay unfair amounts of money in taxes. The Pharisees and teachers of the law started complaining because Jesus was friendly to a tax collector named Levi. But Jesus said to them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick” (Luke 5:31). He said that He came to help the sinners, not the righteous. Jesus does not limit His love. He loves everyone just the same.

We can love and accept others even if we don’t like what they do. It is easy to want to avoid children who often do wrong. The Bible says that we shouldn’t be concerned about what another person is doing, but rather we should be concerned about our own actions because each of us will give an account of himself to God (Romans 14:12).

The Bible also tells us that we should pray for people who mistreat us (Luke 6:28). For example, if a child is not fun to play with because he/she will not share toys, it is easy to reject him/her and choose not to play with him/her. But Jesus would rather that we pray for the selfish child, asking that he/she will learn to share.

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Teddy bear tea party

Stage a tea party for the stuffed animals that “live” in your home. Don’t let your kids know, ahead of time, that the goal is to practice inclusiveness. Just set up the tea party and have your children begin gathering stuffed animals. Wait and see if they bring all their animals or not. Chances are, some will be left out. (If your children will likely bring every single one of their stuffed animals, hide one for use later. This can be an excellent opportunity to affirm them in their choice to include “everyone.”)

After the “guests” have arrived, ask your children if there are any others who would like to come. If they do bring more, it’s your cue to act the part of the stuffed animals who have been added to the party.

Exclaim how delighted you are to have been invited as well. Finally, ask if there are any others. When the final answer is “No,” see if you can find any that have been left out, or retrieve the one you stashed away.

Play the part of the excluded stuffed animal and cry (or otherwise illustrate how bad you feel). While you have “tea” with all the stuffed animals, talk about the importance of including others in play and in conversations.

Bible Connection

A good heart

Read

1 Samuel 16:1-13.

Questions for discussion

1. Why did Samuel think that Eliab, the oldest son, was the one he was to anoint as the next king?
2. When we look at another person's physical appearance, what are some things that we might notice?
3. What does God look at when He looks at a person?
4. Should we be accepting of others based on how they look?
5. How do we show that we accept another person?

Key concepts

When Samuel was sent by God to anoint one of Jesse's sons as the next king of Israel, Samuel was tempted to judge Jesse's sons by their looks – their appearance and their height. Fortunately, Samuel listened to God and anointed (chose) Jesse's youngest son, David. Even Jesse, David's father, was surprised by God's choice. But God could see what the heart of each of these boys was like. God knew which boy would make a good king for Israel. He chose David because He knew that David loved God very much.

We can judge others by their looks too, without even realizing that we are judging them. Pre-judging someone is called "prejudice" and God doesn't want us to pre-judge anyone. We should not accept or reject others based on how they look. We should accept everyone as God accepts us (Romans 15:7). We show love and acceptance when we treat others kindly, talk to them and share with them.

Bible Memory Verse

1 John 4:12

Tuesday Evening

The unlikely "Z"

Read

Luke 19:1-10 and 1 John 2:5-6.

If your children are very familiar with the story of Zacchaeus, you may want to consider sharing a modern re-telling of the Zacchaeus story alongside the story from the Bible. For example, as you tell your story, substitute a bossy kid named Zach for Zacchaeus. Other ideas include stating that the other children in the playground do not like to play with Zach because of his bossiness. Progress the

plot by telling about an exciting afternoon when a clown from the local church visits the park. When the clown sits down to have lunch with the bossy boy, the other children complain. Have the mother of one of the complaining children explain that the clown wanted to share Jesus' love with the unloved boy.

Questions for discussion

1. Why did the people disapprove of Zacchaeus?
2. How did Jesus show love to Zacchaeus?
3. What do other kids do that you don't like?
4. What do you think Jesus would say to these kids if He went to their house?
5. God cannot allow any sin into heaven. What kind of plan did God make to allow for sinners to be forgiven and accepted into His family?
6. How can you help others learn about Jesus when you are with them?

Key concepts

When Jesus spent time with Zacchaeus, a tax collector, people complained because Zacchaeus was known as a sinful man. The day that Jesus came to Zacchaeus' house, Zacchaeus believed in Jesus and Jesus told him that he was saved from his sins and was accepted into God's family.

When the people complained about Jesus visiting a "sinner's house," Jesus said that He came to "seek and save what was lost." In saying this, Jesus meant that He came to teach those who didn't know about God and His plan for accepting everyone into His family.

We can help others learn about Jesus by sharing His love with them, especially by accepting those whom others reject – just as Jesus did with Zacchaeus.

Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Paper dolls or cookie people

Cut out paper dolls and have your children decorate them. After they are done, use the discussion questions below to begin a dialogue about favouritism and accepting individual differences. Explain that just as none of the paper dolls are alike, God made people with individual differences as well. People can be similar or very different, but no two people will ever be exactly alike. Explain that we find it easy to

choose a favourite paper doll, but God does not choose favourites – He loves all of us exactly the same.

You can do the same activity with “roll and cut” cookie dough. Roll out the dough and have your children make at least ten cookies using the same cookie cutter. These can be compared afterwards, just as you compared the paper dolls. Once again, no two will be alike, and even the rejects or the “funnylooking” ones will taste good. The dolls and cookies can also be used to role play inclusive and exclusive playtime activities.

Questions for discussion

- Can you find any two paper dolls that are the same?
- Which is your favourite doll?
- What kind of food do you enjoy eating most?
- What kind of activities do you enjoy?
- What is your brother’s/sister’s/friend’s favourite food/hobby?
- What would our family be like if everyone were the same?
- Does God have favourites?

Relevant Scripture

Acts 10:34-35
Romans 2:11
James 2:8-9

Bible Connection

Accepting those who are different

Read Acts 10.

You may choose to paraphrase and shorten this story or use the summary in the “key concepts” below.

Questions for discussion

1. How was Cornelius different from Peter?
2. Why did Peter go and visit Cornelius?
3. What did Peter tell Cornelius?
4. Who can be accepted into God’s family?
5. How should we treat people who are different from us?

Cornelius was not a Jew, but he loved and served God faithfully. God sent an angel to Cornelius and the angel told him to go and find a man named Peter who lived in a town called Joppa. At the same time, God told Peter that he should go with the men who had come to fetch him and take him to visit Cornelius.

This was unusual because, at that time, it was against the rules of the Jews for them to visit with Gentiles (Acts 10:28).

People who were not Jews were called Gentiles. Jews believed that they were the only people who could be a part of God’s family because God told them that they were His chosen ones.

When Peter went and visited Cornelius, Peter realized that God accepted people of all nations who feared Him and did what was right. God gave the gift of His Holy Spirit to Cornelius and his family that day. Peter also baptized them, which showed others that they were followers of Jesus Christ and part of God’s family. Peter accepted Cornelius because God asked him to. God also asks us to accept others as He accepts us (Romans 15:7).

Bible Memory Verse

1 John 4:12

Songs

Jesus Loves the little Children
Love Your Neighbor.mp4
I Can Be Your Friend.mp4

Wednesday Evening

Blind Bart

Read

Mark 10:46-52, 1 John 2:5-6 and 1 John 3:18.

To enable deeper understanding, you may choose to blindfold your children during the story or during your discussion time.

Questions for discussion

1. What was Bartimaeus’ handicap?
2. Do you know anyone who has a handicap?
3. How hard would it be to find someone if you were blind?
4. What did the people do when Bartimaeus needed help?
5. What could they have done to help Bartimaeus?
6. How can you love and accept someone with a handicap?
7. How should you not treat someone with a handicap?
8. How did Jesus show love to Bartimaeus?

Key concepts

Bartimaeus had a handicap. A handicap is when a person has something wrong with their body that prevents them from doing things that other people can do. Bartimaeus' handicap was blindness. Jesus was walking through a town called Jericho when He heard a Bartimaeus call His name.

Bartimaeus begged Jesus to have mercy on him. Others who heard the blind man shouting told him to be quiet. Instead of helping Bartimaeus find Jesus, they discouraged him, even though he was blind and helpless.

Bartimaeus wanted Jesus to cure his blindness. He believed that Jesus could heal him. Jesus said that because Bartimaeus had faith in Him, Bartimaeus would be able to see. The story tells us that immediately Bartimaeus could see.

Jesus showed love to Bartimaeus by healing him. We can show love to those who have handicaps by accepting them and being kind to them (1 John 2:5-6, 1 John 3:18). Another story about showing love and acceptance to a handicapped person is found in 2 Samuel 9. King David showed kindness to Mephibosheth, his friend Jonathan's son, even though he was crippled. David cared for him and allowed him to eat at his table every day.

Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

Modelling inclusiveness

Set your children up to want to be included. Play an active, fun game involving yourself and another person within earshot of your children. Hopefully, they will come over and ask to be included. Model inclusiveness by saying, "Of course, we'd love to have you play." Then play the game together.

Ask the following questions to debrief after the game:

- How did you feel when we included you?
- Was it fun to join in?
- How would you have felt if we had said, "No, we want to play by ourselves. Go away!"?
- When and where might you be tempted to exclude someone?

Explain that telling a child that he/she is not welcome to play can be one of the most hurtful things they could ever

say to another child. It feels terrible to be left out. End by reading Luke 6:31 and then close by praying together.

Relevant Scripture

Luke 6:31

Bible Connection

Jesus shares God's love with the Samaritan woman at the well

Read

John 4:3-42.

If the word "Saviour" is new to your children, explain that the word "Saviour" is like the word "save." If someone helps others, they are called a helper. Because Jesus saves us from our sins, He is called our Saviour.

Questions for discussion

1. Why did the woman wonder why Jesus asked her for a drink of water?
2. What did Jesus say to the woman that made her believe that He was the Saviour of the world?
3. What country do we live in?
4. Can you think of anyone who comes from a different country?
5. What kind of things do people from (name a country) do differently than we do here in (name your own country)?
6. How can we show love and acceptance to someone who comes from a different country?
7. Why should we accept others?

Key concepts

Jesus stopped at a well in a town called Sychar in a region called Samaria. In those days, Jews did not speak to people who came from Samaria. Jews and Samaritans hated each other and had fought with each other for many, many years.

At the well, Jesus met a Samaritan woman and asked her to give Him a drink of water. The woman was surprised that Jesus, a Jew, spoke to her. Jesus explained to the woman that He could give her much more than water; He could give her eternal life.

Because Jesus told her things about her life that no ordinary stranger could have known, the woman believed Jesus when He told her that He was the Saviour of the world (John 4:29). She went and told the people from her town about Jesus.

Many other Samaritans, when they heard the woman's story about Jesus, also believed that Jesus was the Saviour of the

world. God accepted the Samaritan woman into His family. He asks us to accept others as He does.

Bible Memory Verse

1 John 4:12

Songs

Jesus Loves the little Children
Love Your Neighbor.mp4
I Can Be Your Friend.mp4

Thursday Evening

Helping a neighbour

Read

Luke 10:25-37.

Questions for discussion

1. Who are the four people mentioned in this story?
2. How were these four people different from one another?
3. Why do you think the first two men did not want to help the wounded man?
4. How did the Samaritan show love to the injured man?
5. Was it difficult for the Samaritan man to help the injured man?
6. Do you think Jesus would have helped the injured man?
7. Why do we choose not to help people sometimes?
8. Can you think of some ways we could help the people who are our neighbours?
9. How do love and acceptance go together?

Key concepts

Jesus told a story about a man who was traveling from Jericho to Jerusalem. The man was robbed, stripped of his clothes, beaten and left hurt and bleeding on the side of the road. A priest (a church leader) came down the same road and saw the injured man, but passed by on the other side of the road.

Next, along came a Levite man. Levites were people who helped the priests. The Levite also passed by on the other side of the road. These men may have been afraid of being hurt themselves, or they may have been concerned that if

they helped the man, that they would not be allowed to do their jobs at the temple.

Finally, a Samaritan man walked down the road and saw the wounded man. Samaritans and Jews considered each other to be enemies. It was not likely that the Samaritan even lived in that area. He was probably just another traveller passing through.

However, the Samaritan man decided to help the injured man. He put the injured man on his donkey, took him to an inn (hotel) and took care of him. The next day the Samaritan offered to pay the innkeeper for the injured man's room and care until he was better. When He reached the end of this story, Jesus said, "Go and do likewise" (Luke 10:37).

It makes God happy when we show His love to others by being kind, caring and fair (Jeremiah 9:24).



Friday

Attention Grabber Activity

Water and oil

Needed

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup of milk
3 tbsp. cooking oil
food colouring
1 cup of flour
a mixing bowl and a spoon.

Instructions

1. Colour the milk with food colouring so that it will contrast with the oil when the oil is added.
2. Add the cooking oil to the milk and ask your child to mix the two ingredients together. The water and oil may appear to mix initially, but will eventually separate again.
3. Explain that the water and oil represent two people who are having a hard time getting along or accepting each other's differences. Give examples that are appropriate to your children's lives.
4. Next, measure out the flour. Explain that the flour represents the Holy Spirit. Have your children mix the flour, water and oil together. When the flour is


added, the other two ingredients will no longer separate.

5. Finish by reading Ephesians 4:2-3. Explain that when we allow God's Holy Spirit to fill us, we will find it easier to be humble, gentle and patient with others. The result of God's Spirit living in us is that we will experience more peace in our relationships with others.

Friday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Acceptance:


James 4:12; Rom 2:1-3



Relevant Scripture

Ephesians 4:2-3

***Note:** If you don't want to waste the ingredients, add 1 tsp. of baking powder, ½ tsp. of baking soda, and 1 egg to the flour, oil and water mixture. Mix it all together and you will have some colourful pancake batter. If yellow, pink, blue or green pancakes are not appetizing to your children, this is another opportunity to encourage your children to keep an open mind rather than making a judgement based on appearance.*




Bible Memory Verse

1 John 4:12



Songs

Jesus Loves the little Children
Love Your Neighbor.mp4
I Can Be Your Friend.mp4



Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

1 John 4:12



Honor, Respect

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

Apple Time

For this activity you will need to give each child an apple. Try to make the apples distinguishable from each other. You can get different types of apples but try to stay in the same color as it will be too easy to tell a green apple from a red apple. Arrange the students in small groups and have each student take turns describing their apple. Would they be able to pick out their apple from the bunch? When they are finished, ask them to discuss the ways the apples are the same. Discuss how we are like apples in that we all have things that make us unique but we are all still special and deserve honor. As a class, ask what kinds of things you can make with apples (pie, cake, muffins, applesauce, apple cider, etc.) or different ways you can eat apples (whole, sliced, baked, with Peanut butter, in fruit salad, etc.). Does everyone like to eat everything that you can do with apples? Probably not. Our tastes for things are different. Some may not like anything with apples! We all have different likes and dislikes but it is important to honor our differences. When the discussion is done, slice each apple horizontally (not the normal way from stem to bottom) and see the star pattern the seed packet makes inside. All of us are special inside, too. Before you begin the activity, you may want to have all of the students wash their hands or use hand sanitizer. When you are finished, you can refer back to the initial washing. We honor our bodies when we do things to protect it from germs. We honor the class when we do things to stay healthy and not bring germs to share.

Introduction

Opposites:

Honor vs Disrespect

What does it mean?

Respecting others because of their worth as human beings.

Translation:

Spanish: Honor vs. Falta de respeto

Go to the root

The English word for honor comes from the Latin "honoro" which means "to respect, to decorate, to ornament." You are familiar with a common method of honoring heroes with medals but can you see how we can also 'decorate' someone with our words and attitudes?

How do we Sign it?

Honor

Nature Story

Respect Nature Story (VID) (5:55)

Poem

Respect Poem (VID) (4:30)

Bible Memory Verse

Rev 4:11

The I WILL's of Honour

To practice Honour I will:

- be attentive to those who lead me
- show loyalty to my authorities
- speak only the truth
- obey cheerfully
- give place to those who are older or hold positions of prominence

Monday Evening

**Honor all people. Love the brotherhood.
Fear God. Honor the king.**

Read

1 Peter 2:17

This is an interesting verse because it calls on us to honor the king (or those in authority, like government leaders and also chiefs and traditional rulers). But BEFORE that, it calls on us to honor ALL PEOPLE. Respect is not only to be shown to rulers. It is to be shown to everyone.

When Jesus comes in, He changes our attitude of disrespect toward others to one of respect, because we come to understand that God values and loves each one of us.

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

A Proper Handshake

The handshake is thought by some to have originated as a gesture of peace by demonstrating that the hand holds no weapon. In today's society it is considered an honorable way to greet someone. There are a few tricks to getting a handshake just right.

The Grip - not too firm, not too weak; palm to palm

The Pump - 1-3 times, not too fast or hard; shake from your elbow not your shoulder

The Eyes - must make eye contact

The Greeting - acknowledge the person; can use their name and polite greeting ("Pleasure to meet you.")

The Space - about the space for both to extend approximately two cubits (distance from fingertips to elbow) away from the other party

The Position - both hands should be vertical; if horizontal or slanted, the hand palm down is the dominant party
Pair up the students and have them practice giving a proper handshake.

Can you tell what's wrong with these handshake types?

- The Dead Fish
- The Dominator
- The Bone Crusher
- The Power Pump
- Just Fingers
- Will This Ever End
- In Your Face
- The Mumbler

Discussion

Jordan Brown, Model of Honor

Jordan Brown is a 13 year old in Central Pennsylvania who is a WWII buff. In 2010, he started a campaign to contribute to a plan to build a statue in Normandy, France to honor the WWII vets who served on D-Day. Included in this memorial was Major Dick Winters, Jordan's hero. You may remember his hero from the Steven Spielberg/ Tom Hanks mini-series Band of Brothers) and the expression "Hang Tough" that he used when leading his troops in battle. Jordan created olive green wristbands that are inscribed with these words. Jordan began distributing these wristbands for minimum donations of \$1. He wanted to ensure that children could afford them too. As word spread of his efforts, a small team of 'adult cheerleaders' formed to help him reach his goal. In addition to raising funds via wristband donations, a fundraiser was held at Clipper Magazine Stadium in Lancaster, PA on the 67th anniversary of D-Day as a tribute to Major Winters & the Men of Easy Company. To date, these combined efforts have raised over \$98,000 towards the creation of the monument.

In order to bring greater awareness to his efforts, Jordan has delivered speeches to area civic organizations, marched in parades, manned stands at fairs, and has been interviewed by local media. Even though Major Winters passed away on 1-2-2011, and the wristbands have sold out, Jordan plans to "Hang Tough" and continue to collect donations to ensure his hero and the men that served with him are forever remembered. Jordan recognized the importance of honoring our military heroes and the sacrifices they made on our behalf.

Discussion

Defining the Quality:

Demonstrating RESPECT — similar to showing HONOR— for others is very important in the way you relate to people. Others can tell soon after meeting you if this is part of YOUR character or not. If you regularly display the opposite quality, DISRESPECT, it means you have a low regard for other people's feelings or possessions. This quality of giving others a sense of being honored or not, is an attitude that you display every day. When you HONOR others, sometimes it is because they represent higher authorities over you. However, an exceptionally respectful individual is courteous to all persons, no matter what their position or station in life. You might not agree with all aspects of another person, but you can still show them a measure of RESPECT or HONOR.

- Describe when someone showed you a measure of honor.
- Describe when you made the effort to honor someone.
- What does it mean to earn someone's respect?
- Why might you respect someone even when he didn't seem to deserve it?
- What helps you be respectful when it's difficult or challenging?

Songs

Respect Song (VID) (9:14)

Poem

Respect Poem - Review

Bible Connection

Ps 1:1-6

Bible Memory Verse

Rev 4:11

The I WILL's of Honour

Review

Tuesday Evening

A Noble Gentleman

Charles Young was a true gentleman, even at an early age. His parents taught him to think of others, not just himself.



One evening, Charles and a friend played soldiers in his bedroom. "Attention!" Charles shouted loudly. Then Charles heard a knock on the front door and his mother talking to a friend. "We better be quiet," Charles said. "Mother wouldn't want us to make a bunch of noise now that we have company around."

When the visitor left, Charles' mom walked into the room. "How respectful of you to notice I had company," she said. "You boys will make fine gentlemen."

Charles attended West Point Military Academy and served in the US Army for 33 years. "Charles," his commander said, "The Army wants to send you on a special mission to the island of Haiti. Your job is to keep an eye on political affairs and keep us informed of what happens. Be careful. Some people won't like having a foreigner there. Watch what you do, and don't cause any trouble."

Charles arrived safely in Haiti, excited to represent the Army as a military attaché. He quickly became friends with the local people, and he learned much about their culture and way of life. When it was time for Charles to go to the African country of Liberia, the Haitian people were sad to see him go.

Liberia was very different from Haiti. However, Charles did not let differences get in his way. He studied the new culture and made new friends. Charles also made maps wherever he went to help others find the remote villages more easily. He reported any problems he found to Liberia's leaders, and he even kept a civil war from breaking out.

Charles worked hard to show respect and avoid offending those around him. He honored local customs and displayed good manners. One bad experience could ruin his relationship with leaders in the country. By the time Charles returned to the United States, he was a national hero in Liberia. Before his departure, someone knocked on Charles' door.

"The President of Liberia wants to see you," the man said. "He asks you to come at once!" Charles straightened his uniform and followed the messenger. Armed soldiers and a large iron fence surrounded the President's home.

Charles wondered why the President wanted to see him. "Charles, you have helped us very much," the President said.

"You are caring, thoughtful, and hard-working. We will miss you, but want to give you something on behalf of our people."

The President handed Charles a small wooden box with a beautiful gold pocket watch inside.

"This is very unexpected," Charles said. "It has been my pleasure to serve you and your people."

“It has been my pleasure,” said the President, “to know such a true and noble gentleman.”

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Wednesday

Discussion & Bible Connection

What is respect?

Respect is both an attitude and a way of talking and acting. Respect is giving honor to someone in word or in deed just because of who they are or the position they hold. It is recognizing and honoring the rights of others.

Disrespect or ridicule is the opposite. It is speaking or acting in a way that dishonors or fails to honor someone or the position they hold. It is failing to recognize and honor or stomping on the rights of others.

To whom should we show respect?

We should show much respect to our parents or those who take care of us, to our elders, and to those who hold positions of authority in our lives. This includes people like teachers, community and government leaders, police, pastors, etc.

We should also show respect to everyone because every person is created in the image of God and is deeply loved by Him.

Show respect for your parents, because Jesus showed respect for his earthly parents.

Lesson aim

Our goal is that at the conclusion of this lesson the children realize the importance of respecting those in authority and to Character Building from the Bible show increased respect to their parents, elders, and people of authority in their lives.

Introduction to the lesson

Simon thought he was smarter than his parents because he had learned to read better than they could. As he learned to read more and more, he began to about his parents to his friends in a very disrespectful way. He laughed at them and called them old coots and no-nothings (teacher give an example of disrespectful speech that is common where you are). One day he forgot he was with his father and not his friends. When his father asked him to get a sack for him,

Simon refused. He began to laugh at his father and call him names. His father did not laugh like his friends had done. His father gave him a beating. As he did, Simon noticed that there were tears in his father's eyes. He realized he had really hurt his father. But he was just doing a little laughing, he reasoned. Was that really so bad?

Transition to the Bible lesson

What do you think? What was so bad about the way Simon treated his parents? Let's see what the Bible says about respecting our parents.

Bible lesson based on these Scriptures

1. God commanded children to respect their parents (5th command) (Exodus 20:12)

Read this verse to your students: Ex 20:12 NKJV

About this verse :

- This was the fifth of the Ten Commandments God gave to Moses.
- God gave these commandments to show His people how He wanted them to live.

Questions to ask

- Who is speaking ? (God is speaking to Moses.)
- God gives a command and a promise. What is the command ? (Honor your father and mother.)
- What is the promise ? (God will give them long life in their land.)
- God uses another word that means the same thing as respect. What is it ? (Honor)
- Can you think of at least one way of honoring your parents ? (Answers may vary.)

2. Jesus honored his earthly parents. He was subject to them when He was 12 years old. (Luke 2:51-52)

Read these verses or ask a student to read them: Luke 2:51-52 NKJV

Ask these questions:

- What does it mean that Jesus was subject to his parents? (He obeyed them.)
- Where did they live? (Nazareth)
- Jesus increased in wisdom. What does this mean? (He learned. He developed skills for life.) [Even though He was God and knew everything, He had limited

- Himself to a human body and became like us, so as a child He learned.]
- d. Jesus increased in stature. What does this mean? (He grew physically. He became taller and bigger and stronger.)
 - e. Jesus grew in favor with God and men. What does this mean? (He did what was right in God's eyes and also in men's eyes.)
 - f. Would He have had favor in God's eyes and in men's eyes if he had been rebellious and disrespectful to His parents who were caring for Him? (No)

3. Jesus asked His disciple John to care for His mother Mary after His crucifixion (John 19:25-27). (Apparently Joseph had died and Mary needed someone to care for her.)

Read these verses to the students or ask one of them to read: John 19:25-27

Ask these questions:

- a. Who were the three women standing near the cross as Jesus died? (Jesus' mother, His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleopas, and Mary Magdalene.)
- b. Who was the disciple standing nearby? (the disciple Jesus loved, or John) [This does not mean that Jesus did not love the others, but that John was close to Him in a special way.]
- c. What did Jesus say to Mary? (Woman, behold your son.) [Woman was a respectful term of address like "Mama".]
- d. What did Jesus say to John? (Behold your mother.)
- e. How do we know that Jesus intended for John to care for His mother Mary after His crucifixion? (John took Mary to his home from that very hour, so it is clear that he understood it in that way.)
- f. How did Jesus' words show respect for Mary? (He showed concern for taking care of her. He left a plan for her care after His crucifixion.)
- g. Why did Jesus show respect and care for Mary? (Because she was His mother.)
- h. What are some of the things your parents have done for you that make them worthy of respect? (They gave birth and life to you if nothing else. Often times they have also provided shelter, food, medical care, clothing, schooling, counsel, etc. Even if they have failed in many ways, they still gave you life, so they are still worthy of love and respect.)

4. Jesus respected His parents even though they were common, uneducated people making a humble living.

Read to the students or ask one of them to read: Mark 6:3 NKJV

Ask these questions:

- a. What was the occupation or the job of Jesus' foster father, that he also taught to Jesus? (Joseph was a carpenter.)
- b. Are carpenters usually very rich people living in luxury? (No, they usually make a very modest living.)
- c. How many brothers did Jesus have who were born after Him? (At least four—James, Joses, Judas, and Simon.)
- d. How many sisters did He have? (We don't know, but sisters is in the plural, so there must have been at least two.)
- e. Joseph made a modest living, and there were at least seven children in the family including Jesus. Do you think Mary and Joseph had a lot to spend on their children? (No, that would not have been possible.)

Main point to make:

Even though Jesus lived in a very humble home and his parents were not rich or highly educated, still He showed respect to them.

Life Application:

Let the children role play situations in which children were respectful to their parents. Pray together that God will help us all to show greater respect to our parents. Make it clear that if they live with another relative or person, they should respect that person as their parent because he or she is acting as a parent to them. Jesus showed respect to His earthly mother, Mary, and father, Joseph. Yet Joseph was not His real father. The Bible makes it clear that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit. He was the Son of God in a very special way. Joseph was not His biological father.

Joseph just cared for the child Jesus as a foster father, because God told him to do so. If Jesus could respect Joseph as his foster father, then you can and should respect whoever is caring for you and acting to you as a parent, whether they gave birth to you or not.

How do we sign it?

Respect



Bible Memory Verse

Rev 4:11

Songs

Respect Song - Review

Poem

Respect Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Honour

Review

Wednesday Evening

Jesus showed respect for everyone

Lesson Aim: Our goal is that at the conclusion of this lesson, the children realize that everyone is valuable and worthy of respect, and they show increased respect for

1. He touched lepers (Matthew 8:1-3)

Read to the students, or ask one of them to read: Matt 8:1-3 NKJV

Ask these questions:

- What did the leper do? (He came and worshiped Jesus.)
- Why was this unusual? (Lepers were supposed to stay away from other people so they wouldn't get the disease.)
- What did the leper say? ("Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.")
- What did Jesus do in response? (He put out His hand and touched the leper.)
- Do you think people usually touched lepers? (No way, because lepers had nasty sores that could spread to you. They were considered unclean.)
- Why do you think Jesus touched the leper? (To show kindness, love, respect.)

- What did Jesus say? (I am willing, be cleansed.)
- What happened when Jesus touched the leper and said, "be cleansed"? (Immediately the leprosy was cleansed. He was healed. The leprosy was gone.)
- Do you know any cases where someone is made to feel dirty or less than human because others will not touch him or her? (Trokosi are one example.)
- This man needed cleansing or healing. Do you think he also need Jesus' touch? Why? (Yes, to show that he was worthwhile in God's sight, to give him dignity and respect.)
- Who do you know who is looked down on and outcast by others? How can you show them respect?

2. He healed those controlled by demons (Luke 9:37-42)

Read to the students, as students act out the parts - Luke 9:37-42 (NKJV)

Ask these questions:

- What was the problem the man was having with his son? (An evil spirit would seize him and cause him to convulse and foam at the mouth and even bruise him.)
- What happened while they were bringing the boy to Jesus? (The demon threw him down on the ground and convulsed him or made him shake uncontrollably.)
- What did Jesus do for the boy? (Rebuked the unclean spirit and healed him.)
- Do people usually show much respect for someone who is controlled by demons?
- How did Jesus treat the boy differently?

3. He forgave a prostitute (John 8:3-11)

Read to your students as your students act out what they hear - John 8:1-11 (NKJV)

Ask these questions:

- Who was brought to Jesus? (A woman caught in the act of adultery)
- What did they want Jesus to do and why? (They wanted Him to kill her by stoning or tell them to do so, because the law of Moses commanded a sentence of death for the crime of adultery.)

- c. What was Jesus' answer? („He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.")
 - d. Why did they all go away instead of stoning her? (They had all sinned too.)
 - e. In the end, did Jesus condemn her? (No. He told her to go and sin no more.)
 - f. Do people usually show any respect to a prostitute? (No, she is considered dirty and sinful.)
 - g. How did Jesus treat her differently? (He forgave her sins and gave her another chance.)
- d. Why do you think the disciples did that? What might have been going through their minds? (Maybe something like, 'Jesus is too busy, too big, too important to waste His time on children.')
 - e. What did Jesus say about it? (He said the opposite. 'Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them.')
 - f. What did Jesus do in the end? (He laid His hands on the little children.)
 - g. Why do you suppose Jesus took time out of His busy ministry to bless the little children? (It must be that He considered the children important, too.)

4. He called a hated tax-collector to be His disciple (Matthew 9:9-10)

Read to your students: Matt 9:9-10 (NKJV)

Ask these questions:

- a. What was Matthew's job? (He was a tax collector.)
- b. What did Jesus ask Matthew to do? (Jesus invited him to follow Him, that is, to become His disciple.)
- c. Did Matthew obey? (Yes, he got up and followed Jesus.)
- d. Was Matthew the only tax collector Jesus associated with? (No, He and His disciples sat down and talked with many others.)
- e. Tax collectors had a reputation for taking too much money for taxes and using force to do it. How do you think people felt about them? (People feared and hated them and basically had nothing to do with them.)
- f. How did Jesus treat Matthew and the other tax collectors differently? (He also called them to become His disciples. He associated with them—sat with them and talked with them. He treated them like human beings.)

5. He blessed the children (Matthew 19:13-15)

Read to your students: Matt 19:13-15 (NKJV)

Ask questions like these:

- a. Who did they bring to Jesus? (Little children.)
- b. What did they want Jesus to do for them? (Put His hands on them and pray—sort of like blessing them.)
- c. Who rebuked those who were bringing the children? (Jesus' disciples)

Conclusion/Life Application for the Saved Child:

Wow! Jesus showed respect for lepers, for those controlled by demons, for prostitutes, for tax-collectors, and for little children. He treated them so much differently than others treated them. He treated them like human beings worthy of respect. If the Creator of the world showed respect for everyone, who do we think we are to show disrespect for anyone?

Jesus showed respect to others and only He can give you power to show respect consistently. This power comes through His Holy Spirit when you invite Him to come into your life.



Thursday



Attention Grabber Activity

Cookie Time

This activity will teach respect for rules using recipes. Give each student an index card and give them the instructions that you have "lost" your recipe for chocolate chip cookies and you want them to help you with creating a new one. For younger students, you can list the typical ingredients on the board and they can choose how much to use of each item. For older students, you may want to see what kinds of ingredients they think goes in. (If you are really brave, you can have the typical ingredients handy and let them make a small batch and bake them and see who came closest.) When they have finished their versions, you can reveal the correct recipe and see how close they came. Go through the recipe and tell why each item is needed and what happens when you don't have enough or it is missing. Relate the

recipe to classroom rules. Following the classroom rules is similar to following a recipe for a happy place to learn. You may want to have them to convert the classroom rules to read like a “recipe”.

Story & Bible Connection

God wants us to show respect for the property of others

Respect for the property of others is honoring their right to own and use the things they worked for or received from their families.

Disrespect for the property of others is an attitude that seeks to get for yourself in a dishonest manner the things that others worked for or received from their families. It often results in stealing.

Introduction to the Bible lesson:

Eric had worked hard to plant papayas around his house. He carried water for them every day. At last he saw blossoms. Soon they would turn into papayas. He planned to feed them first to his mother who was sick. One morning he went out to see his papayas. They were all gone! Eric found out that children of the village had stolen them. They ate some, gave some to the dogs, and played football with others until they broke open. Eric felt sick. All his hard work was gone. How would he help his sick mother now?

Transition to the Bible lesson:

Those children did not know that God wants us to respect other people’s property—that is, the things that belong to other people. But what DOES the Bible say about this? Let’s look at some Scriptures together.

Bible Lesson based on these Scriptures:

1. **John’s instructions to soldiers who were repenting included not cheating people.** Cheating is taking something that belongs to someone else and treating it as if it were your own.) (Luke 3:7-14)

Read to your students: Luke 3:7-13 (NKJV)

Ask these questions:

- a. Who was baptizing people? (John the Baptist, the one who came before Jesus to get the people ready for His coming)
- b. What do you think John meant by “fruits worthy of repentance”? (Do things that show your repentance is real. Stop doing

the wrong things you repented of and start doing right things.)

- c. When the tax collectors came to be baptized, what did John tell them to do? (Collect only rightful taxes and don’t add any extra. Don’t add any corruption. This was a way they could show true repentance.
- d. When the tax collectors asked for more than the rightful taxes, how was this stealing? (They were asking for money that people did not rightfully owe and then keeping it themselves just to make themselves rich.)

2. Zaccheus’ conversion results in him returning things he had stolen Luke 19:2-8

Read slowly to your students while they act out what they hear: Luke 19:1-10 (NKJV)

Ask these questions:

- a. What was Zachhaeus’ job? (He was a chief tax collector. He was a boss over the other tax collectors.)
- b. Zacchaeus was rich. Do you think he got rich honestly? (No. Tax collectors got rich by stealing from people.)
- c. Why couldn’t Zacchaeus see Jesus? (He was short, and many people were all around Jesus.)
- d. What unusual thing did Jesus do? (He called Zacchaeus by name although He had never met him, and He said He had to stay at his house.)
- e. How did Zacchaeus receive Jesus? (Joyfully)
- f. What did Zacchaeus decide to do that showed that he had really repented of his stealing? (He decided to give away half his riches to the poor and to give back what he had stolen four times as much as he stole.)
- g. What did Jesus say that showed Zacchaeus was really saved? (Today salvation has come to this house”.
- h. If you stole before you were saved, what would Zaccheus example show you that you should do now? (Stop stealing and if possible, give back what you stole.)

Life Application

Think about the story we told at the beginning of the lesson about Eric. Discuss these questions:

- When the boys took the papaya from Eric’s trees, was this stealing? Why?
- How did their actions affect Eric and his mother?

- How much do you think the boys thought about the consequences of their actions before they took the papaya?
- How could they make this right? (Students will likely say the boys should say they are sorry. This is a good start, but what else should they do? Shouldn't they try to repay Eric and his mother for the papaya in some way? Help the students think of several ways they could do this.)
- Think about a time when you did not respect someone's property. Ask God to help you do better and change your behavior.

Bible Memory Verses (from the Ten Commandments):

You shall not steal (Ex 20:15)

"You shall not covet ...anything that is your neighbor's." (Ex 20:17)

(Coveting is wanting something God did not give you so much that you would even do wrong to get it. This evil desire is what causes us to steal.)

Bible Memory Verse

Rev 4:11

Songs

Honour Song - Review

Poem

Honour Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Honour

Review

Thursday Evening

God wants us to respect His name

Remember, respect is both an attitude and a way of talking and acting. Respect is giving honor to someone in word or in deed just because of who they are or the position they hold. Respect for God and for His name, then, is an attitude of reverence and honor for God, and a way of using His name that gives Him honor because of the position He holds as our Creator.

Disrespect or ridicule is speaking or acting in a way that dishonors or fails to honor someone or the position they hold. Disrespect for God, then, is speaking or acting in any way that dishonors God as our Creator. This could be by using His name carelessly, using it as a curse word, or joking around about God in a way that shows no respect for Him.

Introduction to the Bible lesson:

Ask the children how they have heard people disrespect God's name. Get several ideas.

Transition to the Bible lesson:

All around us, we hear people disrespect God's name. Is it really a big deal? What does the Bible say about respecting God's name?

Bible Lesson based on these Scriptures:

1. Third of the Ten commandments (Exodus 20:7)

Read to your students or ask one of them to read: Ex 20:7 (NKJV)

- What is forbidden in this commandment? (Taking God's name in vain)
- If we do take God's name in vain, will we be innocent or guilty before God? (guilty)
- Why do you think God's name is so special? (He made us, He saved us, He is worthy of love and respect. He is the only God.)
- How would we use the Lord's name in vain? (Swearing, use His name carelessly or for curses, saying His name when we don't really mean it, using His name in any way that dishonors Him)

2. Jesus beginning the Lord's prayer (Matthew 6:9)

Read to your students or ask one of them to read: Matt 6:9-10 (NKJV)

Ask these questions:

- How does Jesus say we should begin our prayers? (Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your Name.)
- Who is the only one Jesus taught us to pray to? (Our Father in heaven)

- c. What does “hallowed” mean? “hallowed by thy name”? (Honored or respected. We are to begin our prayers by respecting or honoring God’s name.)
- d. What are we to pray for first? (For His Kingdom to come on earth as it is in heaven.)
- e. Do you remember to honor God’s name every time you pray, even before you ask for anything?

3. Jesus said He did always what honors the Father (John 8:29)

Read to your students or ask one of them to read: John 8:29

Ask this question:

- a. How did Jesus honor the Father’s name? (By doing always those things that pleased Him.)

4. Jesus knows whether we honor Him in our hearts (Matthew 15:8)

Read this verse or ask a student to read it: Matt 15:8

Ask these questions:

- a. What problem was Jesus talking about? (People who say words like they are honoring Him, but their hearts are far away from Him)
- b. God wants us to honor Him with our words. But is that enough? (No, we need to honor Him with our whole hearts as well.)
- c. What about this verse shows that God knows our hearts? (He saw that what they were saying with their mouths was not the same as the thoughts of their hearts.)

Life application

Discuss: How can you honor God’s name more? What do you need to stop doing? What do you need to start doing? (Pray together for God’s help.)



Friday

Bible Memory Verse

Revelation 4:11



Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Rev 4:11



Songs

Respect Song - Review



Poem

Respect Poem - Review



The I WILL’s of Honour

Review



Friday Evening

Play “hangman” using the four things we have learned to respect– Our parents, Everyone, People’s things, God’s name.

Place lines on the blackboard to correspond with one of these and have the children guess letters to put in the blanks to complete the word.



Gratefulness

Monday

Introduction

Opposites:

Gratefulness vs Unthankfulness

What does it mean?

Letting others know by my words and actions how they have benefited me.

Translation:

Gratitudo vs. Ingratitudo

Go to the root

Gratefulness has its roots in the Latin words *gratus* meaning "pleasing" and the verb *facere* which means "to make or do" to create the word *gratificus*- "doing a kindness". Can you see how being grateful is the kind way to be?

How do we sign it?

Thank You

Gratitude

Grateful

Attention Grabber Activity

Good Manners

Roleplay two people speaking to one another, the one decent, and the other with unpleasant, short answers (and questions). For example, "Johnny, please bring me your book." "No."

When finished, ask what could be changed so that the characters can show more gratefulness in their conversation towards one another.

Discuss how students can show good manners at school and at home.

Have you heard the phrase, "mind your manners"? It means to pay attention to what you're doing and show courtesy and respect to the people who are around you.

Part of gratefulness is showing good manners by saying "please" and "thank you." Let's look at some other ways you can be polite and show respect to others.

Mind Your Manners:

- Speak respectfully by saying "Yes, Sir," "Yes, Ma'am," "No, Sir," and "No, Ma'am."
- Use "Please" and "Thank you."
- Say, "You're welcome" and "Excuse me, please."
- Stand when an elder enters the room.
- Hold the door open for others.
- Sit and stand up straight.
- Help clean up before company comes to visit.
- Place napkin in lap at the dinner table.
- Hold utensils properly.
- Keep arms and elbows off the table.
- Chew with your mouth closed.
- Offer food to others before taking the last portion.
- Don't speak with food in your mouth.
- Don't disturb others by making loud or obnoxious noises.
- Ask to be excused from the table.
- Offer to help clean up.

Nature Story

Gratefulness Nature Story (VID) (6:52)

Poem

Gratefulness Poem (VID) (4:39)

Bible Connection

Ps 100:3-4

Bible Memory Verse

Eph 4:25

Craft

Links of Gratitude

Every day for a week, have your child write one (or more) person for which they are grateful on a strip of paper and why they are grateful, and make a chain in your classroom. Use colors appropriate for the season. Have each student share their gratitude as they place their link on the chain. See how long the chain is at the end of the week/month. For non-writers, you can have them draw a picture of the people for whom they are grateful and make a quilt of gratitude. After you have done this for a few days, ask the students if anyone of them shared their gratefulness with the actual person they named on a link. If so, ask them how the person reacted and how they felt expressing gratitude. Was it easy? Did it get easier the more you did it? If they haven't expressed their gratefulness, encourage them to do so.

The I WILL's of Gratefulness

To practice Gratefulness I will:

- show my parents and teachers that I appreciate them
 - write thank you notes
 - take care of my things
 - be content with what I have
 - count my benefits rather than my burdens
-

Monday Evening

Gratefulness Acrostic

Make an acrostic using the word "Gratefulness" that lists various people and things your class appreciates.

Sample Acrostic:

G - grandparents, golf, gorillas, grapes
r - relatives, rain, running, reading
a - aunts, apples, animals, automobiles
t - teachers, toys, teeth, trains, tools
e - elephants, electricity, exercise, excitement
f - family, friends, food, fun, festivals
u - uncles, umbrellas, understanding
l - light, land, language, lollipops
n - neighbors, nationalities, naps, nectarines
e - energy, eating, every day!
s - smiles, schools, stickers, songs
s - salt, sugar, savory sandwiches

Variations:

- Make a list of things for which you are grateful, beginning with the letter "A" and going through the whole alphabet.
- Students can look up various words related to "gratefulness" in a thesaurus and make a list of the words they find. Make another acrostic using words only out of the thesaurus, such as "thankful" or "appreciation" or "gratitude."

Discuss some Bible verses about Gratefulness:

1 Thess 5:18

Tuesday

Discussion

Model of Gratefulness

Andrew Carnegie gratefulness for a gift of books as a child led him to make significant contributions in order to establish more than 2800 public libraries throughout the world.

When Carnegie was a teenager he worked as a messenger boy for the Pittsburgh Telegraph office. He was grateful for his job but he was also grateful to Colonel James Anderson, who opened his little library of 400 volumes to the boys every Saturday afternoon. He resolved then if he ever became wealthy he would use it to establish free libraries so that other poor boys could receive the same opportunities that he had been given.

Carnegie's life was marked with a pattern of gratitude. He was a generous man who was motivated by his gratefulness to those who benefited his life. The day he retired, he gave away \$11.2 million.

He has been quoted as saying that "The man who dies rich dies disgraced." By the end of

Discussion

Being a person full of GRATEFULNESS allows you to go through life in a way that promotes a thankful attitude. Your awareness of the many good people and good things along life's way will help you keep positive. DESCRIBE AN INDIVIDUAL OR ITEM you recognize as a benefit in your life. Explain why you view this individual or item in this GRATEFUL way. How

has this individual or item made a positive DIFFERENCE in your HOME OR SCHOOL setting?

Have you ever been told by someone to count sheep to help you go to sleep? One idea is to count up all the people for whom you are GRATEFUL and then start counting all the things you for which are GRATEFUL.

There really is a lot to give you that feeling of GRATEFULNESS, isn't there?

WHAT causes that feeling of GRATEFULNESS within you and identify WHY you feel that way

Songs

Gratefulness Song (VID) (8:07)

Poem

Gratefulness Poem - Review

Bible Connection

Psalms 107:1

Bible Memory Verse

Eph 4:25

The I WILL's of Gratefulness

Review

Craft (continued)

Links of Gratitude

Tuesday Evening

Gratefulness Family Connection

Gratefulness starts by recognizing what others have done for you and then showing your appreciation.

This kind of positive and grateful attitude makes someone pleasant to be with—especially compared to an ungrateful person who takes things for granted. No matter what your circumstance, you can always find something to be grateful for if you look for it!

Character Quiz:

1. How would you describe a grateful person?
2. A grateful person:
 - a. shows good manners
 - b. leaves dishes for someone else to clean up
 - c. always wants something more
3. A grateful person only says "thank you" for really special things: TRUE? or FALSE?
4. Name 3 things you are grateful for
5. Why is it nice to be with someone who has a positive outlook on life?
6. What are ways to say you're GRATEFUL? One way is to say THANK YOU!!

Discuss some Bible verses about Gratefulness:
Luke 7:39-50

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Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Praise Shakers Art Project

Materials:

- Paper plates (2 for each student)
- Beans or dried cereal (whatever you have on hand!)
- Tape or a stapler
- Crayons or markers
- Avery label that reads, "Give thanks to the Lord, for his love endures forever." - 2 Chronicles 20:21 (or print out the verse yourself on the bottom side of one plate.)

Instructions

1. On the bottom side of one plate, have the students affix the memory verse and start writing things that they can be thankful for.
2. On the bottom side of the other plate, have the students brainstorm additional items of thanksgiving.
3. Once they are done decorating their plates, either staple or tape the plates together so that they are almost closed. Have the child place a handful of beans or cereal in the remaining opening. Then close that as well so that the plates are sealed together.
4. As you are working on sealing plates together, students can either brainstorm additional items of praise or work on memorizing 2 Chronicles 20:21.

Once all plates have been completed, teach the students a song of thanksgiving and sing it together with their "Praise Shakers." You can choose "Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart" or "I Will Enter His Gates with Thanksgiving in my Heart" or your personal favorite.

Musical Chairs Game:

Materials: chairs lined up back to back in two rows (one chair for each child), CD player (or someone singing who is not facing the children), a Praise CD

Instructions

1. Have each student start out sitting in a chair. Start with a trial run. Play the music and have the students move around the chairs. Shut the music off and have the students grab a seat. Everyone gets one the first time. Now remove one seat to play.
2. Play the music again. When the music stops, everyone grabs a chair. The player without a chair is out. Take out one chair each round.
3. Repeat until you have 2 players and 1 chair. The one to sit down first on the last chair is the winner.

Bible Connection

Thankfulness No Matter What: A Bible Lesson about Jehoshaphat

Try this lesson plan based on the story of Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 20 to teach children about thankfulness. It would work in any children's ministry setting but is designed for Children's Church or Sunday School.

Objectives:

To identify Biblical strategies for dealing with problems in our lives, based on Jehoshaphat's response to an attacking army. To develop students who display hearts of gratitude. This lesson is geared towards a classroom of 1st-5th graders.

Materials:

- this lesson plan
- Bibles for each student (or every other one),
- a whiteboard, whiteboard marker, color coded seats (optional - see Bible lesson),
- chairs,
- CD player and praise CD,
- paper plates (2 for each student),
- beans or dried cereal (whatever you have on hand!),
- masking tape or a stapler,
- crayons or markers,
- an Avery label that reads, "Give thanks to the Lord, for his love endures forever." - 2 Chronicles 20:21 (or print out the verse yourself - one for each student.)

Bible Basis:

"Give thanks to the Lord, for his love endures forever." - 2 Chronicles 20:21

Anticipatory Set:

- Have you ever had a problem that seemed bigger than you?
- Have you felt helpless, like you couldn't fix it, no matter how hard you tried?
- Sometimes life isn't always easy. Sometimes family members get sick, people we love go to war, bullies at school make fun of you, parents don't get along, and moms and dads lose their jobs. Today we're going to learn about a guy named Jehoshaphat who faced these kinds of big problems. In fact, an entire army was coming to destroy him and his people. It seemed like Jehoshaphat had nowhere to turn, but he chose to run to God. At one point, he cries to God, "We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon you." (2 Chronicles 20:12)
- When we do not know what to do, let's learn how we can turn to God with our problems, like Jehoshaphat in our study today.

Bible Lesson: 2 Chronicles 20

1. Ask the students to figure out who Jehoshaphat was. Tell them that you are going to read a passage of scripture, and you want them to listen for clues. Have a whiteboard and marker ready to jot down clues that they generate. Read 2 Chronicles 17:1-6. (Some answers may include: He was a King. Asa was his Dad. He followed God. He didn't follow other gods. He had great wealth and honor. He

- removed the high places or idols -though scripture is clear that he did not remove all of the idolatry in the land.)
2. Say: Sounds like a pretty good guy, right? Well, even good guys have big problems. One day, Jehoshaphat was probably eating a Big Mac, or high-fiving his friend, or playing his Wii when these guys came running to tell him that a HUGE army was coming against him. And not only that, but the army was kind of close. How would you feel if you were in his shoes? (Scared!) That's right! In the Bible, it says that Jehoshaphat was alarmed! Yet instead of freaking out and running away, let's figure out what he did.
 3. Read 2 Chronicles 20:3-4.
 4. Does anyone know what a fast is? A fast is going without food for a period of time, in order to go to God about something. Instead of taking the time to make food and eat, the people of Judah spent time praying: asking for forgiveness, praising God, and thanking Him. Every time they felt hunger cramps, they would remember that God had provided for them in the past. They trusted that He would provide in the future.
 5. Read 2 Chronicles 20:12 as a choral reading. Repeat the last part of the verse three times, "We do not know what to do (arms lifted up as if asking a question) but our eyes are on You (point upward)." Use motions as you say it together.
 6. Take a moment to pray with the children. Ask for forgiveness of sin, praise God for being bigger than our problems, and thank Him for listening to the prayers of His children.
 7. So how does God answer Jehoshaphat? Separate the students into pairs. Ask them to listen for what God told His people. Have the older child read 2 Chronicles 20:15-17 to the younger child. Once everyone is done reading and reflecting on God's words, invite some of the students to respond on behalf of their pair. (Answers should include: Don't be afraid or discouraged. You will not fight this battle, but God will. March against the people and then watch what God will do! God will be with you.)
 8. Build up anticipation for the conclusion. Raise your hand if you think Jehoshaphat with God on his side will win? Raise your hand if you think the enemy will win? Take some guesses. How in the world is Jehoshaphat going to win without fighting? How is God going to fight for His people?
 9. Tell the students that Jehoshaphat's people woke up early for the battle. In a loud voice (act this out grandly), Jehoshaphat said, "Listen to me, Judah and people of Jerusalem! Have faith in the Lord your God and you will be upheld; have faith in his prophets and you will be successful." Then Jehoshaphat chose men to sing to God and praise Him ahead of the army. Choose 3-5 boys to stand up and sing, "Give thanks to the Lord, for His love endures forever." Have them repeat it a couple of times. Mention that this is quite a unique strategy for war - singing praises!
 10. Continue to build up anticipation. (Show excitement in your voice and body language!) You will never believe what happened! Remember how God said that Jehoshaphat and his people wouldn't have to fight? They didn't! God tricked the enemy into turning on each other! At the end of the day, no one was left alive! Not one enemy escaped! Not one person from Jehoshaphat's side had to fight! And not one person got killed or even injured for that matter! And if all that wasn't great enough, Jehoshaphat's people spent three days finding equipment, clothing, and expensive stuff. They found so much stuff that they couldn't take it all with them!
 11. Have the students give a loud round of applause for Jehoshaphat for trusting in God. And another round of applause for the singers who must have thought it weird to praise God when they were supposed to be getting ready for war! And of course, the loudest round of applause for the God who saved His people when they called to Him for help.

Application:

Preface these questions by telling the students to not answer these questions out loud, but to just think about them quietly.

- What kind of problems do you have in your life right now?
- Are they problems with people at school or your last report card?
- Are they problems at home with your parents or brothers or sisters?
 - Maybe you're not sure how God will take care of your family and you're worried about it.
 - Maybe someone you love has passed away and it keeps making you really sad.
- You know, life can be full of hard times. But God doesn't want us to go through those times alone.

- Do you know Jesus as your Savior? If you do, He can help you through those hard times like God did with Jehoshaphat. He can help you fight problems that seem bigger than you.
 - Why? Because God is even bigger than that problem you see!
- What did Jehoshaphat do when a HUGE army was coming to destroy him?
 - He prayed and he praised! Even though he saw the problem, he trusted that God was going to take care of him. He had joy, no matter what! He and his people sang thanks to God. Now that is something that we can get excited about! Whenever you have a problem of any sort, please pray about it. Maybe talk to a grown up that you trust. But also, remember to have a heart of thanks. Thank God for as many things as you can think of!

Wednesday Evening

Going Without

Begin a discussion in class about a time when storms knocked out power for an extended period of time. Ask them what they missed most about not having electricity. Ask about if there has been someone in their life who has taken a long trip or was ill a long time. How did it feel to go without seeing that person? Did they appreciate them that much more when they returned? Have any of them ever broken a bone or sprained a joint that required a cast or a brace that prevented you from using the injured body part? What accommodations did they have to make to not use the injured part? Did it put a strain on other working parts? How did they feel when the use of it returned? Ask if anyone has lost a toy or another treasured belonging? How did it feel to know that something important was lost? What did it feel like when you found it again? Did you treat it any differently? Has anyone been lost or separated from their parents in a public place? How did it feel to not know anyone and not be able to locate the person you were with? Did you actively look for them and stand still and hope they found you? What did the reunion with them feel like? Did you hold onto them even tighter?

All of these examples help us to see people and things that we take for granted. Instead of waiting for a time when something or someone is gone, encourage them to speak to individuals and express their gratefulness.

Bible Memory Verse

Eph 4:25

Songs

Gratefulness Song - Review

Poem

Gratefulness Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Gratefulness

Review

Craft (continued)

Links of Gratitude

Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

Yuck Presents

This exercise is intended to give students practice at gracefully accepting gifts they view as less than desirable. Find some pictures of items that would make "yuck" gifts to your students such as ugly sweaters, kitchen appliances, or toys that are intended for a much younger child. Place each picture in an envelope and draw a gift bow on the outside.

Have the students pick an envelope and open the gift. Their challenge is to accept it gracefully and gratefully. Model this with an envelope containing a gift that you don't really want and show how it's done. You may also choose to bring in

some gifts from your own “gift dungeon” to further demonstrate (as long as they aren’t from someone in the school community.) If there isn’t time to make an envelope for each student, make enough for about 1/3 of the class. When all of those gift envelopes have been used have the student return the gifts to the envelopes and mix them up and re-use them. Make sure to instruct the students that they must be truthful and kind in what they say to the giver. Appreciation for a gift should be framed as gratefulness to the individual and not the value of the gift. Some examples are below:

For a plain sweater: “Thank you, Aunt Betty, for the warm sweater. It will certainly keep me toasty this winter. I appreciate your thoughtfulness.”

For toy that is for a younger child: “Thank you, Uncle Roger, for the cool toy truck. Now when play with my little brother I can have my own truck. I’ll think of you when we play with it.”

For utilitarian socks: “Thanks, Grandma for the socks. You never forget my birthday. I love you!

If they give a good response but their tone or inflection doesn’t match, ask them if their attitude said the same thing as their words and give them a chance to re-state the Thank You. It is important to stress sincerity in their gratefulness.

Gratefulness Glasses

Make colorful glasses that remind students to look on the bright side of life.

Use the template to make a pair of glasses using heavy paper. Cut out the glasses and decorate the frames. Cut circles of iridescent cellophane or kitchen plastic wrap, and tape them as “lenses” to the inside of your glasses.

Supplies: heavy paper, scissors, markers, iridescent cellophane, clear tape

Points to Ponder:

- How you look at life affects your ability to be grateful. Do you see what is good or what is bad? Do you focus on what you have or what you do not have? Do you recognize what your parents and teachers have done for you, or do you take them for granted?
- When you face difficult times, ask yourself, “What can I be grateful for in this situation?”

Practice by discussing real-life examples such as someone getting sick, the car breaking down, the power going out, or parents not letting you do what you want.

Bible Connection

A Thankful Leper - Luke 17:11-19

Jesus was traveling to Jerusalem when He passed through a village where ten lepers were. Because they were unclean from their disease, they stood away from the crowd but still yelled to Jesus asking Him to have [mercy](#) on them. They apparently knew who He was and that He had the power to heal them.

Jesus told them that they should go to the priest, the one who could declare them healed from their disease. When they arrived at the priest they were made clean of their leprosy.

Of the ten, only one returned to thank Jesus. He came to Jesus’ feet and bowed down to Him to show his gratitude. Jesus asked if there were indeed ten who were healed and why only one returned to thank Him. Even though many people are touched by Jesus, few give Him the praise and glory He deserves.

Bible Memory Verse

Eph 4:25

Songs

Gratefulness Song - Review

Poem

Gratefulness Poem - Review

The I WILL’s of Gratefulness

Review

Craft (continued)

Links of Gratitude

Thursday Evening

Gratitude

Imagine for a minute that you're invited to a birthday party of one of your classmates. You want to buy just the right gift, so you find out everything that you can about this person in order to know what kind of gift to buy. You discover that this kid loves a certain musical group. You go online and order a limited edition book about them complete with colored photos and words to their music. It's costly and a lot of trouble, but you do it anyway. The day of the party arrives, and you proudly present your gift. To your amazement the gift is opened and tossed to the side without so much as a thank you. How would you feel?

What is gratitude?

Gratitude is a feeling of thankfulness or being grateful for something. It generally leads you to express that feeling of gratitude. If you are invited to a birthday party, you usually express gratitude by honoring that person with a gift. The person who receives the gift expresses to you how much they appreciate you thinking of them. It's a good thing to feel and express gratitude. Without gratitude, there would be no joy. Somehow the two emotions go together.

What does the Bible say about gratitude?

King David wrote, "It is good to say thank you to the Lord, to sing praises to the God who is above all gods. Every morning tell him, 'Thank you for Your kindness,' and every evening rejoice in all His faithfulness" (Psalm 92:1-2, TLB). This text tells us that gratitude is good and should be expressed to God at least twice a day.

How should I express gratitude?

David must have been a great musician because he writes over and over in the Psalms to sing or make a joyful noise to God (Psalm 95:1). He also writes that we should "bow down in worship" (Psalm 95:6). There are many ways to express gratitude. Prayer is a great way to express gratitude. Telling others about Him is another way that lets God know that we appreciate His loving kindness. David wrote his praises to God in poetry. Journaling would be a similar method. There is something about expressing gratitude that makes it more real and personal in your heart.

What should I express gratitude for?

The automatic penalty for sin is death. It's in the Bible, "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23, TLB).

Everybody has sinned by breaking the law of God - but Jesus loved us so much that He chose to die in our place. The Bible says, "We were brought back to God through the death of His Son, what blessings he must have for us now that we are his friends, and he is living within us!" (Romans 5:10, TLB). Salvation, love, peace, hope and life eternal are just a few of God's blessing that we should express gratitude for.

But what if I don't feel it?

There is an old song that says, "Count your blessings, name them one by one." It's really a good idea to make yourself think about what is good in your life. Everyone has something to be thankful for even if it is the very air we breathe. In giving thanks to God it reminds us where our blessings come from. "Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits." (Psalms 103:2, NIV).

What about the people who have nothing?

It's in the Bible "Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 5:18, NIV). Note: The Bible is not saying that it is God's will that you have nothing. It is saying that it is His desire that you praise Him in all circumstances. It is His will that you express praise for what you do have.

What happens if I refuse?

Paul tells the sad story of some who knew about God but refused to give thanks or worship Him. "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened...they became fools" (Romans 1:21, 22, KJV). By not acknowledging God, you lose God. Open communication is a must in any relationship whether it is with people or with God.

If you owed a lot of money and a friend paid your bill, wouldn't you feel gratitude? Jesus did even more. He died in our place. I can never repay Jesus for the sacrifice He made in giving His life for me - but I can take the time to express my gratitude for that gift. Gratitude is a natural response from the heart of someone who loves God. If you don't have that love, ask God to put the love in your heart. Invite Him to come in and fill you with love, joy and yes, gratitude.

Craft (continued)

Links of Gratitude

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Friday

Bible Memory Verse

Eph 4:25

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Eph 4:25

Songs

Gratefulness Song - Review

Poem

Gratefulness Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Gratefulness

Review

Friday Evening

Gratefulness in poetry

If you woke up this morning with more health than illness, you are more blessed than the million who won't survive the week.

If you have never experienced the danger of battle, the

loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pangs of starvation, you are ahead of 20 million people around the world.

If you attend a church meeting without fear of harassment, arrest, torture, or death, you are more blessed than almost three billion people in the world.

If you have food in your refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof over your head and a place to sleep, you are richer than 75% of this world.

If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish someplace, you are among the top 8% of the world's wealthy.

If you hold up your head with a smile on your face and are truly thankful, you are blessed because the majority can, but most do not.

If you can read this message, you are more blessed than over two billion people in the world that cannot read anything at all.

You are so blessed in ways you may never even know.

by Stephen Eardley

*"You cannot be grateful and bitter.
You cannot be grateful and unhappy.
You cannot be grateful and without hope.
You cannot be grateful and unloving.
So just be grateful."*

— Author Unknown

Be Thankful

Be thankful that you don't already have everything you desire, if you did, what would there be to look forward to?

Be thankful when you don't know something
For it gives you the opportunity to learn.

Be thankful for the difficult times.
During those times you grow.

Be thankful for your limitations
Because they give you opportunities for improvement.

Be thankful for each new challenge
Because it will build your strength and character.

Be thankful for your mistakes
They will teach you valuable lessons.

Be thankful when you're tired and weary
Because it means you've made a difference.

It is easy to be thankful for the good things.
A life of rich fulfillment comes to those who are also
thankful for the setbacks.

GRATITUDE can turn a negative into a positive.
Find a way to be thankful for your troubles and they can
become your blessings.

Author Unknown



Joyfulness

Parents

Parents' prayer

Despite our best efforts to nurture an attitude of joyfulness in our children, only God can bring about lasting change in a child's heart. Before you begin leading your child through this study on joy, spend time alone with God interceding for His help.

Ask Him to help you grow in joy, and to release His power in your child. Use the sample prayer below to guide you in praying for your child's character development. If you prefer to personalize your prayers even further, read through the additional verses provided under "Scripture-guided prayer" for direction and inspiration.

Sample prayer

Lord, You make us glad by Your works O Lord. You give us so many reasons to sing for joy! (Psalm 92:4) You have made known Your salvation and shown Your righteousness to all nations (Psalm 98:2). We come before You with thanksgiving and praise because You, the Lord, are the great King above all gods. In Your hands are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to You. The sea is Yours for You made it, and Your hands formed the dry land. We bow down in worship before You, our Lord and Maker. With You as our God, we can rest in comfort, knowing we are the flock under Your care (Psalm 95:1-7). What joy there is in knowing that You hear our cry for mercy and respond as our strength and shield. As we trust in You, please give us hearts that leap with joy as we give You thanks (Psalm 28:6-7). You reign in our hearts and over all the earth – we need no other reason to rejoice.

As I read in Your Word that we are to be joyful always, to pray continually and to give thanks in all circumstances, I am reminded that too often my outlook becomes negative and I forget to pray and be thankful (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18). When Satan tries to steal my joy by infecting my heart with pessimism, self-pity or anxiety, please remind me that I can turn to You and Your love will bring me consolation and restore joy to my soul (Psalm 94:18-19). Please make me glad and remind me to delight in the joy of Your presence, despite the constancy of life's demands (Psalm 21:6). I want to be fully aware of my eternal blessings so I can choose joy in my everyday duties of _____ (list some never-ending tasks such as going to the office every day, picking up

things left behind by others, preparing food that is inhaled and gone in moments, attending to the call "Mom!" or "Dad!" again and again). More significantly, when I am immersed in painful or difficult circumstances, please send Your Holy Spirit to give a deep sense of Your presence, to bring peace to my soul even though there is turmoil in my mind and heart.

It excites me to pray for joy for my child, _____. Please shower _____ with the joy of Your presence as he/she reads Your Word and follows You along the path of life You lead him/her on (Psalm 16:11, Psalm 19:8, Psalm 119:111). When _____ is frightened, please assure him/her that those who love You can rejoice in Your protection (Psalm 5:6-12). If sin causes distance between You and _____, please send Your Holy Spirit to teach him/her that there is great joy in repenting and restoring a right relationship with You (Psalm 51:8,12).

Praying through this myriad of ways for _____ to experience the joy of knowing You reminds me of how I feel on Christmas Eve when I fill his/her stocking. My prayer is that _____ would embrace You with the same kind of unbridled enthusiasm with which he/she approaches his/her Christmas treasures.

Now, as I pray for our family, I ask that we would understand that our faith is of far greater worth than gold. As life's trials refine us, I pray that our faith would be proved genuine and that others would see in us an inexpressible and glorious joy that results in praise, glory and honour for You. Though we have not seen You, we love You and thank You that we are receiving the goal of our faith, the salvation of our souls (1 Peter 1:7-9). Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for parents

Read and pray through one or more of the selected Scriptures under each heading. Focus on listening to God and allowing His Spirit to direct you as you pray.

Character focus

Begin by thanking God for giving you joy through the power of His Holy Spirit.

Psalm 66:1-5 | Psalm 97:1-6 | Isaiah 12:1-6 | John 15:9-11 | Hebrews 12:2-3

Heart search

Acknowledge the areas in your life where you are lacking joy or peace.

Psalm 51:7-9,10-12 | Psalm 139:23-24 | Luke 12:22-30
| Philippians 4:6-7 | 1 Peter 5:6-9

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have seen your family members rejoicing, even in difficulties.

Family requests

Ask God to help you and your children live joyfully in good times as well as in hard times.

Psalm 4:6-8 | Psalm 5:11-12 | Psalm 94:18-19 |
John 16:24 | Romans 15:13



Kids talk with God

Use this section to help your child learn to reach out to God in all things. The sample prayers all begin with “Dear God,” however, you may use any other names for God your children are comfortable with (i.e. Jesus, Father God, Lord Jesus, Heavenly Father, Abba Father, Lord).

If your child is ready to pray an original prayer, you may wish to use the Bible verses provided under “Scripture-guided prayer for children.”

Sample prayers

Dear God, I don't feel like being joyful right now. I need Your Holy Spirit to help me. Amen.

Dear God, knowing that You protect me gives me joy (Psalm 5:11). Amen.

Dear God, thank You for loving me and sending Jesus to set me free. Amen.

Dear God, Your ways are right and they give me joy in my heart (Psalm 19:8). Amen.

Dear God, can You please send Your Holy Spirit to help me choose to be joyful right now? Amen.

Dear God, please remind me that You are always in control. Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for children

Read through one of the selected Scriptures under each heading and help your children pray based on the verse you read. Encourage them to listen to God and allow His Spirit to guide them as they pray.

Character focus

Begin by thanking God for giving you joy.
Psalm 65:8 | Psalm 92:4 | Isaiah 12:2-4

Heart search

Acknowledge when and how you have trouble being joyful.
Psalm 51:10,12 | Psalm 139:23 | 1 Peter 5:7

Gratitude

Thank God for times when you and your family members have been full of joy, even when life has been hard.

Personal requests

Ask God to help you, your siblings and parents to be joyful in good times and in hard times.

Psalm 5:11 | Psalm 119:14 | John 16:24



Speak a Blessing

Your affirmation will give tremendous encouragement to your children as they strive to be more joyful. Use this section as a reminder to “speak a blessing” when you see evidence of this godly characteristic.

- _____, you are a joy to be around. You are (kind, respectful, generous, cheerful, loving, etc.).
- Tell your child that he/she is a blessing from God to you, his/her parents (Psalm 127:3). You can also tell the story of how and when they were born and how you picked their name. Show them pictures and then explain how much joy they have brought to you and your spouse.
- Thank you for choosing to be joyful, even though things didn't go your way today. .
- What a joyful smile you have, .
- You have chosen to be joyful, . I'm proud of you.
- _____, because you have loved righteousness, the Bible says that God will give you joy (Hebrews 1:9).
- Your joy is contagious. When you are joyful, I feel like being joyful too!



Monday

Songs

I've got the joy, joy, joy

Attention Grabber Activity

Ha Ha

This activity is usually good for some belly laughs but it can only be done with a group that is comfortable with appropriate body contact and those who can count has high as the number of students in the classroom. For this activity, the students will be laying on the floor. Each student has their head on the stomach of a classmate so that their body is perpendicular to the classmate. All of the students should be connected this way so a large space is needed for all of the students to be connected into a single puzzle. Set the stage for a serious activity, having the students close their eyes and maintain silence to start. Now instruct the students that the first person in the line says "Ha" one time. The next person says "Ha" two times with each person down the line saying one more "Ha" than the last person. As the number of "Ha"s increase it generally dissolves into the entire group laughing together. Please make sure to excuse any student who doesn't wish to play.

Introduction

Opposites:

Joyfulness vs Self-pity

What does it mean?

Maintaining a good attitude, even when faced with unpleasant conditions.

Translation:

Spanish: Regocijo vs. Auto lástima

Go to the root

From the Latin word gaudium which means joy. Some other words that also come from that root are jest, joke, juggle and yodel.

How do we Sign it?

Joy

Bible Connection

Rejoicing in salvation

Read

Acts 8:26-40.

Questions for discussion

1. If an angel came to your house and told you to go somewhere, would you go?
2. What did the angel tell Philip to do?
3. What was the Ethiopian reading as he traveled along the road to Jerusalem?
4. Who did God send to help this man understand what Isaiah wrote?
5. What did Philip ask the Ethiopian?
6. What did the Ethiopian ask Philip?
7. It says that Philip told him the good news about Jesus. What do you think Philip said?
8. After Philip told the Ethiopian about Jesus, what did the Ethiopian ask?
9. After the Ethiopian was baptized, what did he do?

Key concepts

An angel of the Lord told Philip that he was to go on the road south of Jerusalem, toward Gaza. Philip was obedient and he went. Along the way he came across a man in a chariot who was reading the book of Isaiah. God's Spirit instructed Philip to stay near the man's chariot. The man who was travelling was an important official from the country of Ethiopia.

When Philip asked him if he understood what he was reading, the Ethiopian said, "How can I unless someone explains it to me?" and he invited Philip to come up and sit with him (Acts 8:31). Philip explained what the book of Isaiah meant and told the Ethiopian the good news about Jesus (Acts 8:34).

The good news Philip explained is that, because of Jesus, our sins can be forgiven and we can have eternal life in heaven with Him. *(For a more detailed explanation of what salvation means, see the parable of the lost sheep in the Bible stories section of the lesson on forgiveness.)* As soon as the Ethiopian heard the good news, he wanted to become a follower of Jesus and be baptized. After Philip baptized the Ethiopian, the Bible says the man went on his way rejoicing!

Knowing that we are God's children and our sins are forgiven, and that someday we will go to heaven to be with God, is a very good reason to be joyful!

Relevant Scripture

Isaiah 25:9
Romans 5:10-11

Bible Memory Verse

Prov 15:13

God's Way vs My Way

God's way

I am demonstrating godly character when:

- I am joyful
- I think about God's goodness, presence and protection when I am tempted to be dissatisfied or unhappy

And God is pleased!

My way

When I am tempted to:

- have a negative outlook
- be dissatisfied
- be anxious or fearful

I know that I need to go to God for help.

The I WILL's of Joyfulness

To practice Joyfulness I will:

- Look for good in all things
- Smile at adversity
- Not give in to discouragement
- Not allow my emotions to rule my mind
- Take time out of every day to laugh and to sing

Monday Evening

Short circuit complaints

For this activity, you will need a buzzer. A "That was easy" buzzer from Staples is perfect, but any fun noise maker will do. Unfortunately, people seem pre-programmed to complain. In our affluent culture, it seems as though people

get very accustomed to having things just the way they like them, doing the things they enjoy and eating food they enjoy. What are some of the common reasons for complaining in your home? Is it doing chores? Cleaning up? Eating vegetables? Going somewhere "boring" on errands? In most families, the list goes on and on. This activity helps to change attitudes from negative to joyful, with help from a buzzer. Every time a family member is tempted to complain, have them go and find the buzzer. Once they have thought of one thing to praise God for instead, they get to push the buzzer.

Relevant Scripture

Philippians 2:14-16
1 Timothy 6:6-9

For problems with being joyful despite disappointment

Biblical basis

Habakkuk 3:17-18

Suggested disciplinary action

Just as Habakkuk listed all of the problems in his life, have your child tell you and God about all the things that are troubling them. Then encourage your child to pray as Habakkuk did, trusting God to be his/her strength and acknowledging God as awesome and famous because of the things He has done.

Affirmation

Read Habakkuk 3:2a, which says, "Lord, I have heard of Your fame; I stand in awe of Your deeds, Lord."

Follow this by reading Habakkuk 3:19: "The Sovereign Lord is my strength; He makes my feet like the feet of a deer, He enables me to tread on the heights."

Pray with your child, thanking God for His power and control. List awesome things that God has done and ask Him to give your child strength to face their problems. You may also choose to read and pray through Psalm 126:1-6 with your child to encourage them to trust God to fill him/her with joy despite the pain of their disappointment.

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

The "Oh, No" Game

Arrange the students in groups of 5 - 7 sitting in a circle. Pick a place in the circle to start. The first person makes up a bad luck scenario and shares it with the group. The scenario starts with "Oh, no!" For example: "Oh, No! The car won't start". Everyone in the group tries to make up a good that could come out of that. This could also be explained as the silver lining. Their responses start with "Oh, well." for example: "Oh, well, I'll save money not going to the mall". The group should try to come up with as many "Oh well"s for each "Oh no" as they can. When the groups are finished, ask them to share some of the more humorous answers with the class. When finished, ask the students how easy was it to look for the silver lining. Try to use the Oh no/Oh well language in the classroom when bad luck occurs and try to turn around the situation.

Songs

I've got the joy, joy, joy

Discussion

Victor Borge, Hero of Joyfulness

Victor Borge, affectionately known as "The Great Dane," was a musician, humorist, and humanitarian. In the nearly 60 years that he lived in the United States, Borge performed on the radio, in films, on television, in opera houses, in sports arenas, and at the White House.

Distinctively Danish, his comedy encouraged audience interaction and found humor in the mundane. He was the daffy pianist whose whimsical approach to the classics earned him the moniker the "clown prince" of Denmark.

For decades, Borge delighted audiences by deflating the pomposity of classical music.

He fell off his bench, played music upside down. He would comically mangle classic tunes, make faces, or simply stop at the keyboard to tell jokes.

He repeatedly milked laughs from such classic routines as "phonetic punctuation" in which he used goofy sounds to indicate commas, periods and question marks in his monologue.

Borge became a U.S. citizen in 1948. He was knighted by Denmark and each of the other four Scandinavian countries. He quipped, "After I was knighted five times, I became a weekend."

When Joel Goodman's Humor Project instituted their very prestigious International Humor Treasure award in 1991, the first person honored was Victor Borge.

Victor Borge is quoted as saying, "Humor is something that thrives between man's aspirations and his limitations. There is more logic in humor than in anything else. Because, you see, humor is truth."

Undoubtedly, Borge brought Joy to those around him.

Bible Connection

There is a joyful celebration in heaven!

Read Luke 15:8-10 and Psalm 32:1-5,11.

Questions for discussion

1. Have you ever lost something that you value?
2. What did you do?
3. How many coins did the woman in the story have?
4. Why do you think she cared about losing one coin if she still had nine others?
5. Why did Jesus tell this story?
6. What happens in heaven when a person repents of their sin?
7. How did David describe the way he felt when he "kept quiet" about his sin?
8. How do you feel when you know you have done something wrong?
9. When you are obeying your parents, how do you feel?
10. What does David say at the end of Psalm 32?

Key concepts

Jesus told a story of a woman who had ten silver coins. When the woman lost one of the ten coins she lit a lamp, swept the entire house and searched diligently until she found the lost coin. Upon finding it, she called friends and neighbours to celebrate with her. Jesus said, "In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents" (Luke 15:10).

This story was told to teach people how much joy there is in heaven when one person asks God to forgive their sins. As much as sin causes God pain (Genesis 6:5-6), repentance brings Him joy. Not only does repentance make God happy, it also brings a great sense of freedom to the person who repents. In Psalm 32, David talks about how awful he felt when he was quiet about his sin and what great relief he felt when he confessed his sin.

Relevant Scripture

Genesis 6:5-6

Bible Memory Verse

Prov 15:13

The I WILL's of Joyfulness

Review

Tuesday Evening

Joyful bubbles

For this activity, you will need commercial or homemade bubble solution and wands. Here's a recipe for homemade bubble mix.

Bubble mix recipe

Combine the following ingredients:

- 1/4 cup of dish soap (any Dawn product, or Dawn with "Olay hand renewal" works very well)
- 1/4 cup of cool water
- 1 tsp. Sugar

Use any circular item to blow bubbles. If you don't have any traditional bubble-blowing wands, the handle of a pair of scissors works well, but first tape the blades closed and wrap the blade end in a protective cover, such as bubble wrap, to prevent injuries.

Have fun blowing bubbles together outside. If it isn't warm enough to play outside, you can still blow bubbles indoors at bath time. A fun song to sing while blowing bubbles is *Jesus' Love is a Bubblin' Over*. After your children are tired of blowing bubbles themselves, suggest that they take a break from blowing and try to pop the bubbles that you blow.

When they are done blowing and chasing bubbles, call your children together and tell them this make-believe story. (Feel free to change it to personalize it for your kids.)

Bubble-time story

Once upon a time, there was a little girl named Karis. Karis was a normal girl who lived in a normal home with a very normal family. But she thought her life was abnormally boring. She desperately wanted to be a princess. If only I could live in a palace! she thought. If I could live in a palace

and have all the privileges of a princess, my life would be full of joy.

As she fell asleep one night, Karis wished - for the one hundred and first time - that she could one day become a princess. Moments later, much to Karis' surprise, a huge butterfly flew through her window and spoke to her. The butterfly told her that she had been chosen as the next princess of the Land of Chara, and that they must fly there right away. Away through the dark night they flew, eventually arriving at their destination. As they flew down toward the Land of Chara, Karis noticed that the streets were golden. When the butterfly showed Karis her new bedroom and gave her a tour of the royal palace, Karis thought that she would be incredibly happy in her new role. Her room was full of hundreds of dolls, complete with a tiny kitchen that had mini-appliances of every kind, including a fridge, an oven and a dishwasher - and they all worked!

The butterfly told Karis to put on an extravagant gown and get ready for a royal feast. As she quickly dressed, she wondered what kind of food would be served at the party. Almost as soon as Karis had fastened her gown, she noticed that the lace at the neck and the sleeves had begun to itch. Soon, Karis wished she could take the dress off, but she thought to herself, If this is what I must do to be a princess, then I will have to leave the gown on.

At the feast there were many people Karis didn't recognize, but they all smiled at her and bowed or curtsied when she walked past. It seemed as though everyone was almost afraid to talk to her because she was royalty. The food that was brought to her table was wonderful; it was pizza with all her favourite toppings, and tiny hamburgers with exquisite miniature fries. For drinks, there were five different flavours of milkshakes to choose from.

Karis chose chocolate and strawberry. For dessert, they rolled out a very large tray full of fancy cakes and candy. There were more treats on the tray than Karis had ever seen all at once, and she got to choose whatever she wanted.

After dinner, everyone went outside for a carnival. There were rubber inflatables, giant slides and even a climbing wall. Pretty bubbles floated through the air, generated by automatic bubble-making machines. Although everyone seemed to be having a grand time, Karis felt a little lonely wandering around and playing by herself at the different attractions. She also was a little worried about the nasty-looking little dwarves who ran around popping all the bubbles, laughing as they went.

Karis decided to go back to her room to play. She set the dolls up in the kitchen, but it wasn't much fun playing alone.

By nightfall, Karis' stomach had started to hurt and her gown had given her a horrible rash. Just as she was thinking

about going to bed, the butterfly came fluttering in the window, and reminded Karis that she was now a princess, which meant she could stay up as late as she wanted. But Karis was very tired, and soon going to bed seemed like a very good idea. The bed was beautiful, but it was so high off the ground that Karis worried that she might get hurt if she fell out. As she lay in bed, she longed for her mom and dad to come and tuck her in. She wished she could hear her little brother making silly noises in the room next door. Then a frightening thought came into her mind: Will I ever see my family again? she wondered. All night long Karis tossed and turned as her worries and her aching belly disturbed her sleep.

In the morning, Karis was delighted to find herself in her own bed, in her own bedroom. She ran downstairs and found her family eating cereal for breakfast. Her younger brother was making loud slurping noises at the breakfast table as usual, but this time it didn't bother Karis.

Later that morning, Karis told her parents about her dream and everything she experienced in the Land of Chara. Her parents listened, deep in thought, as Karis explained her dream. Then Karis' parents offered their thoughts about the dream, and Karis saw the Land of Chara in a whole new light. What Karis had not known was that the Land of Chara was a fake or a "counterfeit." All the wonderful things in the dream were things that people often think they need in order to be happy. Although it was named the Land of Joy - for the word "chara" means "joy" in Greek - it was not really the land of joy at all. It was a place that offered false joy instead of true joy.

Karis' parents explained that the only way anyone can experience true joy is through knowing Jesus. They said that there is nothing wrong with wanting to be happy, as long as a person doesn't seek after happiness instead of seeking the joy of knowing and being with Jesus.

Then Karis' parents told her that her name means "grace," and that her name also came from the Greek root word for "joy." Her mother then explained that it is because of God's grace that everyone can have their sins forgiven and experience the joy of knowing God as a friend. "A relationship with God will give us much joy here on earth," her mother said, "but we will have even more joy when we go to live with God in heaven someday." Then Karis' father got out a Bible and read from the book of Revelation to let Karis know what heaven would be like some day. Heaven sounded much better than the land in her dream. Karis' favourite part was the promise that in heaven there will be no more tears or pain (Revelation 21:4). Karis found herself thinking a lot about heaven in the days that followed, but never again did she wish to be a princess.

A note to parents: The Greek word for "joy" is "chara," derived from the word "charis," which is the Greek word for

"grace." This is important to note, for it tells us that "chara" is produced by the "charis" of God. This means that true joy is divine in origin... it is a Spirit-given expression that flourishes best in hard times.

Finish your time together by asking the following questions:

- What caused Karis to be dissatisfied?
- What are some things in your life that tempt you to be discontent?
- When are you tempted to be selfish or discontent?
- How do we find true joy?
- If the bubbles we played with represent joy, then what kind of thoughts and attitudes can pop your "joy bubbles"?
- What kind of attitudes can prevent your joy bubbles from bursting?

Key concepts

People can have everything their hearts desire and still feel empty and alone if their goal in life is to please themselves and not God. We can be joyful in "normal" circumstances - even when life gets very hard - if we love and trust God. The soap bubbles, as pretty and fun as they were, only lasted a short time. Similarly, having things, popularity and entertainment are short-lived in the length of time they entertain us or offer us fascination.

Some common joy stealers include dissatisfaction and greed (always wanting more or wanting the biggest or the best). These attitudes steal joy, but being content and generous with what we have gives us joy. True joy is found in Jesus and in sharing His love with others.

Relevant Scripture

Psalm 37:3-4



Wednesday



Attention Grabber Activity

Sing:

"If You're Happy and You Know It"

This repetitive children's song has many variations. Choose one that includes the 4th line of "Then your face will surely show it." Discuss how your face can reflect your mood and how it is often part of the first impression you make on a stranger.

'Don't Worry, Be Happy by Bobby McFerrin.

Can you have too much optimism?

Discuss how excessively optimistic people may not have realistic expectations about the possibility of bad things occurring to them, and so do not prepare such as not studying enough for a test. Include in the discussion when too much Joyfulness is not appropriate such as at a solemn event like a funeral or if is a distraction and disrespectful such as excessive clowning in the classroom.

Bible Connection

Looking for joy in all the wrong places

Read

Luke 15:11-31.

If your child has heard the story of the prodigal son many times, see the alternative version below.

Questions for discussion

1. Why do you think the son wanted to leave home?
2. Where did he go looking for joy?
3. How do you think the father felt when his son left home?
4. Did the son find joy in spending money and living wildly?
5. Where did he finally decide to go?
6. Why did the father have a big party for his son when he finally came home?
7. Why do you think Jesus told this story?
8. What do you think will bring you joy?
9. Where is the best place to look for joy?

Key concepts

Jesus told a story about a son who wanted his share of the family property so he could go and live on his own. This son thought that he would be happier living away from home and doing his own thing. The Bible tells us that he went to a foreign country and spent his money on wild living.

Eventually, when he ran out of money, he had to get a job feeding pigs. He ended up being so hungry that he wished he could eat the pigs' food. He began to think that living at home might not be so bad after all. At last, he did return home. He humbly apologized and said, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son" (Luke 15:21). His father welcomed him with hugs and kisses and had a big feast.

Jesus told this story to illustrate how much God loves people and how readily He forgives those who confess their

wrongdoing. The life lesson we can learn from this story is that as long as we go looking for joy and satisfaction anywhere other than God, we will never be satisfied.

Alternative retelling of "the prodigal son"

There was once a little boy who went to the fair with his family. At first he was very excited. But as the day wore on, he became more and more unhappy with the way his parents were "controlling" how the family spent their money at the fair. In anger, he asked if he could have all the money they planned to spend on him that day. He wanted to hold it and decide when and how to spend it. Once his parents had given him the money, the boy he ran off to spend it as he wished. He gorged himself on mini-donuts and went on lots of rides.

Just as his money ran out, he started to feel ill. Suddenly he felt very alone and scared. The fair wasn't fun at all with no family around and no more money to spend. Finally, a gruff midway worker offered him a job cleaning up the vomit on one of the rides and picking up garbage. At this point, the boy decided that spending the remainder of the day with his parents, even though he would have no more treats or rides, would be far better than working on the midway. He searched and searched until he found his mother and father. They were overjoyed to see him. Can you guess how they celebrated his return?*

** This may sound harsh and gross, but feeding pigs was the worst of jobs in Bible times.*

Relevant Scripture

Psalm 70:4

Psalm 90:14

John 15:9-11

1 Peter 1:8-9

Bible Memory Verse

Prov 15:13

Songs

I've got the joy, joy, joy

The I WILL's of Joyfulness

Review

Wednesday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Joyfulness:

Psalm 5:11
Psalm 28:7
Psalm 45:7

Thursday

Bible Connection

Rejoicing in difficulty

Read

Acts 16:16-34.

Questions for discussion

1. What is fortune telling?
2. How did the owners of the slave girl make money?
3. Was it God's Spirit that allowed the girl to predict the future?
4. What did the girl say about Paul and Silas?
5. How did Paul make the spirit leave the girl?
6. Why were the owners of the slave girl mad?
7. What did the owners of the slave girl accuse Paul and Silas of doing?
8. How were Paul and Silas punished?
9. What did they do when they were in prison?
10. Why did the jailer decide to become a follower of Jesus?
11. When the jailer and his whole family came to believe in God, what were they filled with?

Key concepts

In Paul's time, there was a slave girl who had a spirit in her which allowed her to predict the future. Her special ability to "tell fortunes" made a lot of money for her owners. For many days this girl followed Paul and Silas and called out, "These men are servants of the Most High God" (Acts 16:17). Paul was bothered by this and finally said, "In the name of Jesus Christ, I command you to come out of her!" (Acts 16:18).

Immediately the spirit left the girl! The owners of the slave girl were angry when they saw that they would no longer be able to make money from her fortune-telling. They took Paul and Silas to their community judges and accused them of

causing trouble. As a result, Paul and Silas were severely beaten and put in prison. Later that night, when Paul and Silas were singing and praising God, an earthquake came and shook the prison, allowing the prisoners to escape. The jailer was so upset, he was about to kill himself. But Paul and Silas stopped him and told him that none of the prisoners had run away. The jailer was so impressed with Paul and Silas that he decided to become a follower of Jesus too, and asked them what he needed to do to be saved. Paul and Silas told him that he needed to believe in the Lord Jesus. The jailer took them to his own home and Paul and Silas told the jailer's whole family about Jesus. The Bible tells us that the jailer was "filled with joy" because he and his whole family had come to believe in God (Acts 16:34).

Relevant Scripture

Matthew 5:11-12

Bible Memory Verse

Prov 15:13

Songs

I've got the joy, joy, joy

The I WILL's of Joyfulness

Review

Thursday Evening

The vine with a special secret

Read

John 15:4-13, 16-17, and Galatians 5:22-23

Questions for discussion

1. How do tree branches get food and water?
2. What happens to a branch that gets broken off a tree?
3. How are we like branches?
4. Who is like the vine?
5. How can we "remain" in God's love?
6. Can you list the fruit of the Spirit?

7. How is love connected to joy?

Key concepts

Just as a branch needs to stay connected to the tree trunk or vine in order to grow leaves and bear fruit, God tells us to “remain in Him” so that we can “bear fruit.” By “fruit,” the Bible means that others will be able to tell that we have God’s Spirit living in us because of the things we say and do. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

The Bible tells us we can “remain” in God by obeying His commands. When we obey God’s commands, His love will be in us and we will experience joy!

Relevant Scripture

Galatians 5:22-23



Bible Memory Verse

Prov 15:13



Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Prov 15:13



Songs

I’ve got the joy, joy, joy



The I WILL’s of Joyfulness

Review



Friday Evening

Joy and strength

Read

Mark 15:16-32, Hebrews 12:1-2 and 1 Peter 1:3-9.

Questions for discussion

1. Does life ever seem hard?
2. Is there anything in your life that is painful?
3. Why did Jesus choose to die on the cross?
4. What did Jesus think about to help Him endure the pain?
5. Who can help you be strong and joyful, even when life gets hard?

Key concepts

When Jesus died on the cross it was a very difficult thing to do. It was very painful to have people beat Him, spit on Him and leave Him to die, hanging on a cross. The Bible tells us to “fix our eyes on Jesus” or to look at Jesus as an example when life gets hard. All athletes experience pain at the end of a race. If a runner focuses on the finish line, it makes it easier to endure the pain of the extreme physical exertion they are experiencing. The “joy” that helped Jesus die on the cross was knowing that His death would allow everyone to experience forgiveness for their sins so that we all can have a close friendship with God.

At times, there may be other children who make fun of you for choosing to follow Jesus and do what is right. These are the times that you can remember that Jesus had people hurt Him too. He helps us feel joyful when things are hard by giving us His Holy Spirit.



Sensitivity

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

Mirrors vs. Windows

You've all seen police dramas on TV where someone is being interrogated on the other side of a one-way glass. The "perp" on the inside of the room sees only a mirror but those watching from the outside can see inside the room. Teenagers are like the person in the room. They view situations as a mirror. How can this help me? What can I gain from this? What does this have to do with me?

Their world is very self-centered. Sensitivity calls us to be others-centered or extra-centered. To do this, we must convert mirrors to windows. We must teach our students to look beyond ourselves and look into the others around us.

To demonstrate this concept with students give each of them a piece of foil. You can have it glued to paper already or have them tape or glue it to paper. While they are looking at this mirror explain the concept of mirrors and windows to them. Now give them two strips of brown or white paper and have them glue or tape them to the window to look like window panes. If you are feeling particularly crafty you may also give them construction paper, wall paper samples, wrapping paper or fabric scraps to make "curtains" for their windows. On strips used as window panes, have them write down something they can do to be more sensitive to others in the classroom.

Introduction

Opposites:

Sensitivity vs Callousness

What does it mean?

Using my senses to perceive the true attitudes and emotions of others.

Translation:

Sensibilidad vs. Dureza

Go to the root

The Latin root of sensitivity is *sentire* which means "to feel or perceive". To be sensitive you need to try to feel what others are feeling.

How do we Sign it?

Sensitive

Feel

Discussion

Definition: If you are able to perceive, or recognize, the true attitudes and emotions of those around you, others will consider you to be an individual who has **SENSITIVITY**. If you are unaware or seeming to be indifferent to another's perspectives you might be viewed as *callous*.

When someone is insensitive her or his attitude communicates "I could care less" about others-s/he appears to think more about himself or herself. Do you know someone who seems to be callous? How does this person make others feel?

Sometimes we can be overly **sensitive**. There is a balance here that needs to be maintained so people don't experience hurt feelings, but also so you don't always feel you are the only one making concessions.

When have your feelings and opinions been listened to by a **sensitive** person? The person seems to be full of care on your behalf-careful with words and actions. How did that make you feel?

Someone who has **SENSITIVITY** knows when it's time to **stop!** Some people seem to require more sensitivity than others. If your feet have become calloused from walking barefoot on hard surfaces you might not feel a feather's tickle as much as another person. Just so, someone who is experiencing something new might be a bit unsure about themselves - a little more **SENSITIVITY** is needed. Sometimes people are injured; perhaps they need an offer of **help**. Exercising **SENSITIVITY** you also understand the need to take **turns** whether it's in conversation or playing a game.

- There's an emotional aspect to the word **SENSITIVITY** as you relate with other people.
- There's also a physical aspect to the word **SENSITIVITY**.

- Do you see the word SENSITIVITY almost spells the word "SENSE" at the beginning?
- How is SENSITIVITY related to your 5 senses?

Bible Connection

Galatians 6:2

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 12:15

The I WILL's of Sensitivity

To practice Sensitivity I will:

- listen to others fully
- watch facial expressions
- notice tone of voice
- put myself in others' shoes
- show that I care

Monday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Sensitivity:
Ephesians 4:32

Tuesday

Discussion

Model of *Sensitivity*

Jon Wagner-Holtz

When Jon Wagner-Holtz was 9 years old, his mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. It made him very angry that his mom was sick. She sent him to a counselor to help him deal with his feelings but he couldn't open up to someone who had not gone through what he had.

He watched his mother get help from a support group that she went to. Jon decided that he needed to talk to other kids with sick parents and that those kids probably needed to talk, too. He approached the Orange County, California Race for the Cure, a part of the Susan G. Komen foundation and received a grant of \$250 to start a hotline for kids with sick parents. The hotline rang in his bedroom.

This small start grew into Komen Kids as part of the Susan G. Komen organization. In 1997, it became its own nonprofit organization called Kids Connected to better facilitate its growth. Jon says, "The success of a program lies in the tears of a child being wiped away by a caring friend and in the quiet 'Thanks' of a sick parent that can worry less about the emotional stress their illness has on their children."

Jon's sensitivity, empathy and understanding of his own needs and those of children in similar situations enabled him to envision a solution that helped others as well as himself.

Discussion

Having someone you've just recently met remember your name is a positive experience and helps to make you feel connected to other person. Here are some tricks for teaching students how to remember someone's name. You may want to invite an older or younger class to learn these tips with your class and then practice name recall with each other.

- Be sure to concentrate on the name when someone is introduced to you and repeat the name right away. "Pleased to meet you, Beverly."
- If it is more than just a brief meeting, try to use the name frequently to reinforce it.
- Don't be afraid to ask someone to repeat a name if you didn't hear it or if you don't recall it at the end of a conversation.
- If the name is unusual, it is not rude to ask how it is spelled.
- Try to come up with a visual picture to associate to the name and face. Clare Evans suggests creating an image with as many of the elements as possible - the person who they remind you of, a location, the image of their surname and the person you know with the same first name. Make it as visual, colorful, bizarre and as detailed as possible. For example Michael White - reminds you of an accountant, visualize him with a massive 'white' calculator, pouring over a pile of papers and account books, surrounded by large, colorful numbers.
- The first thing you think of is the strongest association - use this, it will make it easier to recall later.

- Try not to link the image to their clothing or something they are wearing such as jewelry, especially if you are likely to meet them again. They are highly unlikely to be wearing the same thing when/if you next meet them.
- When you're at a meeting or social event, you can briefly scan the faces in the room and recall the names. The more often you do this, the more likely you are to remember them.

Bible Connection

The Bible talks about us all being part of the body of Christ. The body is made up of many parts, and we don't function as well if one of those parts is missing. This is true in the family of God too. Our work here would not be complete without us all working together. Everyone has different talents and gifts. Everyone thinks differently and has different things to contribute. Each one is valuable, and we wouldn't function as well without them. Therefore, we need to have sensitivity toward other people in our body because "each member belongs to all the others."

1 Cor 12:26

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 12:15

The I WILL's of Sensitivity

Review

Tuesday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Sensitivity:
1 Samuel 3

Would you say that Samuel was sensitive to God's voice?

Attention Grabber Activity

The Real Deal

This activity requires a deck of ordinary playing cards. Divide the class into groups of 6 - 8 students per group.

Distribute one of the playing cards to each student face down. You may wish to have them separated into groups to match the number of students per group so that some of each kind of card is in each group. When instructed, the students will place their card face up on their forehead without looking at the card. Those who have face cards or Aces are Royalty. Those with numbers are not. Instruct each group that they are planning to put on the play Cinderella and the group has to decide who will do what. They are to treat each other by the type of card they are holding. Let the discussion go until everyone determines what type of card they are holding. Make sure that this game doesn't give anyone permission to actually insult a classmate. For the second part of the activity, allow the students to look at their card. As a whole class, finish planning the play. Each person can now act like their own card while treating others like their card. For this part you will also need to have selected a group or two during the previous discussion to which you will give a special job. They are to treat people the opposite of their card. Notice the expressions on the faces of the Royalty card holders when they are not treated as such. When the activity is over, discuss how each person felt when they were treated well and when they were ignored. Ask them to talk about how they saw others react. Apply these answers to being sensitive to how to treat others.

Discussion

Empathy

SPECIFIC GOALS:

1. To define and understand empathy.
2. To learn the Five Skills to develop empathy.

PREPARATION AND MATERIALS:

1. Five (5) cards listing Five (5) Skills to Develop Empathy in numerical order.
2. Storybook/reading lesson or magazine page featuring strong emotion (emotional stimulus).

Procedure:

1. Teacher writes the word “empathy” on the board and asks, “Can anyone define empathy?” After discussion, write on the board the definition: “Empathy: the ability to understand and share the feelings of another person.”
2. Teacher asks students to think of a time when someone showed you empathy, or when you showed someone else empathy. List up to ten (10) responses on the board.
3. Note which responses are similar.
4. On five cards, introduce the 5 Skills to Develop Empathy:
 - a. Step 1 – Watch & Listen: What is the other person saying and what is their body language?
 - b. Step 2 – Remember: When did you feel the same way?
 - c. Step 3 – Imagine: Imagine how you might feel in that situation. Validate the wide range of emotions that come up.
 - d. Step 4 – Ask: Ask how the person is feeling. Step 5 -- Show You Care: Let them know that you care through your words and actions.
5. Show an emotional stimulus picture from a storybook or magazine (with an issue relevant to your students), and use the 5 Skills to analyze the picture and practice developing empathy:
 - a. Watch & Listen: What is happening? Ask, “How does the person feel?” “How can you tell?” Discuss strategies to figure it out, such as asking: “What do their words say?” “What does their body language say?” “Does what they say match their body language?”
 - b. Remember: Have you felt the same way? Ask “When did something like this happen to you?”
 - c. Imagine: Imagine how you might feel. Ask the class for examples of what it might feel like, and how they might act. Examples: “I’d feel like crying; I’d want to hit back; I’d feel very embarrassed.”
 - d. Ask: Find out how the person is feeling. Have students provide examples of what they could say to someone, such as “Are you OK? What happened to you? How do you feel? How are you doing?”
 - e. Show you care. Ask the students how to show someone that you care, and list answers on the board. Some examples: “Listen with all your attention, spend time with them, stay with them (don’t leave), say, “I’m sorry you’re feeling this way.” Encourage them, “Let’s get help, How can I

help? Do you need a hug? I’m here for you, etc.”

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 12:15

The I WILL’s of Sensitivity

Review

Wednesday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Sensitivity:
Ephesians 4:19

Thursday

Bible Connection

The Wrong kind of Sensitivity

1. **Sensitivity is a symptom of pride; we’re hurt and our ego is deflated when others point out our mistakes.**
 - Proverbs 11:2
 - Proverbs 16:18
 - Proverbs 29:23a
 - 1 Timothy 3:6
2. **Sensitivity shows we’re not really holding onto the Lord and His Word.**
 - Psalm 119:165
 - Isaiah 26:3
 - Isaiah 32:17
 - Philippians 4:6,7
3. **Sensitivity takes things personally, and ends up believing the Devil’s lies and becoming discouraged.**
 - Proverbs 23:7a.

- Jonah 2:8
 - Zechariah 7:10b
4. **People who are easily offended are not very strong and pretty unspiritual.**
 - Proverbs 14:17a
 - 1 Corinthians 3:1,2
 5. **Sensitivity makes it difficult to receive counsel, thus hindering training and spiritual growth.**
 - Proverbs 4:13
 - Proverbs 6:23
 - Proverbs 15:31-33
 - Proverbs 19:20
 - Ephesians 4:15
 - Hebrews 12:11
 6. **Sensitivity hinders honest, open communications, undermining our relations with others.**
 - 1 Kings 18:17,18; 21:20 [See also 22:8,27.]
 - Galatians 4:16
 - Proverbs 9:8
 - Proverbs 18:19
 - Amos 3:3
 - 1 Corinthians 1:10
 7. **Persistent sensitivity results in losing our usefulness.**
 - Psalm 81:11,12
 - Proverbs 15:10,32
 - Proverbs 28:13a
 - Isaiah 30:9-11
 - Matthew 5:13 [See also Mark 9:50; Luke 14:34,35.]
 - Matthew 13:15
 8. **As good soldiers in the Lord's army, we need to learn how to "take it."**
 - 2 Timothy 2:3
 - Matthew 16:24,25
 - 1 Corinthians 15:31b
 - 2 Corinthians 5:15
 - Galatians 2:20
 9. **The Lord can help us overcome sensitivity if we are determined to change.**
 - Psalm 138:8a
 - Proverbs 13:18 [See also 15:5.]
 - Proverbs 25:12
 - 1 Corinthians 15:57
 - 2 Corinthians 5:17
 - Philippians 4:13
 - Hebrews 12:1b

10. **We all need to safeguard one another and "be our brother's keeper."**
 - Leviticus 19:17,18
 - Proverbs 28:23 [Honesty pays.]
 - Matthew 18:15
 - Luke 17:3-5
 - Galatians 6:1
 - Ephesians 5:21
 - Colossians 3:12,14
 - 2 Timothy 4:2
 - Hebrews 3:13
 - 1 Peter 5:5
11. **The more we fight sensitivity, the less sensitive we will become.**
 - Job 17:9
 - Psalm 141:5a
 - Proverbs 4:18
12. **Pray for the right kind of sensitivity: sensitivity to the Lord's Spirit and the needs of others.**
 - Romans 12:15
 - Romans 15:1,2
 - 1 Corinthians 12:25b,26
 - Philippians 2:4
 - Galatians 6:2

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 12:15

The I WILL's of Sensitivity

Review

Thursday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Sensitivity:

1 Pet 3:8
Phil 2:3

.....

Friday

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 12:15

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Rom 12:15

The I WILL's of Sensitivity

Review

Friday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Sensitivity & Empathy:
John 13:34-35

Honesty, Truthfulness

Parents

Parents' prayer

Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea, asked Jesus, "What is truth?" Perhaps Pilate encountered so much deception in his interactions with others, he had begun wonder if truth could even be defined.

Still today, we frequently face the temptation to misrepresent the truth. As you begin this study on honesty with your family, prepare your heart by praying through this sample prayer, or by praying through some of the Bible verses provided in the "Scripture-guided prayer for parents" section.

Sample prayer

Lord God, You speak the truth and declare what is right (Isaiah 45:19). I praise You, God of Truth, author of the book of truth (Daniel 10:21, Psalm 31:5). Thank you for guiding us into all truth through Your Spirit of Truth (John 16:13). Your Son Jesus is full of grace and truth. He is the way, the truth and the life (John 1:14; 14:6). In a world that claims there is no such thing as truth, You are the ultimate standard of truth. Your Word tells us how much You abhor dishonesty (Psalm 5:6)!

Lord, I don't want falsehood to hinder my prayers; rather, I desire to be one who speaks the truth from my heart so I can enjoy being in Your presence (Psalm 15:1-2, Psalm 101:6-7). In humility, I ask Your forgiveness for the times I have been less than entirely honest. I consider myself to be completely honest in the big things and almost pride myself in being honest in the little things, too. Pride precedes error and it is so easy to slip up on halftruths, exaggerations or with embellished truths.

Please send Your Spirit to guide me in all I say and do. I want to be a reflection of You. I thank You for blessing my child, with (list character qualities relating to honesty). Impress on him/her 1 Peter 3:10-12 which states, "... Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech. He must turn from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and His ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."

Please inspire _____ to be a boy/girl who refuses to speak anything but the truth. May he/she choose a life of righteousness and integrity so You can allow him/her the privilege of entering Your presence and the blessing of answered prayer (Psalm 24:3-4, Psalm 34:15).

Satan will come to and tell him/her it is okay to tell a little lie, that lying is acceptable because "everyone does it" and that no one will find out about his/her lie. Please send Your angels to remind of how much You detest lying lips and how much You delight in people who are truthful (Proverbs 12:22). Give him/her the strength of character to tell the truth despite expected punishment or pressure from peers.

I pray that would share David's prayer of Psalm 119:29-30: "Keep me from deceitful ways; be gracious to me through Your law. I have chosen the way of truth; I have set my heart on Your laws."

I ask that our family would be characterized by integrity. May we highly esteem truth-telling and be known as those who can be trusted to tell the truth, regardless. Thank you for Your promise to watch over us when we choose the path of righteousness for our lives (Psalm 1:6, Psalm 25:20-21). Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for parents

Pray through one or more of the selected Scriptures under each heading. Focus on listening to God and allowing His Spirit to direct you as you pray.

Character focus

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate that He is the God of Truth.

Psalm 33:1-5 | Isaiah 45:18-19 | John 1:14 | John 14:6 | John 16:13

Heart search

Acknowledge where and how you are tempted to be dishonest.

Psalm 24:3-4 | Psalm 26:2-4 | Psalm 101:7 | Proverbs 24:12 | Zechariah 8:16-17 | Colossians 3:9-10

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have seen honesty exhibited in your family.

Family requests

Ask God to inspire you and your children to be passionate about telling the truth.

Psalms 25:4-5 | Psalm 51:6 | Psalm 119:29-32 | 1 Corinthians 13:6 | Philippians 4:8

Kids talk with God

Just as you taught your child to learn language skills through continual interaction, you can teach your child to have constant dialogue with God by leading them in brief but frequent prayers throughout the day.

These sample prayers will help you lead your child in asking God to enable them to be honest in their speech and behaviour.

Sample prayers

God, please help me to be a boy/girl who always tells the truth. Help me to tell the truth even when I think I will be punished if I admit what I have done. Amen.

God, I know you delight in people who tell the truth. Please help me to be someone who You can delight in. Amen.

Dear God, I have disappointed You, my mom and dad, and myself by not telling the truth about . Please forgive me and send Your Holy Spirit of Truth to guide me into all truth (John 16:13). Amen.

Dear God, if there are things I have said that are untrue, please remind me so I can tell the truth instead. Amen.

Dear God, if I am tempted to lie, please help me to listen to Your voice which will say "Tell the truth." Amen.

Dear God, please forgive me for I have not been truthful. I am sorry because I know You hate it when people lie. Please help me to tell the truth so You can delight in what I say (Proverbs 12:22). Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for children

If your children prefer to say an original prayer, these Scriptures will help. Choose one verse under each heading and help your children pray based on the verse you read. Encourage them to listen to God and allow His Spirit to guide them as they pray.

Character focus

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate that He is the God of Truth.

Psalms 33:4 | Isaiah 45:18-19 | John 14:6

Heart search

Acknowledge where and how you are tempted to be dishonest.

Psalms 15:1-2 | Proverbs 12:22 | Proverbs 24:12

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have been honest.

Personal requests

Ask God to inspire you, your siblings and your parents, to be passionate about telling the truth.

Psalms 25:4-5 | Psalm 119:30,32 | 1 Corinthians 13:6 | John 16:13

Speak a Blessing

Psst! This is a reminder! Are you complimenting your child for the progress they are making in the area of honesty? Here are some ideas you can use to encourage and motivate them.

- I know _____ is honest. He/she is a boy/girl who tells the truth.
- Even when it is hard to be honest, _____ is.
- I know that I can trust what _____ says. He/she is careful to tell the truth.
- There is no question in my mind. I know what _____ says is the truth.
- God delights in you _____, when you tell the truth and so do I.
- _____ can be trusted to tell the truth.

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

Show two watches—a real, attractive, working watch, and a cheap plastic toy watch. Ask which is the TRUE watch. The other watch is pretend, false, not genuine, fake. It will not really help you tell time because it is not a REAL or TRUE watch. Wearing it is like telling a lie. You are saying it is a real watch, but it is not TRULY a watch. It is only pretend. As you listen to the first two lessons, think about what is REAL and TRUE, and what is only PRETEND.

Kick-off craft

Underscore the importance of honesty by helping your children each create a personalized “certificate of authenticity” that verifies that they speak the truth. Have your children complete this project early in your study on honesty, so you can refer to it often in the days ahead.
Certificate of authenticity

Directions

Using thick cardstock, write at the top of each page “Certificate of Authenticity.” Just below this write, “This certificate tells us that what says is true.” Also include your selected memory verse on the certificate.

Provide materials and allow your children to decorate their certificates, creating a border with gold or silver foil paper strips, lace, glitter, buttons or other fun embellishments.

While your children are working on their certificates, explain that just as we delight in beautiful things, God delights in us when we tell the truth.

After the certificates are completed, admire your children’s creations and let them know you are pleased with such beautiful artwork. Use this as an opportunity to speak a blessing – letting them know how pleased you are to have children who always tell the truth.

For the duration of the time that you are focusing on honesty, give each child a smiley face sticker to add to their certificate whenever they tell the truth. Let them know that the happy face represents God smiling when they are truthful.

Introduction

Opposites:

Truthfulness vs Deception

What does it mean?

Earning future trust by accurately reporting past facts.

Translation:

Veracidad vs. Engaño

Go to the root

The word truthfulness is from the Old English word *treowth*, which means “to be firm, solid, or steadfast”. Can you see how being truthful can help build a solid future?

How do we Sign it?

Honest

True

Nature Story

Honesty Nature Story VID (8:01)

Poem

Honesty Poem (VID) (4:02)

Bible Connection

The story of Achan

Read

Joshua 7, and Psalm 86:5-6,11.

Questions for discussion

1. Have you ever taken something that didn’t belong to you?
2. How did you feel?
3. Did you give it back?
4. What did Achan do?
5. What happened to Achan?
6. Even if you think no one is watching when you take something that does not belong to you, who always sees you?

Key concepts

When the Israelites conquered Jericho, Achan disobeyed God by keeping some of the gold and silver from Jericho for himself. Achan hid what he had stolen and tried to cover up his sin.

God dealt with Achan severely because God hates dishonesty! But as much as God hates lying and stealing, He will forgive you when you are truly sorry about what you

have done. Mom and Dad will also forgive you when you repent of wrongdoing.

Character Quiz:

1. Why do you think honesty is important?
2. An honest person
 - a. admits mistakes
 - b. cheats on tests
 - c. spreads rumors.
 - d. lies to someone and says, "I was only joking."
3. An African Lion tells the truth with: q sign language
q verbal language q body language
4. An honest person tries to cover up his or her mistakes: TRUE? or FALSE?
5. Why is it more fun when everyone plays by the rules?

Bible Memory Verse

Proverbs 12:22

God's Way vs My Way

God's way

I am demonstrating godly character when:

- I am honest in all that I say
- I tell the truth
- I don't hide what I know to be true in order to avoid consequences

And God is pleased!

My way

When I am tempted to:

- be dishonest or lie
- tell only part of the truth
- take things that are not mine or steal
- embellish or misrepresent the truth

I know that I need to go to God for help.

The I WILL's of Honesty

To practice Truthfulness I will:

- tell the truth
- encourage others to be truthful
- not cheat or steal
- admit when I am wrong
- not exaggerate to make things seem different from what they are

Monday Evening

Ananias and Sapphira tell a big lie

Read

Acts 5:1-11

Questions for discussion

1. What did Ananias and Sapphira do?
2. What happened to Ananias?
3. What happened to Sapphira?
4. Certainly lying to God is a dangerous thing to do. Do you think that lying to anyone is a good thing to do?
5. Do you think God only cares about big lies or do you think He cares about little lies, too?
6. What would you think if you saw one of your friends die because they had lied to God?
7. What happened to the other people in the story after Ananias and Sapphira died?

Key concepts

Ananias and Sapphira tried to deceive God by lying. They said they had given God's people all the money they received for selling a field, when in fact they had kept some of the money for themselves.

But God knows everything and sees everything so it is impossible to trick Him. God put Ananias and Sapphira to death for lying. When the people saw it, they began to understand how much they should respect God and be truthful. God does not like it when we lie to Him or to anyone else.

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Role Play:

- Situations in which they may be tempted to tell lies.
- Going back to someone they've lied to, confessing their sin and telling the truth

Discussion

Katie Davis, Model of Truthfulness

In December of 2006, 18-year-old Katie Davis from Brentwood, Tennessee, traveled to Uganda for the first time. She was immediately captivated with the people and the culture. In the summer of 2007, Katie returned to Uganda to teach Kindergarten at an orphanage. She was shocked to see the number of school-aged children not in school. Most schools in Uganda are privately operated and therefore require school fees for attendance, making poor children unable to afford an education. Katie decided to start a child sponsorship program, matching orphaned and vulnerable children who are unable to afford schooling with sponsors all over the world. A gift of \$300 will provide allowance for one child to go to school, providing school supplies, 3 hot meals each day, spiritual discipleship, and medical care. Originally planning to have 40 children in the program, the program sponsors over 600 children today.

Shortly thereafter, Katie established a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization called Amazima Ministries International. The organization seeks to meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the people of Uganda who need it most. In the Lugandan language, Amazima means "truth." Also, Katie became a mother for the first time in January of 2008 to three orphaned girls. She has since adopted more girls bringing the total to 13 adopted daughters.

One of the many other programs she developed was designed to help the women in the Karimojong village provide for their families. She initiated a vocational program to teach these women to make unique Ugandan magazine bead necklaces. They are also taught money management skills. The necklaces made by the women are purchased and sold in the United States.

The programs that Katie has created are her way of being true to her core. She firmly believes in helping those who are in need

Songs

Honesty Song (VID) (9:35)

Poem

Honesty Poem - Review

Bible Connection

Daniel Tells The King The Truth Even When It Is Hard

Beginning the Lesson:

Every child has struggled with the temptation to be untruthful, so let's focus on that struggle in the introduction.

- Ask the children to tell you about a time they were tempted to lie. Let one or two children tell their stories briefly, not longer than two minutes.

Transition to the lesson

We have all been tempted to lie, and we have all said things that were not true. What does God think about this?

Read Daniel 4

Background for your understanding and enrichment:

Nebuchadnezzar was a powerful king, ruler of the mightiest empire of his time. Previous chapters of Daniel show he knew something about the Lord, yet he threw 3 of Daniel's friends into a fiery furnace because they refused to bow to him in the way he wanted. The interpretation of the dream is true because it comes from God, but it is unflattering to the king, a message of judgment on him. One could easily expect a sentence of death for saying such things to the king.

This is the basis of Daniel's fear.

Main Ideas to Emphasize:

- The king asked Daniel to tell him the meaning of his vision.
- Daniel was upset when God told him the meaning of the vision, because the vision was a warning against the king.
- Daniel probably was afraid to tell the king the truth about the vision. He could be punished severely if the king did not like what he said.
- Daniel told the truth anyway, and God protected him.
- Everything happened just like God said it would in the dream. God always tells the truth, and He is pleased when His people tell the truth, too.

Discussion for Older Students:

- Why was it so tempting for Daniel to tell a lie?
- When are you most tempted to tell lies?
- What happened to Daniel when he told the truth? (Nothing is stated, either good or bad.)
- What could have happened if he had lied?
- Someone has said, "Telling the truth is its own reward." What do you think this means?

Assignment

Are you aware right now of some specific lie you have told? God says this is sin, so ask Him to forgive you. If you can, go this week to the person you lied to and tell them the truth. Ask them to forgive you, too. (Ask children to raise their hand if they remember a specific lie. Pray for those children.) This week, try to be thinking about everything you say. Is it really true? Ask God to help you tell the truth this week. If you mess up and do tell a lie, ask God to forgive you right away. Then go back right away and tell the truth.

Bible Memory Verse

Proverbs 12:22

The I WILL's of Honesty

Review

Tuesday Evening

Like father, like son

Read

John 8:44-47, Psalm 33:4 and Titus 1:1-2.

Questions for discussion

1. Who is your father?
2. How are you like him?
3. How would you like to be like him when you get older?
4. Would you rather have an honest or a dishonest father?
5. What does the Bible say about God and truth?
6. Can we say the same thing about you as we can say about your Heavenly Father?

Key concepts

Satan is called the "father of lies." You cannot trust or believe anything that Satan says or does. God only speaks what is right and true and it is impossible for Him to lie (Hebrews 6:18). God can be trusted.

Honest people can be trusted. Dishonest people cannot be trusted. Even though your father is an honest person, you must decide for yourself whether or not you will be trustworthy. There will be many times in your life where you

will have to choose to be like your Heavenly Father who speaks only truth, or choose to honour Satan by lying.

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Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Truth-tionary

To prepare for this game make some cards with phrases that depict a scene where a child has to decide to tell the truth such as spilled milk, broken crayon, not emptying the trash can, forgetting to make your bed, not doing homework, etc. The game is played like Pictionary, using the cards as the drawing suggestions. Divide the group into two smaller groups and have them compete against each other. Provide a space on a chalk board or a white board for them to use for their drawings. Pick one team to go first. One person from that team comes forward, selects a card from a face-down stack. They have 3 minutes to draw something so that their team can guess what scenario is on the card. Be sure that both teams know what kinds of phrases they are trying to guess. The person who is drawing is not allowed to say anything until someone guesses the correct answer. Once the answer is given or time is up and the answer revealed, have a short discussion on the example that was drawn. Why is telling the truth the right thing to do in each instance? Be sure to include that the more you tell the truth, the more trust you build.

Bible Connection

Jesus always told the truth

Review Questions for Older Students: (For use with a variety of Bible games)

- How many things do you know about King Nebuchadnezzar?
- How was Daniel tempted to lie to the king?
- What was so scary about telling the king the truth about what his dream meant?
- How did Daniel show good will to the king, even though he had to tell him hard things?
- Why did Daniel's dream come true?
- How does Daniel show great courage?

For Younger Students:

- Who was tempted to tell a lie?
- Does a king want to hear good things or bad things about himself?
- What kind of things did the king's dream tell about himself?
- How did Daniel please God?
- Why did the king's dream come true?
- Which does God like—telling the truth or telling lies?
- Why was it hard for Daniel to tell the truth?
- Why was he glad he did tell the truth?

Beginning the Lesson:

When we were together before, we talked about how we have all been tempted to lie, and how we have told things that were not the truth. Can you think of a time when YOU told something that was not the truth? (Pause a moment.) What about Jesus? The Bible says He was tempted like we are (Hebrews 4:15). Did He ever tell a lie? Even a little lie? Even when He was a child? (The questions are more for thought than for response.)

1. Pilate questions Jesus and finds no fault in him. Jesus refuses the temptation to escape death by saying He is not the Messiah. He tells the truth about who He is.
Matt. 27:11-24, 35a, 50
2. Jesus told the truth when He promised that He would rise from the dead.
Matt 27:62-66; 28:1-17

Main Ideas to Emphasize:

- Pilate questioned Jesus and found no fault in Him.
- He could not find fault in Jesus because Jesus never did wrong, never sinned.
- He could not find fault in Jesus because Jesus never told a lie. He always told the truth.
- Jesus could have escaped death by just saying He was not the Messiah. But He would have been lying, for in truth He really was the Messiah. Jesus did not lie about it, even though it meant suffering and death.
- Jesus always did everything He promised to do. He promised that after 3 days, he would rise from the dead, and He did.
- He rose from the dead just as He said He would do.
- Jesus always told the truth, and He wants us to tell the truth, too.

Bible Memory Verse

Proverbs 12:22

Songs

Honesty Song - Review

Poem

Honesty Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Honesty

Review

Wednesday Evening

Abraham hides the truth

Read

Genesis 20:1-28

Questions for discussion

1. Have you ever told most of the truth, but missed part of the truth?
2. Why did Abraham lie?
3. What did God do?
4. Is it ever okay to lie, even to protect yourself?
5. Instead of lying to protect himself, what should Abraham have done?

Key concepts

When Abraham moved to Gerar, he told the people that his wife Sarah was his sister. This was only half of the truth. (She was, in fact, his half-sister — they had both had the same father.) Abraham did not tell the whole truth because he was afraid that if the people knew that Sarah was his wife, someone would kill him so they could have his beautiful wife. He decided to tell them that Sarah was his sister so they would treat him well.

The king wanted Sarah for himself, but God warned him in a dream that Sarah was already married, so the king gave Sarah back to Abraham, along with many gifts. God chose to protect Abraham, even though he didn't tell the whole truth. Abraham should have trusted that God would protect him, even if he did tell the truth about Sarah being his wife.

Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

Cover-up

For this activity you will need a container about 4-6 inches in diameter and no taller than 8-10 inches. Fill it with about 6 inches of water. If you have a large group you may want to divide into smaller groups and provide each group with the same set-up. Place the container in the center of the group. Have someone drop a nickel into the container, aiming to get it as close to the center as possible. Explain that the nickel is like a lie that you tell. Now give pennies to the others in the group. Each person has to try to cover up the lie (the nickel) by telling other smaller lies (pennies). How many pennies does it take to cover the nickel completely? How difficult is it to cover the lie when you don't have a lot of control over where the pennies land? How is that like lies that you tell to cover your tracks?

Tower of Flour

You will first need to spread newspaper over the area for this demonstration. Place the dime in the center of the bottom of a plastic cup. Pour flour into the glass being sure to pack it in firmly. Place the paper plate on top of the glass and turn them over together on the newspaper. Tap the glass gently, and carefully lift it off. The flour should remain standing in the shape of the glass with the dime on top. Explain that the dime represents the character quality of truthfulness. Let the group take turns slicing some of the tower away with a plastic knife but keeping the tower intact. This represents what happens when we tell lies. Our reputation is weakened. Others will not trust or respect us, and eventually the tower of trust falls. Notice how each time more flour is removed the dime's position becomes more precarious. Continue until the dime drops in. Ask the group what does the tower falling signify? (losing all trust).

Bible Connection

God cares for the righteous

Read

Psalm 52:1-7

Prior to reading the psalm, explain the history behind it to your children. David was running away from King Saul because he was afraid that Saul was going to kill him. Saul had turned away from following God. God had chosen David

to take Saul's place and this angered Saul. While David was hiding from Saul, he wrote this psalm.

Questions for discussion

1. Has anyone ever made you scared when they chased you?
2. Would you have been scared if you were David?
3. Why was David confident that the Lord would protect him?
4. Has anyone ever told a lie that got you into trouble?

Key concepts

David was confident that God would care for him because he was righteous. He believed that God would destroy the evil people who were chasing him and who loved falsehood (lies) instead of truth. It is easy to be afraid of people who lie or do other bad things. When you are tempted to be afraid of those who do wrong, remember this psalm of David and be confident, as David was, that God will care for you.

Bible Memory Verse

Proverbs 12:22

Songs

Honesty Song - Review

Poem

Honesty Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Honesty

Review

Thursday Evening

God destroys dishonest people

Read

Jeremiah 5:1-3,12-17

Note: The content in this story may be frightening for a young child.

Questions for discussion

1. What does God look for?
2. What makes God angry?
3. What did Jeremiah tell the people God would do to punish them for their dishonesty?

Key concepts

God was looking for honest people in the city of Jerusalem, but there weren't any – not even one. So God decided to bring their enemies against them to destroy their city, their crops, their flocks and herds, and even their families. God doesn't like lying at all!

Other Scriptures

Titus 1:2
John 8:44

Friday

Bible Memory Verse

Proverbs 12:22

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Proverbs 12:22

Songs

Honesty Song - Review

Poem

Honesty Poem - Review

Bible Connection

Lies are never worth it

Read

2 Kings 5:19-27

Note: To understand the preceding events, review 2 Kings 5:1-16. Explain to your children that after God healed Naaman of his leprosy, Naaman offered Elisha a gift of thanks. Elisha would not take the gifts, but his servant Gehazi had a different idea.

Questions for discussion

1. Why did Gehazi go back and see Naaman?
2. What did he tell Naaman?
3. Was this true?
4. What did Elisha ask Gehazi?
5. What did Gehazi tell him?
6. What was the punishment that God provided for Gehazi?
7. Is it ever worth telling a lie to gain something?

Key concepts

God used Elisha to help heal Naaman of his leprosy. After he was healed, Naaman was so thankful, he offered Elisha a gift, but Elisha refused to take it. Later, Elisha's servant, who was named Gehazi, ran after Naaman and pretended that Elisha had changed his mind and did want a gift after all.

Naaman happily gave Gehazi silver and clothing. But God showed Elisha everything that had happened, and how Gehazi had lied. The punishment for his deceitfulness was the dreadful disease leprosy – the very thing Naaman had been healed of. Gehazi not only lost the trust of his master, but he also lost his health.

Before we tell lies to get something we want, we must remember that lying will not please God or our parents. It is not worth gaining any material possessions if it means we lose the trust of others and cause God to be disappointed with us.

The I WILL's of Honesty

Review

Micaiah prophesies the truth

Read

1 Kings 22:1-23,29-37

Note: This is a long story that contains references to blood and death. You may want to read it ahead of time and paraphrase it for your children, or use the summary in the "key concepts" below.

Questions for discussion

1. What did most of the prophets tell the king of Israel (King Ahab)?
2. What did Micaiah tell King Ahab?
3. Why didn't Ahab like Micaiah?
4. What happened to Micaiah when he told the truth?
5. What happened to king Ahab in the battle?
6. Who told the truth?

Key concepts

The king of Israel (Ahab) and the king of Judah (Jehosaphat) were considering going to war together. Jehosaphat agreed to go if they first asked for God's direction. Ahab brought together many prophets and asked them if he should go to war. (A prophet is someone who speaks the word of God, as directed by His Holy Spirit).

Unfortunately, none of the prophets that Ahab asked were honest prophets. These dishonest prophets spoke their own words instead of God's words and told the kings they should go to war because the Lord would help them win the battle.

Jehosaphat recognized that these men were not true prophets and asked if there was a prophet of the Lord they could ask. Ahab said there was a prophet named Micaiah, but Ahab didn't like to listen to him because Micaiah never prophesied anything good about Ahab. Finally, Ahab did ask Micaiah if he should go to war.

Micaiah said, "Go, you will be victorious." Then Ahab said, "I really want to hear the truth." Then Micaiah told him the truth – that Israel would be like a flock of scattered sheep without a shepherd if they went to war. Micaiah also prophesied that a spirit would entice Ahab into battle by putting a lying spirit into the mouths of the prophets.

Ahab did go into battle. He disguised himself as a regular soldier, but he was still killed in the battle, just as Micaiah had prophesied. Remember that people will not always like it when you tell the truth, especially if you say things they don't want to hear. But it is important to speak the truth, no matter what others want you to say. Micaiah was even put into prison for speaking the truth. God is pleased when we speak the truth.

Forgiveness

Week 1

Parents

Parents' prayer

Although we can try to develop character in our children through various methods and programs, only God can bring about permanent change in a child's heart. Before you begin leading your child through this study on forgiveness, spend time alone with God interceding for His help. Ask Him to help you grow in the area of forgiveness, and to release His power in your child.

Use the sample prayer below to guide you in praying for your child's character development. If you prefer to personalize your prayers even further, read through the additional verses provided under "Scripture-guided prayer" for direction and inspiration.

Sample prayer

Loving and gracious Father, in You we have redemption through Jesus' blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of Your grace that You lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding (Ephesians 1:7-8). Lord, You are compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in love. You do not harbour Your anger forever and You do not treat us as our sins deserve. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is Your love for those who fear You; as far as the east is from the west, so far have You removed our transgressions from us (Psalm 103:8-12).

The depth of Your unending mercy and love is overwhelming. Thank you, Jesus, for enduring great pain and sacrifice so that our sins can be forgiven. Your death was the ultimate expression of Your love for us. Humanly, I lack the ability to love and offer grace as You do, but the promise of Your Spirit living in me gives me hope. I confess my hard-hearted tendency to harbour bitterness, anger and unforgiveness. I pray that out of Your glorious riches You would strengthen me with power through Your Spirit in my inner being. Lord Jesus, in faith I ask that You would establish Your presence in my heart. I need to be filled completely with You in order to experience Your power in a way that allows me to understand how wide and long and high and deep Your love is. I want to practically experience the love of Christ – the love that is beyond human understanding – so that I may be

filled completely with all the fullness of You (Ephesians 3:16-19). Thank you for the hope I have in You! Because You live in me, I can be a grace-filled, loving person who forgives with generous mercy (1 John 4:12-13).

Lord, I bring before You and I ask that You would give him/her a complete understanding of Your forgiveness. Help to repent of his/her sins with a godly sorrow as opposed to a worldly sorrow. May Your Holy Spirit fill 's heart with a desire to be forgiven, not just for his/her salvation, but because he/she knows how much his/her sin saddens You.

I pray that 's spiritual growth would not be hindered by the faulty belief that he/she is undeserving of Your forgiveness or by the bitterness of unforgiveness. Instead I ask that You would enable to embrace Your forgiveness and readily forgive others (1 John 2:10-11). Please send Your Holy Spirit to reveal any feelings of anger, rage, bitterness and resentment that is unknowingly keeping in his/her heart. I pray he/she would recognize these feelings as temptations from Satan to be unforgiving. At these times, may turn to You and ask for Your Holy Spirit to enable him/her to forgive others as You have forgiven him/her (Matthew 6:14-15).

We have been the recipients of much undeserved grace and forgiveness. Empower us with Your mercy so that we willingly put up with each other and bear with one another in love, forgiving as you forgive us (Colossians 3:13, Ephesians 1:6-7, Isaiah 55:7).

Please fill our home with Your gracious love so that we are tolerant instead of being easily angered and forgiving instead of keeping records of wrong (1 Corinthians 13:5). Please pour into our hearts Your Spirit of wisdom and patience to inspire us to overlook the offenses of others (Proverbs 19:11, Galatians 5:22). In Jesus name, I pray that our family would walk in the freedom of the forgiveness Jesus established for us on the cross, so our relationships are all a reflection of Your grace. Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for parents

Pray through one or more of the selected Scriptures under each heading. Focus on listening to God and allowing His Spirit to direct you as you pray.

Character focus

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate His love, grace, mercy and forgiveness.

Psalms 86:5-7 | Psalms 103:1-5 | Micah 7:18-19 | Ephesians 1:3-8
| Colossians 1:13-14

Heart search

Acknowledge when and how you are tempted to be unforgiving or hard-hearted.

Psalms 51:3-4,17 | Daniel 9:4-5,18-19 | Matthew 6:14-15 | Mark 11:24-25 | Ephesians 4:31 | 1 John 1:5-7,9-11

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have seen grace and forgiveness exhibited in your family.

Family requests

Ask God to enable you and your family to offer others forgiveness readily.

Proverbs 19:11 | Matthew 18:21-22 | Ephesians 4:2-3,32 | Colossians 3:12-14 | 2 John 5-6



Kids talk with God

Use this section to help your child learn to reach out to God in all things. The sample prayers all begin with "Dear God," however, you may use any other names for God your children are comfortable with (i.e. Jesus, Father God, Lord Jesus, Heavenly Father, Abba Father, Lord). If you prefer to help your child formulate an original prayer, you'll find inspiration in the verses listed in the "Scripture-guided prayer" section.

Sample prayers

Read Mark 11:25. Before you go to prayer, ask God to help you all do a "heart search," making sure that no one is holding grudges against anyone else.

Dear God, I am having a hard time forgiving for . Please give me Your love in my heart so I can forgive as You have forgiven me. Amen.

Dear God, I feel like hurting rather than forgiving him/her. Please help me to remember that it is Your job to discipline others and not mine. Amen.

Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus to die on the cross so that we can have our sins forgiven. Thank You for forgiving my sins. Please help me to forgive others as You forgive us. Amen.

Dear God, I am sorry I did . Will You please forgive me? Amen.

Dear God, I am afraid to ask forgiveness from . Please give me the courage to do the right thing. Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for children

Read through one of the selected Scriptures under each heading and help your children pray based on the verse you read. Encourage them to listen to God and allow His Spirit to guide them as they pray.

Character focus

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate His love, grace, mercy and forgiveness.

Psalms 86:5 | Psalms 145:8 | Micah 7:18-19

Heart search

Acknowledge when and how you have difficulty forgiving others.

Matthew 6:14-15 | Ephesians 4:31 | 1 John 2:9

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have seen forgiveness offered readily in your family.

Personal requests

Ask God to help you, your siblings and parents, to be willing to forgive others quickly, in all situations.

Ephesians 4:2-3 | Ephesians 4:32 | Colossians 3:12-14



Speak a Blessing

Your affirmation will give tremendous encouragement to your children as they strive become more forgiving. Use this section as a guide and "speak a blessing" when you see this godly characteristic in your son or daughter.

- Great job _____. you are forgiving as the Lord forgave you!
- Forgiving others can be hard _____, but God sure is happy when we forgive each other
- I see that you are stopping those bitter roots from growing up in our family/your friendships
- Good job putting up with what just did to you _____. You are sharing God's love
- When we forgive others quickly, it makes life so much more pleasant



Monday

Bible Connection

The parable of the lost sheep

Read

Luke 15:3-7, John 3:16 and John 1:12.

Questions for discussion

1. How many sheep did the man in the story own?
2. How many were lost?
3. What did the man do about the lost sheep?
4. What did he do when he found it?
5. What does it mean to repent?
6. Who does God want to be in heaven?
7. Pretend you are a sheep. Is God out looking for you or has He already found you?

Key concepts

Jesus told a story about a man who had 100 sheep. One day, the man lost one of his sheep. Even though he still had plenty of other sheep, the man would not stop searching until he had found the one that was lost.

Jesus told this story to help people understand how much celebration there is in heaven when one sinner repents. To repent means we let God know how deeply sorry we are for sinning. God loves the people He created so much that He offers eternal life to anyone who believes in His son, Jesus, and repents of their sins.

In the Bible it says, "... to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12). God wants everyone to become part of His family and to spend eternity in heaven with Him (1 Timothy 2:3-4, 2 Peter 3:9). Anyone who does not believe that Jesus is God's son and has not asked God to forgive their sins is like a lost sheep. God keeps hoping that they will notice that He is looking for them (Acts 17:27-28).

This may be an opportune time to share the message of salvation with your child.

Attention Grabber Activity

Gift of Forgiveness

Wrap a large empty box with a solid color paper and decorate with a bow. Explain that forgiving someone is like giving a gift to both the one who is forgiven and the one who is offering the forgiveness. Have each of the students sign their name on the package. You can do this before you start or you can have them sign when they are the forgiver. Pass the box around the room giving each child the opportunity to practice asking for and granting forgiveness using the box as a physical representation of the gift of forgiveness. These exchanges can be generic by simply saying "I'm sorry. Will you forgive me?" with a reply being "I forgive you." After everyone has had a chance to practice you can have another round where they can volunteer to ask or grant a true, heartfelt apology to a classmate of their choosing. Optionally, you could have the students write down things they are sorry for or things that have offended them and place them in the box before wrapping. When the exercise is over, discuss how different they might feel. Even if the apologies were generic, it might make it easier for them to ask for or grant forgiveness in the future.

Introduction

Opposites:

Forgiveness vs Bitterness

What does it mean?

Clearing the record of those who have wronged me and not holding a grudge.

Translation:

Perdón vs. Rechazo

Go to the root

Forgive comes from the Old English *forġiefan*. It was a compound word combining the prefix meaning "up" or "away" with the word meaning "to give". Can you see how forgive is giving up a claim against someone?

How do we Sign it?

Forgive

Bible Memory Verse

Eph 4:32

God's Way vs My Way

God's Way

I am demonstrating godly character when:

- I am willing to forgive others
- I am gracious and tolerant

- I am quick to admit I am wrong and say I am sorry
And God is pleased!

My Way

When I am tempted to:

- be unforgiving
- be vengeful, bitter or resentful
- refuse to admit that I am wrong or say sorry

I know that I need to go to God for help.

The I WILL's of Forgiveness

To practice Forgiveness I will:

- be quick to forgive
- not cover up my own wrongs but will be quick to ask for forgiveness
- not seek revenge
- respond kindly to those who hurt me
- not take up offenses for others

Monday Evening

Unforgiveness is unacceptable

Read

Matthew 18:21-35

Questions for discussion

1. What did the king do for the servant?
2. Was the servant thankful?
3. What did the servant do to his fellow servant?
4. What did the king do to the unforgiving servant?
5. Would you want God to put you in jail for not forgiving your brother, sister or friend?

Key concepts

There was a servant who owed a king a very large sum of money. He deserved to lose everything that he had to pay the debt, but the king had mercy on him and cancelled the debt.

But this same servant, who had had his debt forgiven, then went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him only a small amount of money. He grabbed him and began to choke him, saying, "Pay back what you owe me." He demanded that the man be thrown into jail until he could repay him. When the king heard what had happened, he was angry. He had the first servant put into jail himself.

The lesson to be learned is that we need to have mercy and forgive each other, as God is merciful in forgiving us. When we have unforgiveness in our hearts, we are like the unforgiving servant. God has forgiven all of our sins and we need to readily forgive others too.

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Kick-off craft

Make this beautiful "stained glass" cross, then hang it in a prominent place to remind your family to practice forgiveness. You will need transparent packing tape and tissue paper in a variety of colours.

"Stained glass" cross

Directions

1. Cut two strips of packing tape. Lay one strip on a firm surface, sticky side up. Lay the second strip across the first strip to form the shape of a cross.
2. Have your children rip up small pieces of tissue paper and stick each fragment to the cross. When the sticky surface area is covered in tissue paper, use two more strips of packing tape to seal the tissue paper between the two layers of the packing tape.
3. Help your children cut off the tissue paper that extends beyond the edges of the tape, then hang the finished cross on a window. You may also wish to make a cross-shaped paper frame for your "stained glass" cross. As the light shines through the cross, it serves as a reminder that, despite our sin, we can be beautiful when God's light shines through us.
4. Read Romans 12:17-19 aloud together: "Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord."
5. Pray with your children, asking that God would give them the strength to overcome evil with good instead of being overcome by evil (Romans 12:21). You may also have them select one of the prayers from the kids talk with God section.
6. Encourage your children to go and stand before your cross when they are angry or frustrated with a

friend or family member. Have them touch the insides of their palms – the spot where the nails would have pierced Jesus' hands.

Bible Connection

Forgiveness and a big number

Read

Luke 17:3-4, Matthew 6:12-15 and 1 John 4:19-21

Questions for discussion

1. Can you name something a brother/sister/friend does that constantly bothers you?
2. How many times are we supposed to forgive someone?
3. Is it hard to forgive someone over and over again?
4. What can you do if you need help?

Pray with your children, thanking God for His forgiveness. If your children need to release frustration prior to praying, have them squeeze their hands into a fist, touching the inside of their palms with their "nails." Then have them open their hands, "releasing" their hurt and pain to God, acknowledging that it is His job to "repay."

Other ideas

If you do not have the supplies required for a "stained glass" cross, help your children make a cross out of sticks or cardboard. Write your selected memory verse on a card and glue it on the cross.

Discussion

The Amish, Model of Forgiveness

In early October of 2006, a lone gunman entered a one-room Amish school house in Nickel Mines, Pennsylvania, ordered the boys and teacher to leave then shot the girls, killing 5 and leaving the others critically wounded. He shot himself as police stormed the building. But the real story was the forgiveness that the families of the slain and injured offered to the grieving gunman's family immediately. They attended his funeral and shared the proceeds from a donation fund set up to pay for the funerals and care of the victims. Marie Roberts wrote an open letter to her Amish neighbors thanking them for their forgiveness, grace, and mercy. She wrote, "Your love for our family has helped to provide the healing we so desperately need. Gifts you've given have touched our hearts in a way no words can describe. Your compassion has reached beyond our family, beyond our community, and is changing our world, and for this we sincerely thank you."

Three weeks after the shooting, "Amish forgiveness" had appeared in 2,900 news stories worldwide and on 534,000 web sites surpassing the coverage of initial tragedy. When asked why they were so forgiving, it was explained that forgiveness is a main tenet of their faith. They believe that their salvation is tied to their ability to forgive each other.

Several books and plays have been written about the events and a Lifetime Movie was made of one of the books and it became the highest-rated and most-watched original movie in Lifetime Movie Network's history.

Key concepts

The Bible tells us clearly that we are to forgive others many times, just as God does for us. The number we are given is 70 x 7. That is a pretty big number! The Bible also tells us we show others that we love God when we love our brothers. God's love in us can help us love and forgive others.

Bible Memory Verse

Eph 4:32

The I WILL's of Forgiveness

Review

Tuesday Evening

Condemnation is God's job

Read

Romans 12:17-21 and 1 Corinthians 4:5

Questions for discussion

1. When God forgives us, does it mean He thinks that what we did was okay?
2. When we forgive others, are we saying that their actions were right?
3. Why does God want us to forgive others when they have not asked for forgiveness or changed their ways?
4. Do we deserve to be forgiven?
5. Should God forgive us?
6. Who does God forgive?

7. Who should we forgive?

Key concepts

When we forgive someone, we are not saying that what they did was right. Rather, we are giving up our right to be angry about their wrong actions. We are leaving the problem and our hurt with God. God is the one who will judge what should happen to those who do wrong. Instead of paying back wrong for wrong, we should be kind (1 Thessalonians 5:15).

God has appointed certain people who are allowed to pass judgment in the form of discipline (Romans 13:1-6). Those people may be judges, police officers, government officials and parents of children. It is not up to children to discipline each other. God forgives everyone who asks Him and we need to forgive as well. The Bible says that if we do not forgive each other, then God will not forgive us.

Lots of Love

For this activity, you will be making a paper heart chain. Prepare the paper ahead of time so that the students are not expecting more than one heart. Using a letter size sheet of paper, fold in half top to bottom, then in half top to bottom again. Open it up and turn it landscape. You now have 4 vertical sections. Accordion fold on the scored lines. Draw a heart on the paper making sure that the heart goes from edge to edge. Now you are ready to begin with the class. Begin by discussing how forgiveness comes from your heart. Now begin cutting out the heart. You will cut along these lines, being careful to leave just a tad of the edge connected on each side so that the hearts are connected. Talk about the things you have to get rid of in your heart in order to have room for love and forgiveness as you cut away the paper. When all the extra paper is cut away, ask the class how much forgiveness you have in your heart. Explain that it is like love. You will never run out of love or forgiveness. When you give some away there's always more left. Open up the chain and show that you now have even more love and forgiveness!

Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Blessing instead of cursing

Have your children practice thinking of a blessing they can say when other children say or do unkind or hurtful things.

Then when these things do happen, your children will be more prepared to bless instead of "curse," helping them to fulfill 1 Peter 3:9 which states: "Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing."

In difficult situations, have your children pray for the person who they need to forgive and also say good things about them. Gently remind your children that they are being like Jesus when they forgive the other person – even when the other person hasn't asked for forgiveness.

Read Romans 12:21: "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

Let your children know that when they "bless and do not curse," they are overcoming evil and winning the battle against Satan, who would prefer them to curse the other person.

Bible Connection

Hearts like stone

Read

Leviticus 19:17-18, Matthew 18:35 and Proverbs 4:20-23

As you read these verses aloud, ask your children to listen for the word "heart." You may also choose to have a stone ready for each child to hold during your discussion.

Questions for discussion

1. What does a stone feel like?
2. How can our hearts be like stone?
3. Can a hard heart be willing to forgive?
4. Is it easy to forgive when someone has wronged you?
5. Why should you forgive?
6. Has anyone ever forgiven you?
7. How did it feel to be forgiven?
8. Who can help you to forgive?
9. When you dislike someone, you don't want to be near him or her. How can you begin to show love from your heart to someone you dislike?
10. Do you really dislike the person or do you dislike their actions?
11. How does forgiving help you and the other person who has wronged you?

Key concepts

The opposite of love is hate. To hate someone means that we have an extremely strong feeling of dislike for him or her. We usually try to stay away from things or people we hate. A grudge is when we remember the wrong someone

did to us and we are unfriendly towards that person. In Proverbs God tells us that we will be healthier if we guard our hearts from hate and holding grudges. If we do not forgive from our hearts, then God will not forgive us. God commands His people to love others as they love themselves (Galatians 5:14, James 2:8).

Bible Memory Verse

Eph 4:32

The I WILL's of Forgiveness

Review

Wednesday Evening

Overlook offense

Read

Proverbs 19:11
Proverbs 15:1
Proverbs 17:1
Proverbs 12:16
Proverbs 10:19
Proverbs 8:32-35

Questions for discussion

1. What is an offense?
2. What kinds of things do people do that offend you?
3. What does it mean to overlook something?
4. Is it easy to overlook an offense?
5. How can you overlook an offense when it is hard?
6. What wise advice did King Solomon give in the Proverbs about overlooking offenses?
7. Would you rather live in a peaceful home or in a home where there is fighting?
8. What does it mean to "hold" your tongue?
9. Who gave Solomon wisdom?
10. What does following God's wisdom and advice give us?

Key concepts

An offense is when someone does something that hurts our feelings or makes us angry or irritated with him or her. Many times, an offense is something small and should not be a reason to argue or fight with others. To overlook something means to not see or notice, or to ignore it. The Bible says that if we can overlook an offense it is to our glory. This

means God will be pleased with us when we ignore the wrong that others do.

In the book of Proverbs, Solomon, a very wise king, gives some advice on overlooking offenses. To summarize, Solomon told people to speak gently, because speaking harshly stirs up anger. He said that wise people are patient and willing to overlook offenses, but fools get annoyed easily.

Solomon also advised people to speak few words. He told people to "hold their tongues," because when we speak it is easier to sin. Solomon also pointed out that it is better to live in a home where people get along and you have very little to eat than to live somewhere where there is lots of food and people are fighting. God gave Solomon wisdom. When we follow the wise advice God gives us in the Bible, God promises to bless and guide our lives.

Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

Bitter roots

Have your children taste a bitter, non-poisonous root such as ginger. Alternatively, use some horseradish, lemon juice or lime juice. Have something sweet on hand for your children to eat to remove the bitter taste. Then read Hebrews 12:14-15.

Questions for discussion

- Do you prefer a bitter or a sweet taste?
- How did you make the bad taste in your mouth go away?
- How can we make sure no bitter roots grow up in our family and among our friends?

Key concepts

One of Satan's favourite tools to cause discord in families and churches is the root of bitterness. It happens easily: one person does wrong to another without realizing it and then the person who feels wronged holds a grudge. Pretty soon everyone is so busy being bitter towards each other, they forget to love each other.

If we miss the grace of God, we harbour grudges and do not forgive. On the other hand, when we share the grace of God with others, we readily forgive before the other person asks our forgiveness.

Holding grudges and not forgiving puts a bad taste in our relationships like the (bitter tasting food). When we forgive others, it is like the (sweet treat). When you ate the, it helped to take the bad taste out of your mouth. Just as the sweet taste took away the bitter taste, so God can remove unforgiveness from our hearts and replace it with love.

Relevant Scripture

Hebrews 12:14-15

Bible Connection

Turn hate into love

Read

Genesis 4:1-16, 1 John 3:11-15 and 1 John 4:19-21.

Questions for discussion

1. Can you forgive someone when you hate him or her?
2. Why did Cain hate his brother?
3. Did Cain have a right to be angry with his brother?
4. Why did God choose Abel's sacrifice and not Cain's?
5. How do you change your hate and anger into love and forgiveness?

Key concepts

Cain and Abel were brothers. One day, both brothers presented offerings to God. God accepted Abel's offering, but not Cain's. This made Cain very angry, so angry that he killed his brother Abel because he was jealous that God favoured Abel's sacrifice over his own (1 John 3:12). After Cain killed Abel, God told Cain that he would be removed from His presence because of his sin.

We might also be tempted to allow our anger or hate to cause us to harm someone else. This does not please God. In order to remove the anger and hate from our hearts, we need to ask and allow God to put His love in our hearts. God wants us to love others as He loves us.

Bible Memory Verse

Eph 4:32

The I WILL's of Forgiveness

Review

Thursday Evening

A son asks for forgiveness

Read

Luke 15:11-24

Questions for discussion

1. How did the son sin against his father?
2. How did the father know the son was sorry about what he did?
3. Was the son expecting to be forgiven?
4. Who did the son apologize to for his selfish behaviour?

Key concepts

In this story that Jesus told, a son asked for the money that his father had put aside for him as his inheritance. The son then left home and spent all of the money having fun. When he had no money left he found a job feeding pigs. It was an awful job and the son became so hungry he wanted to eat the pigs' food. The son realized how unhappy he was and thought that if he could get work as a servant for his father, taking care of his animals, life would be better.

The son realized that he had sinned against God and against his father. He returned home and asked for forgiveness. The father was overjoyed when his son came home and understood how sorry his son was for what he had done. The father forgave his son graciously and welcomed him back into the family.

This is how God forgives us when we say we are sorry for our sins. He welcomes us into His family.

Discussion

The 4 A's of Apologizing

Here's a guide for helping to remember how to apologize. It is more than just a simple "I'm sorry".

1. **Admit** what you did wrong. You need to be specific about what you did. "I borrowed your sweater without asking first."
2. **Apologize** for how your choice affected the other person. "I'm sorry that it wasn't in your closet when you needed it. Will you forgive me?"
3. **Ask** for what you can do to make it up to the person. "I know I can't undo what I did. I can hand wash your sweaters for you or something else if you'd rather."

4. **Alter** your choice in the future. "I promise to ask next time."

Ask the class to come up with some examples. When you have come up with several, ask them if forgiveness is automatic. (No) Bring in the character trait of trust. Sometimes an apology is not accepted because there is no trust that the words mean anything. Explain that in this case, it will take proving the words with future behavior in order to earn forgiveness.

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Friday

Bible Memory Verse

Eph 4:32

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Eph 4:32

Bible Connection

Hidden secrets

Read

Hebrews 4:13, Psalm 32:3-5, Proverbs 28:13 and 1 John 1:8-10

Questions for discussion

1. Have you ever felt tired or "heavy" because you did something wrong but didn't want to tell anyone about it?
2. Have you ever had to keep a secret about a surprise present or birthday party? If so, when? Was it hard to keep this secret from others?
3. How much work is it to keep a secret from someone?

4. Does it make sense to keep something secret from God?
5. Is God willing to forgive us when we sin?
6. Why might someone not be willing to ask for forgiveness?

Key concepts

God knows about everything we do, even if it is done in secret. Keeping our wrongdoing secret and being unwilling to ask for forgiveness from God or others can cause us to feel weighed down inside, as if we are carrying a heavy load. God is ready and willing to forgive us when we come to Him and say we are sorry.

He says that we will not experience blessing if we do not say we are sorry for the wrong things that we do.

The I WILL's of Forgiveness

Review

Friday Evening

The story of Jesus and forgiveness

The following interactive story will help you explain to your child what Christ accomplished through His death on the cross. Although the selected Scriptures are often associated with Easter, the story of God's forgiveness is appropriate at any time of the year.

Fifteen different readings, with questions for discussion, are available below. Choose only twelve readings in total, working through one or two readings each day.

To help engage your children, purchase twelve plastic eggs with hollow centers. Put a Bible verse and a symbolic item appropriate to each reading inside each "resurrection egg" - or simply put the items and verses in an empty egg carton. Commercial "resurrection eggs" are also available at Christian bookstores or online.

When you have completed your readings, be sure to ask your child if they want to have Jesus as their best friend and have Him forgive their sins and become the leader of their lives. If they do make this choice, take the time to help them personalize a prayer, requesting forgiveness and God's lordship in their lives. After they have prayed, assure them of God's love, forgiveness and leadership.

Welcome King Jesus!

Read

Matthew 21:1-11, John 12:12-19 and Matthew 26:3-5.

Symbol: palm branches (Take long feathery leaves from a house plant or garden plant and press them in a book until they are dry, or cut palm branches from construction paper.)

Questions for discussion

1. What do we do in our country to show great honour to people?
2. Why do you think the people were honouring Jesus?
3. Do you get upset when you see someone getting the attention that you would rather have?
4. Who was upset by all the attention Jesus was getting?

Key concepts

Jesus was hailed as king as He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. The people spread their cloaks on the ground and cut palm branches and laid them on the road. This was a tradition that was reserved for very important people or royalty. This made the religious leaders jealous enough that they made plans to kill Jesus.

Prophecy fulfilled: Zechariah 9:9.



Forgiveness

Week 2

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

Fun with laundry

On laundry day, take some very dirty whites and show them to your children. When you do the laundry, add bleach or fabric whitener to the load so that the clothes come out bright white. Have your children compare the clothing items before and after they have been washed.

Then use 1 John 1:8-9 and Isaiah 1:18 to explain the beauty of God's forgiveness to your children. Take some time to ask your children if they want to have stained hearts or washed hearts. Pray a kids talk with God prayer together.

During the course of your study on forgiveness, when your children sin, suggest that you pray together so that God can "wash" the sin from their hearts.

Relevant Scripture

1 John 1:8-9
Isaiah 1:18

Bible Connection

A very special meal

Read

Mark 14:12-26 and Luke 22:7-23

Symbol

A piece of bread or dry cereal

Questions for discussion

1. What do we do to celebrate special occasions?
2. What occasion was Jesus celebrating with His disciples?

Key concepts

On birthdays and holidays we often gather together with friends and relatives and eat food. Before Jesus was

arrested, He had a special meal with His disciples to celebrate the Passover.

While they were eating, Jesus showed his disciples some bread and wine and said that the bread should remind them of His body and the wine should remind them of His blood. This was because Jesus was going to sacrifice His body through dying on the cross. Because Jesus died for us, God said that our sins would be forgiven if we believe in Jesus.

Bible Memory Verse

Eph 4:32

The I WILL's of Forgiveness

Review

Monday Evening

The beautiful gift

Read

John 12:1-8

Symbol

A tiny sample bottle of perfume or olive oil

Questions for discussion

1. What do we do at our home to make people feel special?
2. What did Mary do to make Jesus feel special?
3. Who got upset by this?
4. Why did Jesus say she had anointed Him?
5. What do you think Jesus' special task was?
6. Do your parents ever give you a job that you would prefer not to do?
7. Do you do it anyway?
8. Do you think Jesus wanted to die?

Key concepts

At a dinner party, a woman came and poured very expensive perfume on Jesus' head. She did this to honour Jesus, but Judas complained that she had wasted it as it could have been sold and the money given to the poor.

Jesus corrected those who objected to her actions, because He said it was a beautiful thing she had done. He also said that it was to prepare His body for burial. During Jesus' time on earth, the custom was to put spices, perfume and oil on a person's dead body before putting it in a tomb or grave.

Oil was also used as a part of a special custom called "anointing." A small amount of oil was poured on someone's head to show that he had been chosen to do a special task. Usually only kings, prophets or priests were anointed. Christ means "anointed one."

Jesus had been sent by God, His Father, to die on the cross to save us from our sins. Jesus knew that He was going to be nailed to the cross and die so that our sins could be forgiven. He knew this was the special task God had given Him. He had the power to avoid this cruel death, but chose to go through it all so we could have forgiveness for our sins.

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

God's sponge

Where there are children, there will be spills, be it food, milk or water. Take advantage of a "spill" that takes place in your home by telling your children about "God's sponge."

As you are cleaning up the mess, equate the spill with someone doing something wrong – something that hurts you. Use an example that your children will relate to, such as name calling, teasing, pushing or taking a toy without permission.

Explain how to respond in these situations by conveying the following message:

What we do in response to the wrongdoing – the "spill" – is our choice. One option is to splash the spill back into the face of the one who has done wrong.

This is like trying to make someone "pay" for the wrong they have done.

The other choice is to get out "God's sponge" and quietly wipe up the mess without making the other person feel bad about hurting us. Forgiveness happens when the person apologizes for doing wrong and we forgive them. Grace happens when we forgive a person who does not acknowledge that they have done wrong. God offers us both grace and forgiveness.

Relevant Scripture

Nehemiah 9:17

1 Thessalonians 5:15

Matthew 6:14-15

Bible Connection

Betrayed by a friend

Read

Matthew 26:14-16

Symbol

Dimes or silver coins

Questions for discussion

1. Have you ever has a friend do something unkind to you or say they didn't want to be your friend anymore?
2. How did you feel?
3. How do you think Jesus felt when one of His best friends decided to become an enemy instead?

Key concepts

One of Jesus' disciples, Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and asked, "What are you willing to give me if I hand Jesus over to you?" They gave him 30 silver coins. Judas valued money more than he valued his friend Jesus. Jesus had been very good to Judas, but Judas was not good to Jesus. Judas was not a faithful friend.

The leaders and priests were jealous of Jesus because the people were honouring Jesus as they would honour a king. Jesus claimed to be king, but not the king of Israel – rather the king of our hearts.

The leaders and priests did not understand this. They were afraid that if everyone followed Jesus, they would lose their jobs as religious leaders. So they devised a plan to kill Jesus. They accused Jesus of doing many wrong things, including

claiming He was God. Jesus did not defend Himself. This made them angrier and even more determined to kill Him.

Prophecy fulfilled: Zechariah 11:12.

Bible Memory Verse

Eph 4:32

The I WILL's of Forgiveness

Review

Tuesday Evening

Bible Connection

Deserted by a friend

Read

Mark 14:27-31 and 66-72.

Symbol

Rooster feather or plastic rooster

Questions for discussion

1. Are you a friend of Jesus?
2. Was Peter Jesus' friend?
3. Why did Peter deny Christ?
4. What are some ways we can "deny" Christ?

Key concepts

Peter was a strong and confident man. Jesus even changed his name from Simon to Peter and the name Peter means "rock." But when Jesus was arrested and things got scary, even Peter pretended he didn't know Jesus because he was afraid of what the people might do to him if he admitted he was one of Jesus' friends. On three different occasions people asked Peter if he was a friend of Jesus, and each time he said that he didn't know Jesus at all.

After Peter had "denied" Christ three times, a rooster crowed. Then Peter remembered that he had told Jesus that he would never deny Him. Peter was very disappointed in himself and he cried.

It is easy for us to say Peter was a "chicken" or a "scaredy-cat," but we need to be careful we don't deny our friendship

with Jesus like Peter did. We can "deny" Jesus by choosing not to tell people we go to church and believe in Jesus.



Attention Grabber Activity

Living in love

Following the directions of Luke 17:3, come up with a variety of scenarios whereby your children can practice "speaking the truth in love." Here's an example:

First question: "Let's pretend another child has grabbed the toy you were playing with right out of your hands. What should you say to this boy or girl?"

Answer: "That wasn't nice to grab the toy out of my hands. May I have the toy back please?"

Second question: "If the girl/boy will not give the toy back, what should you do?"

Answer: "Go and find an adult and explain the situation."

Third question: "If the girl or boy apologizes, what should you say to them?"

Answer: "I forgive you. Thank you for giving my toy back. Would you like to play with it when I am done?"

Relevant Scripture

Luke 17:3

Heavy luggage

Tell your children that you are going on a journey. Load a tool belt full of tools, pack a backpack with cans of food and bottles of water and fill a suitcase with heavy clothing. Have your children dress in heavy clothing as well. Then take turns carrying all of these heavy items around until your children understand what the phrases "a burden too heavy to bear" and "my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer," mean (Psalm 32:4).

Questions for discussion

- How does it feel to wear all these extra clothes and to carry all this extra baggage?
- How can sin make us feel heavy?
- What can you do to remove extra weight?
- What can you do to remove the heaviness of sin?

- How do we feel after God has forgiven our sins?

Read Psalm 32:1-5 and explain that King David felt weighed down by his sin until he confessed his sins. Just as taking off the heavy clothing and setting down the luggage is a big relief, so we are refreshed and filled with joy when God forgives our sins. At the end of Psalm 32 David says, "Rejoice in the Lord and be glad, you righteous; sing, all you who are upright in heart" (Psalm 32:11).

When we confess our sins and choose to do right instead of wrong, we feel much happier than when we hold on to sin.

Other ideas

If you have read *Pilgrim's Progress*, re-enact Christian's journey, ending with his arrival at the cross where his burden (of sin) falls from his back.

Relevant Scripture

Psalm 38:4

Bible Connection

Teased and tormented

Read

Mark 14:53-65 and 15:16-20.

Symbol

Purple cloth and/or a crown of thorns (made from a branch from a rose bush)

Questions for discussion

1. What do people do to hurt your feelings?
2. How do you feel when people make fun of your name?
3. How do think Jesus felt when the people mocked Him?
4. How would you feel with a crown like this on your head?

Key concepts

The soldiers put a purple robe on Jesus and a crown of thorns on His head. They mocked Him and teased Him, saying that He was the king of the Jews. They also beat Him on the head with a stick over and over again.

Many people said things about Jesus that weren't true. Jesus did not even try to defend Himself. But when He was asked if He was Christ, the Son of God, He did reply, saying, "Yes, it is as you say." People also spit in His face and slapped Him.

There are two kinds of pain. One is physical pain, like when you hurt yourself by falling down. The other kind of pain is

emotional pain: when your feelings or your heart is hurt by the unkindness of others. Jesus had both kinds of pain.

Prophecy fulfilled: Isaiah 53:4-7.

Bible Memory Verse

Eph 4:32

The I WILL's of Forgiveness

Review

Wednesday Evening

Bible Connection

Sentenced to death on a cross

Read

John 19:17-27

Symbol

A small cross (made out of two twigs or matchsticks tied together with fine thread)

Questions for discussion

1. How are criminals punished today?
2. How were criminals punished during Jesus' time on earth?

Key concepts

Today, criminals are put in prison. The worst criminals are put in "solitary confinement," meaning they are put in prison alone. In Jesus' time, Romans often killed criminals by nailing them onto a cross to die.

They would do this as a warning to others who might also be doing wrong. The criminals would often be beaten and forced to carry their own cross to the place where they would be crucified. Death on the cross was used for the worst criminals. It is a very painful way to die.

Punished in our place

Read

John 19:16 and 20:24-31

Symbol

Nails

Questions for discussion

1. Would you ever offer to take someone else's spanking or punishment?
2. What is the worst punishment that you can think of?
3. How do you think it would feel to have nails driven through your hands and feet?

Key concepts

Jesus loved us so much that He went through this punishment so we wouldn't have to be punished for our sins. When Jesus went through the pain of being we deserve for our sins. We all deserve to be punished for our sins, but Jesus took the punishment for us.

Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

Clean hearts

You will need some white cotton fabric (an old washcloth or pillowcase works well), washable felt tip markers, bleach, water and a bowl.

1. Premix a solution of equal parts of water and bleach.
2. Cut a heart shape out of easily-bleached cotton fabric. Have your children colour all over it with washable felt tip markers. As they are colouring, tell them that the heart represents our hearts and the felt marks represent sin. Talk about what sins they might be.
3. Next, dip the heart in the bleach solution. As you do so, read 1 John 1:8-9: "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."
4. Explain that God promises to take our sins that are as red as the red felt tip marker and make them white like snow, or as bright as the freshly bleached fabric heart.
5. Next, read Isaiah 1:18: "... Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool." Take a

minute to ask your children if they want to have stained hearts or washed hearts.

6. Pray with your children.

Allow your children to keep their fabric hearts as a reminder of God's promise to forgive sins. During the week, when your children sin, ask if they have put some marks on their heart. Suggest that you pray together so that God can "wash" the sin from their hearts.

A picture of pain

The story of the Cross is probably the best object lesson on forgiveness available. To reinforce your teaching on forgiveness, take your children to see an Easter play that portrays the crucifixion – provided they have the maturity to understand it without being traumatized. For young ones, a children's movie featuring the Easter story may be more suitable.

Questions for discussion

Ask your children the following to help them further understand the significance of Jesus' sacrifice:

- What is the worst pain you have ever had?
- Which is worse, pain in your heart or pain felt in your body?
- Did Jesus have only body pain or did He have pain in His heart, too? Why?
- How much do you think it hurt to have nails put through Jesus' hands and feet? (John 20:24-27)
- Do you think it hurt Jesus to have His friends turn away from Him? (Matthew 26:56)
- Did Jesus deserve to be punished like this? (2 Corinthians 5:21)
- Why did Jesus do it? (John 3:16)
- What did Jesus say about those who killed Him? (Luke 23:34)
- Would you like to ask Jesus to forgive your sins?

Ask the Holy Spirit to be present when you offer your children an opportunity to ask God for forgiveness of their sins.

Relevant Scripture

John 20:24-25,27
Matthew 26:56
2 Corinthians 5:21
John 3:16
Luke 23:34

Bible Connection

Sharing the spoils

Read

Luke 23:34 and John 19:23-24.

Symbol

Dice

Questions for discussion

1. What do you use dice for?
2. What did the soldiers use the dice for?

Key concepts

The soldiers divided up Jesus' clothes among themselves, but because one of the pieces of clothing was a seamless undergarment, they decided to play a game to see who got to keep it.

Prophecy fulfilled: Psalm 22:18.

Bound by love alone

Read

Luke 23:36-43

Symbol

A sign saying, "This is the king of the Jews"

Questions for discussion

1. Do you think Jesus could have come down off the cross if He had wanted?
2. Why didn't He?
3. Would it have been tempting for Jesus to jump off the cross to prove to everyone that He was God?
4. If Jesus had chosen to get off the cross and not die, would our sins still be forgiven?
5. Which of the criminals was forgiven?

Key concepts

When a criminal was crucified, the list of crimes he committed would be written on a sign and placed above his head. The sign placed above Jesus' head read, "This is the king of the Jews." Many people came by and made fun of Jesus, saying, "If you really are God, then save yourself."

One of the criminals being crucified near Jesus said, "If you are the Christ, then save yourself and us, too."

The other criminal said, "Don't you fear God? We deserve to die as we have done wrong, but Jesus has done no wrong."

Then he said to Jesus, "Remember me when You come into Your kingdom." Jesus answered, "Today, you will be with Me

in paradise," meaning that he would be in heaven with Jesus. It might have been tempting for Jesus to prove He was God by getting off the cross, but then He would not have completed the very important job of dying to obtain forgiveness for everyone's sins.

Bible Memory Verse

Eph 4:32

The I WILL's of Forgiveness

Review

Thursday Evening

Bible Connection

A bitter drink

Read

John 19:28-30

Symbol

A sponge, or some vinegar to taste

Questions for discussion

1. What do you say when you need a drink?
2. What kind of drink do you prefer?
3. What did they give Jesus to drink?

Key concepts

When Jesus asked for a drink, they gave Him vinegar to drink. John says that Jesus, knowing all that was to happen and that Scripture (prophecies from the Old Testament) would be fulfilled, asked for a drink.

Prophecy fulfilled: Psalm 22:15 and Psalm 69:21.

Ensuring His death

Read

John 19:31-37

Symbol

A spear (Use pliers to poke the dull end of a sewing needle into the end of a twig. You could also use a little cocktail spear.)

Questions for discussion

1. What did the soldiers usually do to make people on the cross die sooner?
2. What did the soldiers do to make sure Jesus was dead?

Key concepts

The soldiers usually broke people's legs to make them die on the cross sooner, but they did not break Jesus' legs. To confirm that Jesus was dead, they stuck a spear in His side instead. The Old Testament said that not one of Jesus' bones would be broken and that He would be pierced.

Prophecy fulfilled: Psalm 34:19-20, Zechariah 12:10 and Isaiah 53:5.

Friday

Bible Connection

Miraculous signs

Read

Matthew 27:51-54

Needed:

A length of fabric torn in two

Questions for discussion

1. What would you think if you were standing in the church and you saw a curtain tear in two when no one was around? What if there was thunder and an earthquake too? What if graves opened up and people came out and walked around?
2. How would you have felt if you were the centurion guarding the body of Jesus on the cross?
3. What do you do at night when you are scared, hungry or need something?
4. Who comes to help at any time of the night?
5. Who else can you go to for help and comfort?

Key concepts

In the temple, there were two rooms: the outer room, and the inner room. The walls were made with thick curtains. The curtain that separated these two rooms was the curtain that was torn in two. Only once a year, the high priest entered the inner room. In the inner room, he would sprinkle the blood he got from a lamb that had been sacrificed.

When Jesus died, it was no longer necessary for the high priest to go into the inner room and sacrifice on behalf of the people to have their sins forgiven. Jesus did that for us. Jesus was the sacrifice! When the curtain was torn in two, the earth shook and rocks split. Holy people came out of their graves and walked around. How amazing! The centurion who was guarding Jesus as He hung dying on the cross was terrified and exclaimed, "Surely, He was the Son of God!" We know Jesus was the Son of God. We also know that we can go to God for forgiveness and help any time we are scared.

Bible Memory Verse

Eph 4:32

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Eph 4:32

The I WILL's of Forgiveness

Review

Friday Evening

The tomb is empty!

Read

Matthew 27:57-28:4 and Mark 16:1-15

Symbol

A rock and/or linen strips

Questions for discussion

1. Who rolled the large stone away?
2. Why was the large stone rolled away?
3. Where did Jesus go?
4. What do you think Mary thought?

Key concepts

In the days when Jesus lived, people were buried in tombs and wrapped in linen strips. The entrance to the tombs would be closed with a very large stone.

There was a huge stone placed in front of Jesus' tomb. It was so large it would have been impossible to move the stone without many men.

When Mary went to look at the tomb after Jesus body had been laid there, she discovered the stone had been rolled back. She also saw an angel there.

The soldiers who were guarding the tomb were so afraid when this happened that they shook! When she looked in the tomb, Mary saw the linen strips just lying there. Jesus had gone!

An angel shares wonderful news

Read

Matthew 28:5-10 and Luke 24:6-12

Symbol

A tiny angel

Questions for discussion

1. What would you think if you saw an angel?
2. What do you think the women said to each other as they ran to tell the disciples?

Key concepts

When the women went to look for Jesus, they found His tomb was empty. They saw the linen strips just lying there and Jesus was gone! They also saw an angel there. The angel told them that Jesus had risen from the dead, just as He had told them He would.

Prophecy fulfilled: Jesus Himself prophesied of His resurrection in Matthew 20:17-19.



Contentment

Parents

Parents' prayer

Although we can try to develop character in our children through various methods and programs, only God can bring about permanent change in a child's heart. Begin this study on contentedness by inviting God to help by giving you guidance and wisdom, and by releasing His power in your child.

Use the sample prayer below to guide you in praying for your child's character development. If you prefer to personalize your prayers even further, read through the additional verses provided under "Scripture-guided prayer" for direction and inspiration.

Sample prayer

Jehovah Jirah, You are Lord, my provider. You provide us with plenty of food and fill our hearts with joy (Acts 14:17). Those who seek You will lack no good thing (Psalm 34:10). Thank you for generously providing for our physical needs, but more importantly, for satisfying us spiritually. I praise as David did, "I have seen You in the sanctuary and beheld Your power and Your glory. Because Your love is better than life, my lips will glorify You. . . . My soul will be satisfied as with the richest of foods, with singing lips my mouth will praise You" (Psalm 63:2-3,5).

But Lord, too often I am so consumed by "things" in my life. I desire the things of this world and become so busy trying to maintain all the possessions You have allowed me to accumulate that I forget to take time to pray. I find myself running around "accomplishing much," instead of focusing on the key to satisfaction in life, which is remaining in Your presence. Please forgive me. I need to learn the lesson You taught Solomon after he tried finding satisfaction chasing after worldly pleasures. As he concluded at the end of Ecclesiastes: "Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).

I pray that I would fear You and keep Your commandments. My heart's desire is to be consumed by my love for You, not the things of this world.

For my child, I pray that You would fill 's heart with the presence of Your Holy Spirit and allow him/her to taste the joy of knowing You. Bring about a desire in to pursue godliness as opposed to riches. Give him/her an understanding that accumulated wealth will permit him/her no sleep and that riches can be hoarded to the harm of their owner (Ecclesiastes 5:3-14). I pray that will experience the fullness and joy of Your Spirit and that he/she will seek Your presence to gain satisfaction and refreshing instead of fulfilling his/her needs through worldly goods. Please put healthy fear of You in 's heart, that he/she may live life to the full and rest content, untouched by trouble (Proverbs 19:23). In Jesus' name, I pray that You would disentangle us from the possessions we honour and cherish. I want to pray as David did: "Whom have I in heaven but You? And earth has nothing I desire besides You. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever" (Psalm 73:25-26). We want to live with You as our priority so we can live with true contentment, joy and peace. Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for parents

Read and pray through one or more of the selected Scriptures under each heading. Focus on listening to God and allowing His Spirit to direct you as you pray.

Character focus

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate the way He cares for you and your family.

Psalm 63:1-5 | Psalm 65:9-13 | Psalm 84:10-12 | Philippians 4:19 | Matthew 6:25-27

Heart search

Acknowledge the areas where you lack contentedness.

Deuteronomy 8:2-5 | Isaiah 55:2-3 | 1 Timothy 6:6-10 | 1 Timothy 6:17-19 | 1 John 2:15-17

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have seen contentedness exhibited in your family.

Family requests

Ask God to help you and your family to be content in all circumstances.

Psalm 17:14-15 | Psalm 145:15-19 | Psalm 147:7-9,12-14 | 1 Timothy 6:6 | Hebrews 13:5-6

Kids talk with God

Use this section to help your child learn to reach out to God in all things. If your child is ready to formulate their own original prayer, use the verses under “Scripture-guided prayer for children” for inspiration.

Sample prayers

Dear God, I want something that I cannot have. Help me to be content and thankful for what You have given me. Amen.

Dear God, I am frustrated that my friend/brother/ sister has been blessed with and I have not. Help me to be happy for him/her. Help me to be thankful for what you have given me. Amen.

Dear God, please show me if there are ways I am discontent. Please help me to be thankful instead. Amen.

Dear God, I have been (jealous, envious, dissatisfied, discontent, comparing myself to others, hoarding my possessions, gluttonous, controlled by desire to have). Please forgive me and send Your Holy Spirit to help me be strong and to withstand temptation. Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for children

Read through one of the selected scriptures under each heading and help your children pray based on the verse you read. Encourage them to listen to God and allow His Spirit to guide them as they pray.

Character focus

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate the way He cares for you and your family.

Psalm 34:10 | Psalm 84:11 | Psalm 107:8-9

Heart search

Acknowledge that sometimes you are not content.
Luke 12:27-31 | 1 Timothy 6:7-10 | James 3:16

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have seen contentedness exhibited in your family.

Personal requests

Ask God to help you, your siblings and parents to be content in all situations.

Psalm 107:8-9 | Psalm 147:7-9 | 1 Timothy 6:6

Speak a Blessing

Your affirmation will give tremendous encouragement to your children as they strive to grow in the area of contentedness. Use this section as a reminder to “speak a blessing” when you see this godly characteristic in your son or daughter.

- _____ is a girl/boy who says “no” to wanting more things. He/she is content with _____.
- What a wise girl/boy is to not crave more _____.
- How blessed it is to have a girl/boy who shares rather than keeping his/her things just for him/herself.

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

A harvest of contentment

Directions

1. Prepare in advance by cooking some spaghetti or similar noodles. Allow them to cool, then have your children try to untangle them.
2. While they are busy doing this, tell them the story in Mark 10:17-27 about the rich young man. Explain that the noodles represent the things they own. Just as it is difficult to untangle the noodles, so it is difficult to disentangle us from our possessions.
3. Next, have the kids paste dry noodles onto a paper plate or poster paper. Post it on a wall with Proverbs 21:26 written on it: “All day long he craves for more, but the righteous give without sparing.”
4. As the children are working on their poster, read all or parts of 2 Corinthians 9:7-11.

Throughout the coming days, as you see your children being content in any way, allow them to colour a piece of dry spaghetti with a marker. At the end of the week, see how colourful a “harvest” your children have produced by how many pieces of spaghetti were coloured on their poster.

Other ideas

If you don't have pasta, you can also use small pieces of string or yarn for this exercise.

Introduction

Opposites:

Contentment vs Covetousness

What does it mean?

Realizing that true happiness does not depend on material conditions.

How do we Sign it?

Content

Bible Memory Verse

1 Tim 6:8

God's Way vs My Way

God's Way

I am demonstrating godly character when

- I am content with what I have
- I am thankful in all situations
- I am happy for others when they have good things
- I am willing to share what I have

And God is pleased!

My Way

When I am tempted to

- be jealous or envious of others
- be dissatisfied or discontent
- compare myself to others
- not be willing to share what I have

I know that I need to go to God for help

The I WILL's of Contentment

To practice Contentment I will:

- be thankful for what I do have
- not complain about what I don't have
- not always ask for "one more"
- value people above things
- want less and give more

Who or what owns your heart?

Read

Ecclesiastes 5:10-20

While reading this Scripture to your child, you can replace the words money, wealth, goods, etc. with the item your child mentioned he/she loves. For example: Replace these words with the word ice cream, jelly beans or toys.

Emphasize verses 18-20

Questions for discussion

1. Have you ever loved something so much that you wanted more and more?
2. What was it?
3. Is there something right now that you want more and more of?
4. How would it make you feel if you could not have it?
5. Would you rather have gladness of heart or frustration?
6. How was the man frustrated by having so much wealth?

Imagine that you had a yard full of _____. There was so much that there was no way you could eat it all/play with them all. Imagine all the neighbourhood kids coming by and eating your ice cream/playing with the toys and there is no way you can stop them.

1. What would you need to do in this situation in order to be relaxed instead of frustrated?
2. If you went out and screamed at them all to get away from your stuff, how would they feel and what would happen?
3. If you said, "Welcome to my party," and shared the _____, what would happen?
4. How would the others feel?
5. How can we be glad in heart with what we have?

Key concepts

Solomon was a very rich man. In accumulating all his riches, he learned some important lessons. He learned that the more money people had, the more they wanted. He found that rich people became frustrated because they didn't get a lot of sleep – maybe they had to work hard to care for their things, or maybe they couldn't sleep for fear someone would take their things. Solomon also pointed out that you can't take any wealth with you after you die.

Solomon was also wise. He decided that instead of worrying about being rich, he would try to enjoy life and allow God to give him gladness of heart. We can be glad in our hearts by being thankful for what we have instead of seeking more and more. We can also be happy in our hearts if we share what we have instead of keeping it just for ourselves.

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Contentedness challenge

Play this game while you are driving or standing in a line up. Ask each other, "Can you be content without?" The person can respond honestly but has to conclude their answer by saying, "If I have food and clothing, I can be content with that." (1 Timothy 6:8) or "God is my Master" (Matthew 6:24) or "I choose to be godly and content with what I have." (1 Timothy 6:6) Take turns asking the question and answering. You may be surprised that it is harder for parents to answer honestly than it is for their children.

Relevant Scripture

1 Timothy 6:6-8
Matthew 6:24

Bible Connection

Gifts from God

Read

1 Timothy 6:6-10, 17-19, Psalm 49:16-20 and Ecclesiastes 5:15.

Questions for discussion

1. What are things we need to live?
2. What does a baby bring into the world?
3. What does a person take out of this world when they die?
4. Are you content to give away something you love?
5. Just because you love something, does it mean you need it?
6. What do you gain when you are happy with what you have?

Key concepts

The basic things we need in order to live include love, food, shelter and clothing. God says that if we have food and clothing, we should be content. Anything beyond that is a gift from God and we should be thankful! When we are happy with God's gifts, we have peaceful and contented hearts.

Bible Memory Verse

1 Tim 6:8

The I WILL's of Contentment

Review

Tuesday Evening

Cravings in the desert

Since this is a long story, use the summary in the "key concepts" section to help you paraphrase and shorten it for younger children, or use a children's Bible. Add humour where you can. For example, the people said, "Hey Moses, this is too much meat - it's coming out our noses!"

Questions for discussion

1. How would you feel when you want something and can't have it?
2. Have you ever been tired of eating a certain food? If so, what was it?
3. If you were in the desert for holidays and all Mom and Dad were feeding you every day was pancakes, what would you say?
4. Once you were tired of eating pancakes, what would you wish you could eat instead?
5. Read Numbers 11:4-35 or Psalm 78:18-31. What did the Israelites crave?
6. Why was God angry with the Israelites?
7. Which food did God send for the Israelites to eat?
8. What kind of meat did God send?
9. How did God punish the people for not being content with the manna?
10. What did the Israelites name the place where the people died of the plague?

Key concepts

To envy means that you want what someone else has. Craving means to long for or desire something. God provided

manna for the Israelites when they were in the dessert, but they got tired of eating the same food all the time and began to crave the foods they had eaten when they were slaves in Egypt. They wanted fish, meat, cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions and garlic.

They moaned and groaned and complained. God became angry with the Israelites because he had provided them with manna for food, and they were not thankful. God told Moses to tell the people that He would give them meat – not just a little meat, but enough meat that it would come out of their noses.

They would be given meat to eat for a whole month. So, God brought quail from the ocean. The quail was piled up on the ground as thick as a kitchen table is off the floor (three feet).

Then, God was angry with the Israelites for craving food other than the manna, which he had provided. He punished them by sending a plague, which killed many of them. They called the place where they buried the people who died because they had craved other food, Kibroth Hattaavah, which means “graves of craving.”

.....

Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Caught in a trap!

This hands-on option helps illustrate the truth of 1 Timothy 6:9-10 – that a desire for riches is one of Satan’s traps.

Needed

A mousetrap, bait and stuffed animals

1. Set up a mousetrap, complete with bait.
2. Have your children choose a stuffed animal and ask what their animal loves to eat.
3. Put this item in the trap. Pick up the stuffed animal and pretend that it is sniffing or trying to eat the bait. (Make sure you are the one to do this, and instruct your children to keep their fingers clear!)

Note: If you prefer, you can also use a roll of paper towels to “sniff” the bait and allow the paper towels to be

caught in the mousetrap.

The questions for discussion are provided to increase dialogue and learning. For a Biblical perspective, read or paraphrase 1 Timothy 6:9-10. Paul uses the illustration of a trap to explain that the desire for more money and getting rich is one way that Satan can trap us and cause us to wander away from God.

Conclude by praying that God would help you see Satan’s trap of discontentment and greed before you get caught in it.

Questions for discussion

- Have you ever seen how an animal trap works? If so, how does it work?
- Would the trap work if the animal did not try to get the bait?
- Does it hurt an animal to get caught in a trap?
- Did you know that one kind bait Satan uses, when he tempts us to sin, is the bait of always wanting more?
- What kind of bait do you think Satan would try to use on you?
- How do you think that loving money or the things that money can buy could tempt you to sin?
- How can we be wise and not fall into Satan’s traps?

Relevant Scripture

1 Timothy 6:9-10

Bible Connection

Mine, mine, mine!

Questions for discussion

1. What are some of the first words a baby learns to say?
2. Are we born wanting to share with others or is it something we have to learn to do?
3. What is one thing that you have difficulty sharing with others?
4. *Read Proverbs 21:25-26, Proverbs 11:24 and 1 John 3:17-18.* What does God say we should do – crave what another has or give to others?
5. Which of these attitudes do you think please God?
6. What does the Bible say will happen to the one who doesn’t share?
7. What does the Bible say will happen to the one gives to the needy?

Key concepts

Some of the first things most babies say are the words, “no” and “mine.” We are not born with a natural desire to share.

The Bible says that those who give things to others freely will get even more, while the ones who refuse to share will become poor. God is pleased when people show love through sharing what they have and He promises to reward their generosity.

Bible Memory Verse

1 Tim 6:8

The I WILL's of Contentment

Review

Wednesday Evening

Peace and contentment 101

Questions for discussion

1. What is the cause for most of your fights with your brother, sister or friends?
2. Why do you think this is?
3. Do you know what it means to covet?
4. *Read James 4:1-3.* Why does James say these people were fighting and quarrelling?
5. Why did God choose not to answer their prayers?
6. *Read James 3:16-18.* Who tempts us to be selfish?
7. What does it mean to be peace-loving?
8. What would someone who loves peace do if another wanted something they had?
9. What does considerate mean?
10. What does submissive mean?
11. Is it still possible to get into a fight if we are thinking of the other person's feelings and letting them have what they want?
12. Who can help you have an unselfish attitude?

Key concepts

James says the reason we fight and quarrel is because we desire to have the things others have.

This passage also talks about "gimme-gimme" prayers. "Gimme-gimme" prayers are selfish prayers. It is not good to pray, treating God like He is a vending machine who will give out things just to make us happy. When we ask God for things, we need ask with the right reasons. If our only motivation for asking God for something is for our own

pleasure, we need to rethink our prayer to make sure it is not a "gimme-gimme" prayer.

Satan tempts us to be selfish, but when we accept God's wisdom, choose to be considerate of others and let others have their way, we keep the peace.



Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

Rotten envy

This activity illustrates the truth of Proverbs 14:30, that envying what others have can rot the attitude of our hearts.

Needed

You will need a cup, a white egg and a can of cola pop.

Instructions

1. Have your children immerse an egg in cola overnight.
2. The next day, have your kids try to brush the egg with toothpaste to remove the stain on the egg. Use the discussion questions to explain that even though the pop is good tasting, it did some damage to the eggshell.
3. Read Proverbs 14:30. Most kids have been told many times that too much sugar can cause cavities in their teeth. Explain that when we envy "stuff," it can rot the attitude of our hearts, just as the cola will rot the eggshell. (If left longer, the cola will eat away at the eggshell.)
4. Use the questions listed below to further your discussion.
5. Pray a simple prayer to conclude, asking God to help you be content in life circumstances and with what you have. Ask Him to give you a hunger for healthy foods and for knowing Him better.

Questions for discussion

- Do you like the taste of pop?
- How did the pop damage the eggshell?
- Do you ever envy anyone? If so, in what way?
- How does envy damage your heart?

Relevant Scripture

Proverbs 14:30

Bible Connection

Mountainside snack attack

Read

Matthew 15:29-39

Questions for discussion

1. How hungry do you think you would be if you had not eaten for three days?
2. Why do you think the people in this story did not go home after one day if they were hungry?
3. What kind of miracles was Jesus doing?
4. What kind of food is in the mountains?
5. How much food did they have?
6. How many people were fed?
7. How much food was there left over?

Key concepts

We can imagine that the people were very hungry, as they had not eaten for three days. They were so amazed at the miracles Jesus was doing – the lame walked, the mute talked and the blind could see after Jesus healed them – that they were not concerned about food.

Jesus was concerned for the people and wanted to feed them before He sent them back to their homes. The disciples could only find seven loaves and a few small fish, but Jesus did another miracle and provided food for 4,000 people. After all of the people ate, there were still seven basketfuls of food left over. Jesus cares about the spiritual part of us and the needs of our physical bodies.

Bible Memory Verse

1 Tim 6:8

The I WILL's of Contentment

Review

Thursday Evening

For problems with greed

Biblical basis

Ecclesiastes 1:12-18; 2:1-16

Suggested disciplinary action

Take the child who is being discontent outside to chase the wind. Have them run until they are tired. After running outdoors, take time to read from Ecclesiastes. Explain that the wisest man who ever lived worked hard to get more wisdom, knowledge, houses, pleasure, food, gardens, animals, servants, gold and silver. After getting everything he ever dreamed of, he was still not satisfied and said that all his efforts has been “chasing after the wind.”

Whenever a child is envious or jealous of another, coveting things, is gluttonous, discontented or dissatisfied with something, ask them if they are “chasing the wind” as a reminder to check the attitude of their heart.

Affirmation

Encourage your child to reflect on what he/she should be thankful for. Have him/her quote a paraphrase of Psalm 23:1, “The Lord is my shepherd, I have all I need.”

Pray together, asking God to help him/her to be content.

Alternatively, read Proverbs 21:26: “All day long he craves for more, but the righteous give without sparing.”

Pray with your child, asking God to teach him/her the “secret of being content” and to remove his/her cravings for things.

Friday

Attention Grabber Activity

Chasing after the wind

This activity is based on Ecclesiastes 2:1-11 and Psalm 39:6. On a windy day, go outside and ask your kids to try and catch the wind. Take nets, buckets, a kite and the questions for discussion with you. After you have tried to catch the wind, enjoy spending some time playing with the wind using the kite instead. Thank God for His gift of the joy in being physically active. Use the questions for discussion while you are enjoying the outdoors or after you get back.

Questions for discussion

- Can you feel the wind?
- Can you smell the wind?
- Can you taste the wind?
- Can you hear the wind?
- Is the wind real?
- How come you cannot catch it?
- Is there anything that you want that is like chasing the wind?

Relevant Scripture

Ecclesiastes 2:1-11
Psalm 39:6

Bible Memory Verse

1 Tim 6:8

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to me today? How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

1 Tim 6:8

The I WILL's of Contentment

Review

Friday Evening

For problems with selfishness

Biblical basis

Ecclesiastes 5:11-12

Suggested disciplinary action

Sometimes, wealth breeds discontentment. Bless your child by removing their "riches." Remove toys that are causing discontentment or strife in your home. For example, a child may own ten, twenty or even fifty Matchbox® cars. For our children, owning this many cars brought out the worst in them. They hoarded their cars and were extremely possessive.

The older one feared losing even one of his cars. When we took away all but one car for each child, almost all of the fighting stopped. Ecclesiastes 5:11-12 teaches that as goods increase, so do those that consume them and that the abundance of a rich man allows him no sleep.

Affirmation

Encourage your child to reflect on what it means to have plenty and what it means to be "in want."

Read Philippians 4:12

Pray with your child, asking God to teach them the "secret of being content" and to give them a generous heart.

Obedience

Parents

Parents' prayer

God knows the disappointment you experience when your child is disobedient. Adam and Eve's first act of defiance toward God - their Creator - was to disobey His direct command. Throughout history, God has tirelessly called humanity to be obedient to Him. Use this prayer to ask God to help you be patient as you strive to teach your children to be obedient. Alternatively, formulate your own prayer based on the verses suggested under "Scripture-guided prayer for parents."

Sample prayer

Loving Father, Your Son Jesus was so obedient that He humbled Himself to death on the cross (Philippians 2:8). His prayer was, "Yet not as I will, but as You will" (Matthew 26:39). Jesus was so passionate about obedience that He said, "My food . . . is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work" (John 4:34). His time on earth provides a real-life example for us to follow.

I desire to be like Jesus, but so often fall short of my goal. Some days I imagine You are up in heaven, thinking, "How many times do I have to tell him/her?" Please forgive my lack of diligence in following Your directions.

I ask that You would give me a humble, obedient spirit that desires to wholeheartedly obey Your commands. I pray with David, "Oh that my ways were steadfast in obeying Your decrees! . . . Teach me, O Lord, to follow Your decrees; then I will keep them to the end. Give me understanding and I will keep Your law and obey it with all my heart" (Psalm 119:5,33-34). I pray my children will see in me a passion for doing Your will that inspires them to follow You wholeheartedly.

Your heart is filled with pain over sin, yet You are gracious, slow to anger and abounding in love (Genesis 6:5-6, Exodus 34:6, Psalm 145:8). I find it grievous and frustrating when my children do not obey me. Please fill me with Your Spirit to enable me to provide correction as You would, in a gracious and loving way. After all, it is easier for my children to obey me when I give advice gently and patiently, than when I am in "drill sergeant mode."

When my children are disobedient, please give me Your wisdom so that I may "govern" them in a discerning way,

distinguishing between right and wrong (1 Kings 3:9). Help me to notice and give them appropriate recognition when they do obey.

I pray for my child, . I don't want him/her to do the right thing just because he/she has to. Rather, I ask that You would bless with an obedient heart that desires to obey You and others in authority. Please help to keep his/her way pure by living according to Your Word. May be diligent in seeking You with all of his/her heart so that he/she will not stray from Your commands.

I pray that because has hidden Your Word in his/her heart, he/she would be kept from sinning against You (Psalm 119:9-11). As grows up, I pray he/she would guard Your teachings as the apple of his/her eye. Bind them on _____'s fingers, Lord, and write them on the tablet of his/her heart (Proverbs 7:1-3).

We read in 1 John 2:5-6, "But if anyone obeys His word, God's love is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in Him: Whoever claims to live in Him must walk as Jesus did." This is my prayer for our family – that we will obey Your Word and walk as Jesus walked, in complete obedience to You. Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for parents

Read and pray through one or more of the selected Scriptures under each heading. Focus on listening to God and allowing His Spirit to direct you as you pray.

Character focus

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate His love and guidance.

Exodus 15:1,11-13 | Psalm 73:23-26 | Psalm 139:7-10 | Isaiah 30:18-21 | John 16:12-15

Heart search

Acknowledge when and how you fall short of obeying God.

Deuteronomy 30:15-20 | 1 Samuel 15:22-23 | Proverbs 13:13 | Isaiah 1:18-20 | 1 John 2:3-4

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have seen obedience exhibited in your family.

Family requests

Ask God to help you and your family to be obedient in all circumstances.

Deuteronomy 30:5-10 | Psalm 25:4-5 | Psalm 119:44-48 | John 14:23-26 | Proverbs 16:9,20

Kids talk with God

Use this section to help your child request God's help in growing in the area of obedience. The sample prayers all begin with "Dear God," however, you may use any other names for God your children are comfortable with (i.e. Jesus, Father God, Lord Jesus, Heavenly Father, Abba Father, Lord). If your son or daughter is ready to learn how to formulate their own prayers, use the verses under "Scripture-guided prayer for children" for inspiration.

Sample prayers

Dear God, it is hard to obey sometimes – like right now. Please help me to obey my parents, as I know this pleases You. Amen.

Dear God, when I feel like disobeying, please help me to think of the promise You gave us in the Bible – when I obey my parents, things will go well for me (Jeremiah 7:23). Amen.

Dear God, please send Your Holy Spirit to help me be obedient to You, my parents and teachers. Amen.

Dear God, please help me to listen to You and my parents so that I can be obedient. Amen.

Dear God, help me to hide Your word in my heart so that I won't sin against You (Psalm 119:11). Amen.

Dear God, I am sorry that I have disobeyed my parents. Please forgive me and help me to obey next time. Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for children

Read through one of the selected Scriptures under each heading and help your children pray based on the verse that you read. Encourage them to listen to God and allow His Spirit to guide them as they pray.

Character focus

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate His love and guidance.

Psalm 119:73 | Proverbs 2:6 | Psalm 73:23-24

Heart search

Acknowledge when and how you are disobedient.

1 Samuel 15:22 | Proverbs 13:13 | Isaiah 1:18-20

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have been obedient.

Personal requests

Ask God to help you and your siblings to be obedient.

Psalm 119:9-11 | John 14:23,26 | Ephesians 6:1-3 | Proverbs 4:10-13

Speak a Blessing

God will reward your efforts to teach your child to obey promptly. Here are some ideas that will help you celebrate your child's progress and encourage them to keep working on this important attribute.

- _____ is such an obedient boy/girl.
- I really appreciate how quickly you obey, _____.
- God is pleased with such immediate obedience, _____.
- Thank you for remembering my instructions, _____. They will be a garland to grace your head and a chain to adorn your neck.
- Thank you for obeying, _____; it sure makes life easier for all of us when we obey.

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

Keys to Obedience

Review the five "I Wills" of obedience before using this object lesson to reinforce each point.

Imagine a door with five locks—you must turn all five locks before opening the door. Similarly, there are "five keys" to obedience. Missing one key makes your obedience incomplete. Use this template to make a set of five keys. Punch holes in the top of each key, and tie them together with string or pipe cleaner.



Show your keys to a parent, teacher, or guardian, and explain your commitment to each key.

Needed

String or pipe cleaner, hole punch, scissors

Points to Ponder:

- If your parent tells you to take out the trash today and you do it tomorrow, is that obedience?
No. Obedience should be immediate.
- If you take out most of the trash and leave part of it, is that obedience?
No. You should obey completely.
- If you take out the trash with a bad attitude, is that obedience?
No. You should obey cheerfully.
- If you see another trash bag and ignore it, is that obedience?
No. You should go the “extra mile.”
- If you are told to dump the trash in your neighbor’s yard, would that be obedience?
No. You should not obey a wrong command.

Introduction

Opposites:

Obedience vs Willfulness

What does it mean?

Quickly and cheerfully carrying out the direction of those who are responsible for me.

Translation:

Obediencia vs. Obstinación

Go to the root

Obedience comes from the Latin words *ob* and *audio* and means literally “to hear”. Can you see how a willful person doesn’t listen to authorities?

How do we sign it?

Obey

Nature Story

Obedience Nature Story (VID) (6:39)

Poem

Obedience Poem (VID) (5:36)

Discussion

Overview

Obedience is not just about rules, regulations, and punishment. It is really about cooperating with one another in order to have a safe and orderly school, home, and community. Think of the peace and freedom you enjoy when neighbors respect one another and obey the law—and the chaos that follows when there is no law and order.

Obedience makes teamwork and cooperation possible by clarifying your duty and doing it to the best of your ability.

Character Quiz:

1. Why is it important to follow the rules?
2. Who are some people that are in charge of you?
3. Why is it important to follow instructions with a good attitude?
4. Showing obedience means:
 - a. you do whatever you are told
 - b. you never do what you want
 - c. you cooperate the best you can.
5. You must obey, even if you are told to do something wrong: YES? or NO?
6. If you are told to do something wrong, who can you go to for help?

Bible Memory Verse

2 Cor 10:4-5

God’s Way vs My Way

God’s way

I am demonstrating godly character when:

- I obey God
- I obey my parents and teachers
- I obey quickly and willingly

And God is pleased!

My way

When I am tempted to:

- disobey God
- disobey my parents
- obey with a reluctant attitude

I know that I need to go to God for help.

The I WILL's of Obedience

To practice Obedience I will:

- obey my authorities immediately
- have a cheerful attitude
- complete all that I am expected to do
- not complain
- go the "extra mile"

Monday Evening

THE River Rescue

Abe was a hard-working and obedient young man. The owner of a large farm hired him to build a riverboat, float it down the Mississippi River to New Orleans, and sell vegetables from the farm. Abe obeyed the farmer's instructions and sold everything before returning home.

One day, Abe was preparing for another trip down the river. He and some friends chopped down several trees and built a flatboat. They also made a canoe to go with the flatboat, and two of the young men jumped into the canoe to try it out, even though Abe warned them not to use the canoe.

The canoe rocked from side to side, and the river was high. Someone yelled, "Abe, those men don't know how to steer the canoe!"

Abe stopped to look. Soon the canoe dumped the two men into the swirling water. They would drown if someone didn't act quickly. Abe spotted a tree in the middle of the river. He ran down the bank, yelling, "Swim for the tree! Do it now!"

The men reached the tree safely, but how would they get back to shore? Abe tied a rope around a log and asked his friend Jim to ride it down the river to the two men. Those on shore would pull all three back on the log.

Jim climbed onto the log, and Abe slowly let out the rope. When Jim reached the men clinging to the tree, he looked down at the water and became scared. Instead of helping the other two onto the log, he grabbed the tree and held on. Now three men were stuck in the river!

Abe pulled the log back to shore. "I'll go get them," he said as he climbed onto the log. The men on shore let out the rope, and the current quickly pulled the log down stream. As Abe got close to the tree, he threw a rope to Jim, but Jim missed the rope!

Without hesitating, Abe threw his rope again and lassoed the tree! Abe pulled himself up river until he reached the men stuck in the tree. All three climbed onto the log with Abe, and the men on shore pulled them back to safety.

As they warmed themselves around a fire, one of the men turned to Abe and said, "I'm sorry we ignored your instructions. Thanks for coming to get us."

Abe grinned and said, "I'm glad everyone is okay. I'm sure we all learned something today."

Bible Connection

A sullen and disobedient king

Read

Deuteronomy 20:16-18 and 1 Kings 20:26-43.

Questions for discussion

1. What were the instructions God gave to King Ahab?
2. What do you do when your parents discipline you and you think you don't deserve it?
3. What did King Ahab do?
4. Did he deserve to be punished?

Key concepts

God went with the Israelites into battle and promised to fight for them and give them victory. He did this to show other nations that He is the Lord. His plan was to have Israel clear all of the foreign nations out of the land that He had promised them as a gift.

King Ahab chose to let the king of the Arameans (Ben Hadad) stay alive, rather than putting him to death as God had commanded. God sent Elijah to show Ahab how unhappy He was with what Ahab had done. Ahab became sullen and angry because he didn't like his discipline.

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Rules Keep Us Afloat

Prepare an orange by writing some classroom rules on it with a permanent marker. Show the orange to the class and ask if an orange floats or sinks in water. Have a container nearby, preferably one that they can see through so that they can see it float and demonstrate that it does, indeed, float. Ask a student to come forward and read what is written on the orange. (For non-readers, you can read what you have written.) Now peel the orange and explain that you are removing the rules from the orange. Ask the class again if now that it is peeled it will sink or float. Put the peeled orange in water. It will sink. You can discuss how our rules keep us afloat and help us. Sometimes it feels like rules are a skin that is too tight but when we get rid of the rules there is chaos. Using the rules that you wrote on the orange, describe what the classroom would be like if those rules didn't exist. Would there be chaos or learning? Fun or fear?.

Songs

Obedience Song (VID) (7:59)
O-B-E-D-I-E-N-C-E

Poem

Obedience Poem - Review

Discussion

Nell, Model of Obedience

In 1968, Nell, of Los Altos, CA was 5 years old when she saved her mother's life by being obedient. They were in their backyard playing when the ground caved in landing her mother in the septic tank. Nell's mother told her to get the garden hose to help get her out of the hole. Nell was obedient and did exactly as she was told. Her mother used the hose to keep herself afloat by wrapping it around herself. She then gave Nell instructions to go to the phone and dial the operator to summon help.

(Back then there were no cell phones or 911.) Again, little Nell did as she was told. When the operator asked for her address, she gave it accurately and the firemen came and rescued her mother. Had Nell not been obedient at any step of the rescue, her mother may not have been saved in time. Fortunately, Nell was in the habit of obeying and in this case it was life-saving.

Bible Connection

Adam and Eve tangle with a snake

Read

Genesis 2:15-17, Genesis 3.

Questions for discussion

1. What did God ask Adam and Eve not to do?
2. What did they do?
3. What did God do when Adam and Eve disobeyed Him?
4. What are some things Mommy and Daddy ask you to do?
5. Do you always obey?
6. Do you think God is happy when you disobey?
7. What do you think God would want Mommy and Daddy to do when you disobey?

Key concepts

God gave Adam and Eve a wonderful garden, filled with many fruit trees. He told Adam and Eve that they could eat any fruit they wished except for the fruit of one tree – the tree in the middle of the garden. But Satan wanted Adam and Eve to disobey God. One day, Satan convinced Eve to try the “forbidden” fruit, and Adam ate some, too. Instead of doing what God asked them to do, they did what Satan wanted them to do.

Adam and Eve felt very badly after they had disobeyed, but God had to discipline them anyway.

He had to send them out of the beautiful garden. Just as God disciplined Adam and Eve, He expects parents to discipline their children to help them learn to obey.

Bible Memory Verse

2 Cor 10:4-5

The I WILL's of Obedience

Review

Tuesday Evening

Abraham obeys when it is difficult

Read

Genesis 12

Questions for discussion

1. What did God ask Abraham to do?
2. Did he go?
3. Because Abraham obeyed, what did God promise to do for him?
4. Do Mommy and Daddy ask you to do things that are hard for you to do?
5. What do you think your parents will do for you when you obey?

Key concepts

God asked Abraham to take his family and move to an unknown country. Abraham followed God's instructions, even though it was hard. Because Abraham obeyed, God promised to make Abraham into a great nation, and He did.

God rewards obedience generously! You can also expect that we, as your parents, will reward you when you are obedient.

Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Freedom

Begin this activity by relating the following 2 stories:
I once heard a story about a stubborn sea captain. One night at sea, this captain saw the lights of another ship heading toward him. He sent a message to the other ship. "Change your course 10 degrees north."

The reply came back. "Change your course 10 degrees south."

The ship's captain answered. "I am a captain. Change your course north."

Another reply came back. "I'm a Seaman First Class. Change your course south."

The captain was not used to being told what to do and fired back, "I said change your course north. I'm on a battleship." The reply came back. "And I say change your course south. I'm in a lighthouse."

Picture a kite flying in the wind. The kite strains against the string fighting to break free. At last, the string breaks the kite flies wildly, free of its restraint until it drops to the ground unable to fly without being tethered.

Discuss with the students the point of these 2 stories. What do they have in common? What would you do if you had no rules? To reinforce the points, give the students a handout of a simple line-drawing of a kite divided into the traditional 4 triangles. Have the students write down 4 rules, 1 in each kite quadrant, that keep them safe. Let the students share the rules they have written. For older students, you may want to have them brainstorm rules or laws that they think should be enacted.

Bible Connection

A disobedient wife

Read

Genesis 19:15-29 and 2 Peter 2:4-10.

Questions for discussion

1. What did the angels instruct Lot and his family to do?
2. What did Lot's wife do?
3. After Lot's wife disobeyed, what happened to her?
4. If Mom and Dad tell you not to peek inside a gift, is it hard or easy to obey?
5. If Mom and Dad tell you to , is it easy to obey?
6. What does it mean to "despise authority"?
7. What does God say about those who ignore instructions?
8. What do you think God wants us, your parents, to do if you do not obey?

Key concepts

Lot tried to honour God in everything he did and to live how God wanted him to. But Lot and his family lived in a city filled with very wicked people. Two angels came and told Lot to take his family and hurry out of the city, and not to look back, as God was about to destroy the city.

Lot's wife disobeyed the instructions given by the angels and looked behind her as they were fleeing the city. God dealt with her disobedience severely, turning her into a pillar of salt.

Just as obedience is very important to God, obedience is very important in our family. God warns that there will be punishment for those who “despise authority,” and protection for those who are righteous (2 Peter 2:4-10).

Bible Memory Verse

2 Cor 10:4-5

Songs

Obedience Song - Review
O-B-E-D-I-E-N-C-E

Poem

Obedience Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Obedience

Review

Wednesday Evening

Jonah learns to obey the hard way

Read

Jonah 1-2

Questions for discussion

1. What did God ask Jonah to do?
2. What did Jonah do instead?
3. What happened to Jonah when he tried to run away from God?
4. Do you feel like running away and hiding when Mom or Dad ask you to do something?
5. What would God want you to do?
6. Do you think God would send you into the belly of a whale for a time out?

Key concepts

God gave Jonah a job to do. He wanted Jonah to go to the city of Nineveh and warn them that God was planning to discipline all the people there because of their evil

behaviour. But instead of doing what God asked, Jonah ran away. He joined some sailors on a boat headed for Tarshish.

God knew where Jonah was and chose to discipline him. When God sent a frightening storm, Jonah realized the storm was his fault. Jonah told the sailors to throw him overboard to save their own lives.

Instead of letting Jonah drown, God sent a big fish to swallow him. Jonah spent three days and nights the belly of the fish, which was like having a long “time out” in a very smelly place! When Jonah was in the fish, he prayed and told God that he was sorry for not obeying. God let Jonah out of the fish, giving him another chance. This time Jonah was ready to obey God. He went and told the people of Nineveh that God wanted them to stop doing wrong.

Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

Red Light, Green Light

Line up everyone at a start line. Designate a finish line about 20 - 25 feet from the start. The “traffic light” stands at the finish line. When the traffic light says “green light”, everyone can start walking toward the finish line. When the traffic light says “red light” everyone must stop immediately. If anyone keeps walking during a red light, they are sent back to the start to start over. The first to reach the finish line is the winner.

Mom says / dad says

Modify the popular game of Simon Says by replacing the phrase “Simon says” with “Mom says” or “Dad says.”

The rules of the game are as follows: The game leader (mom or dad) calls out a simple instruction such as “Touch your toes.” If the game leader precedes their instruction with the words “Mom says” or “Dad says,” the children playing the game need to complete the action called out by the game leader. If a child has not been listening closely and follows a directive that was not preceded by “Mom says” or “Dad says,” they are “out.”

Usually, anyone “caught out” in this way has to sit out the remaining rounds of the game until only one child – the winner – is left. However, you may decide to skip this step to ensure that all children remain in the game for each round.

Bible Connection

Moses obeys, but only halfway

Read

Numbers 20:2-13

Questions for discussion

1. Have you ever been asked to put away your toys, but you only put away a few?
2. Have you ever washed your hands, as you were asked, but didn't use any soap?
3. Can you think of other times when you didn't do exactly as you were told?
4. Were your parents happy or unhappy when they found out?
5. Do you think that obeying only part-way is a sin?
6. What did God ask Moses to do?
7. What did Moses do instead?
8. Did this make God happy?
9. What did God do?
10. Do you think God is pleased when parents discipline their children when they don't obey?

Key concepts

Moses was a good leader and most of the time he did exactly what God asked him to do. Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt and into the desert, just as God had instructed him.

Unfortunately, when they got to the Desert of Zin, the people started to complain that there was no good food and no water to drink. Moses and Aaron prayed and asked God what to do. God promised Moses that if he gathered the people together and spoke to the rock, God would make water pour from the rock for the people to drink.

Moses did gather the people together, but instead of speaking to the rock, Moses hit it twice with his staff. Water did pour out, but God was very displeased, as Moses did not obey His instructions completely.

For this reason, God did not allow Moses and Aaron to take the Israelites into The Promised Land. This was a major discipline for Moses and Aaron, who had looked forward to seeing The Promised Land for forty years.

Bible Memory Verse

2 Cor 10:4-5

Songs

Obedience Song - Review
O-B-E-D-I-E-N-C-E

Poem

Obedience Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Obedience

Review

Thursday Evening

Extreme obedience

Read

2 Kings 18:1-12

Questions for discussion

1. How old was Hezekiah when he became king?
2. Does being young excuse us from being obedient?
3. How did God bless Hezekiah's obedience?
4. What happened to King Hoshea and the Israelites when they were disobedient?
5. What had they done?
6. Has it ever seemed to you that your parents are not giving you anything good or that they are taking away too many of your treats or privileges?
7. Do you think your parents follow God's example by rewarding obedience and punishing disobedience?
8. Do you think your parents would rather give you good things, or punish you?
9. What do you need to do when your parents give you instructions?

Key concepts

Hezekiah was a young man when he became king of Judah. He loved God, and obeyed all God's commands. Because he loved God, God made sure that Hezekiah succeeded in everything that he did.

God told the Israelites many times that if they followed His commands, He would give them many good things to enjoy. He promises to reward obedience with great blessing, including protection, guidance, honour, answered prayer,

joy, long life and prosperity (Deuteronomy 5:32-33; 8:1; 26:16-19; 28:1-14, Psalm 119:1-2, Proverbs 3:1-2,33; 4:10-13; 10:28; 15:9, Isaiah 1:19-20, James 5:16, 1 Peter 3:12, 1 John 3:21-22). God also gave the Israelites many warnings about the hardship and disaster they would suffer if they chose not to obey His instructions (Deuteronomy 28:15-20). God is always faithful to do as He promises.

Friday

Bible Memory Verse

2 Cor 10:4-5

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

2 Cor 10:4-5

Bible Connection

God gets mad!

Prior to reading this story, review some of God's instructions and warnings given in Deuteronomy 28 with your children, emphasizing that God promised blessings for obedience and hardship and disaster for disobedience.

Read

Judges 2:6-23.

Questions for discussion

1. What did the Israelites do to make God mad?
2. What did God do then?
3. What did God do to try to get the Israelites to listen?
4. Did the Israelites listen to the judges?
5. When you disobey again and again, what do your parents do?

6. Do you think God is happy when you are stubborn and refuse to obey your parents?
7. What can you do to please God?
8. Would you like to ask God to help you obey us (your parents)?

Key concepts

After the death of Joshua, the Israelites continually tried God's patience by disobeying His commands and worshipping foreign gods. Even though He disciplined them again and again, still they chose to disobey. He sent judges (leaders) to speak to the people and guide them in doing what was right, but the Israelites continued to disobey.

Finally, God got very angry and decided to quit clearing the foreign people out of the land He had given the Israelites. Instead, God chose to leave the foreign nations there to test Israel to see if they would choose to follow God or not.

We (your parents) get angry too, when our children disobey over and over again. God disciplined the Israelites as He thought best for them. As your parents, we will discipline you with God's guidance.

The good news is that God will help you obey us (your parents) if you ask Him to.

Songs

Obedience Song - Review
O-B-E-D-I-E-N-C-E

Poem

Obedience Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Obedience

Review

Friday Evening

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego obey
when it is hard

Read
Daniel 3

Questions for discussion

1. Is it always easy to obey?
2. Do you think it was easy for Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to obey God?
3. How did God take care of them?
4. How did God reward their obedience?
5. Can you think of a time when you had to choose to be different from others because you were obeying your Mom or Dad?

Key concepts

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego lived in Babylon, which was ruled by King Nebuchadnezzar. The king ordered everyone to bow down to a golden statue.

He even made a law saying that anyone who did not bow down to the statue would be thrown into a fiery furnace.

But Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused to bow down to the statue. They chose to obey God's rule regarding idols, which says, "You shall not bow down to them or worship them" (Deuteronomy 5:8-9). Even though they knew that they might die, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego still chose to obey God rather than the king. God rewarded their obedience by protecting them when they were thrown into a furnace full of fire.

When the king saw how God had protected Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, he told all of the other people to honour the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. They were also given a promotion in their workplace.

At times, you will find it hard to obey because obeying may mean that someone will make fun of you or that you will have to choose to be different from others. At these times, remember that God is always watching over you and will always care for you.



Tolerance

Monday

Jesus and Mary

Introduction

Opposites:

Tolerance vs Prejudice

What does it mean?

Accepting others at different levels of maturity.

Discussion

We walk all over it, sit on it, drive on it and it still bounces back! GRASS! Do you ever consider how much abuse it takes and yet it still manages to bounce back straight and tall? This is the object lesson for tolerance - valuing others keeps us from getting bent out of shape by the faults (or perceived faults) of those around us. The secret of the tolerance of grass is *turgor pressure*.

Translation:

Tolerancia vs. Prejuicio

Go to the root

The root of the word Tolerance comes from the Latin verb *Tolerare* which means "to bear". Can you visualize Tolerance as the ability to bear a strain or difficulty with good perspective?

Idioms

Zero Tolerance: absolutely no tolerance

Live and let live: everyone deserves their chance

How do we Sign it?

Accept
Tolerate
Prejudice

Bible Connection

Scripture:

John 12:1-8 (See also Luke 7:37-39; Mark 14:3-9.)

Jesus had come to a town called Bethany. He was very near Jerusalem, where he knew he would be killed. A man named Simon had invited Jesus to a party in his home. Jesus was at the party with many people. Jesus was the guest of honor—that means that the people were there to see him.

One of Jesus' friends, named Martha, was helping Simon with the party. Martha's sister Mary was there too. Mary had done some bad things before she came to know Jesus. But now she loved Jesus very much and wanted to do something to show Jesus how much she loved him. She took a bottle of very expensive perfume, and poured it on Jesus' feet. Then she took her long hair, and wiped Jesus' feet with it.

Some of the people though this was a bad thing to do. The man who had invited Jesus thought that Jesus could not be the Son of God or he would not have let this bad woman touch him. Other people thought that the money spent on the perfume could have been used to help poor people. Jesus was unhappy because the people were not tolerant of this woman.

They did not see the love with which she poured out the perfume. They did not know the repentance of her heart that had won the forgiveness of her sins. Jesus was very happy that Mary had shown her love and respect for him in this way. Jesus tried to help the other people see how they had not been tolerant of Mary. Jesus wants us to love other people just as he does, and not judge them based on what we think we know about them.

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 15:7

The I WILL's of Tolerance

To practice Tolerance I will:

- not confuse what is right with what is popular
- expect the same of myself as I expect of others
- look for ways to help others mature

- accept my own unchangeables and the unchangeables of others
- listen before I form an opinion

Monday Evening

The story of Peter and Cornelius (Acts 10)

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Cartoon Characters

Everyone has a favorite cartoon character but that is not what this exercise is about. Each person needs to pick the cartoon character that they either want to be like or one that they think they are like. You can switch it to people in current commercials or sit-com characters if you wish. Preface the activity with picking a few well-known characters and having the class choose adjectives (preferably character traits) that describe them. Then let them think on the traits of other characters they know and pick one they want to be like or are already like.

After each student has written down who they pick and why, pair up the students and let them share their pick. You can pair up the pairs and let them share again only this time the original pairs are introducing their partner as their character.

You can do this pairing as many times as you wish. When the sharing is complete, ask if anybody picked a character that people didn't know, if anyone learned anything new about a classmate.

Discussion

Steven Spielberg- Tolerance Hero

You've probably seen one of his movies: ET, Close Encounters of a Third Kind, Jaws, Jurassic Park, or the Indiana Jones series. Steven Spielberg, an American film director, screenwriter, and film producer has had a successful career spanning over four decades and centering

on many themes and genres over that time. He began with science-fiction and adventure films and in his later years, his films began addressing such issues as the Holocaust, slavery, war and terrorism.

Spielberg won the Academy Award for Best Director for *Schindler's List* (1993). The movie was based on the true story of Oskar Schindler, a man who risked his life to save 1,100 Jews from the Holocaust. Its themes include intolerance, bigotry and hatred.

In an interview with Katie Couric on the Today Show on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the film, Spielberg says, "I hope I could look back some day and say, 'gee, there was something else I did that was equally as important,' but up to this point in my life, it's the most important use of film in my entire experience of living in film all these years."

Following the movie's release Spielberg created the Shoah Foundation, to honor and remember the victims of the Holocaust. The Shoah Foundation, collected testimonies from 52,000 survivors – their memories of their lives before, during and after those darkest times.

Bible Connection

What are you called to do?

Setup:

Theme: What are you called to do? Scripture: Ephesians 4:1. Teacher materials: Have a variety of objects available that represent different occupations or hobbies and a Bible bookmarked at Ephesians 4:1.

Introduce the Object Talk:

God has given all of us special things to do. Lets look at some things I have with me and see if you can tell me what people might do who use these things.

Present the talk:

Hold the objects out one by one, and have the children discuss the people who might use each object. Then open your Bible to the marked verse and read it. Then say: *God has given each of us a special calling. You may not be called to the same thing I am. You will probably have a different calling from your brothers or sisters. But just because our callings are different does not mean one thing is better than the other. We should never think that our calling is more special than someone elses. God wants us to love everyone and accept everyone, even if what they are called to do is different than what we are called to do.*

Pray:

Ask God to help us be tolerant of people who are different from us.

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 15:7

The I WILL's of Tolerance

Review

Tuesday Evening

Jesus was tolerant of Judas even though he knew he was a thief and would eventually betray Him

Wednesday

Bible Connection

If there was anyone who know what tolerance was, it was Jesus. Look at the way he related to those around him:

The disciples could get a bit trying at times, but Jesus Christ was tolerant towards them. Peter was somewhat of a bragger. James and John could be a bit mean spirited at times. Philip was slow of thought. Thomas was a doubter, but Jesus was tolerant.

With tolerance Christ was merciful and forgiving. And just as important, Jesus didn't just leave these men as they were. Instead, He filled them with the power to change. And to make sure they would continue in their victory over their weaknesses He blessed them with the Holy Spirit.

Just as Jesus was tolerant, we need to be tolerant of others as well. You can probably think of kids at school who do things a little different. Perhaps they dress different, talk different, and maybe even act different. Do you show

tolerance towards them? You can if you allow God to help you. With His help you can see them through the loving eyes of God. With His help you can show them the kindness of Jesus.

We shouldn't look down on other people, but He has loved us all the same in Jesus. **Galatians 3:28, NKJV. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.**

God doesn't show favoritism to anyone - no person is better than someone else. **Acts 10:34, NIV. "Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right."**

Don't judge a book by its cover. We never know the full story. If we show mercy, we will be shown mercy. **Matthew 7:1, NKJV. "Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you."**

Although we are tolerant of people's personalities and situations, that doesn't mean we join them in their wrong doing. **Psalms 1:1-2, NKJV. Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night."**

We need to share what is right, but do it with patience, and tolerance. **2 Timothy 4:2, NIV. "Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction."**

We are called to love each other, be patient, and compassionate with each other. **1 Peter 3:8, NKJV. "Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous"**

We are to be lights to world to lead people from darkness. **To do that, we have to associate/be involved with them. But while we associate with them, we help people understand what is right and wrong by shining for Jesus. Matthew 5:14-16, NKJV. "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."**

God's love tolerates us in our weaknesses and sins. **John 3:16, NKJV. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him**

should not perish, but have everlasting life." And He sent Jesus to lift us up out of our sins into everlasting life.

Jesus came to earth with a message of mercy and forgiveness, for everyone no matter what country they are from, how much money they have, how old they are, or whether they are a girl or boy. We all need Jesus, and Jesus never gives up on anyone. In each and every one of us, He sees chance to change and become better. God accepts everyone just as they are and tolerates their weaknesses. But God doesn't leave us weak, the way we are. Instead, through Christ, He makes us strong to live the right life, filled with the power of the Spirit.

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 15:7

The I WILL's of Tolerance

Review

Wednesday Evening

Daniel with King Darius (Dan. 6:1-23) (Key Verse:21)

Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

Ten Unchangeables (Craft)

Each of us has things in our lives which cannot be changed. It is important that we not only learn to accept these "unchangeables" in others but also in ourselves. Help the children accept the following unchangeables in themselves and others.

1. I am "One of a Kind"--The children should understand that they are special and no one else in the world is just like them.

2. My Birth Parents--No one can change who their birth parents are, even if not living with them.
3. My Brothers and Sisters--Just like birth parents, brothers and sisters by birth are something that cannot be changed.
4. Race--Each person has a particular race.
5. Mental Capacity--Each person is naturally more or less gifted at academics, sports, or mechanical skills.
6. Time in History--Each person is born on a certain day, in a certain year. We cannot change how old we are.
7. Gender--Each person is born as a boy or girl.
8. Order in My Family--Each person has a place in the order of siblings, either firstborn or perhaps the fourth among brothers and sisters.
9. Aging--Each person has physical changes that will naturally occur as he or she gets older.
10. Death--At some point, each of us will die.

In order to remember the ten unchangeables, give each child ten colored strips of paper and have them write one of the unchangeables on each strip. Then link the strips together to form a paper chain. Encourage the children to use the paper chains to remember the importance of accepting these things as part of their lives and making the best use of all of them.

Bible Connection

David was not tolerant of others guilty of his same sin (2 Samuel 12:1-14)

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 15:7

The I WILL's of Tolerance

Review

Thursday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Tolerance:

Eph 4:2
Acts 10:28
Matt 7:1

Friday

Discussion

A Good Winner and a Good Loser

Winning should not take a back seat to sportsmanship. Neither should sportsmanship take a back seat to winning. The two are not mutually exclusive. In fact, sportsmanship and winning go hand in hand. Those who demonstrate the highest standards of sportsmanship most often achieve the greatest success in their sport. Tolerance is a major part of sportsmanship. It bonds a team together. It motivates a patient coach to instruct a slow student, and allows varying degrees of maturity to play together on the same court. It does not accept cheating or violating the rules. On the other hand, it does not justify abuse, either physical or verbal. Tolerance is the character quality which accepts unchangeables and changes unacceptables.

Ten Commandments of Sportsmanship

Be a Good Winner

- 1. Deflect the Praise**
When you win, remember to recognize those who have made you successful. Instead of holding on to the praise you receive, pass it on to those who share in your success. A good winner shares praise with teammates.
- 2. Play By the Rules**
Breaking the rules cheapens the victory. It is no different than attempting to steal something that is not yours. Every competitor who steps onto a court must agree to play by the same set of rules—or sit on the bench.
- 3. Praise the Good in Others**
Good sports cheer for others' successes. They don't mock others' failures. A good winner points out how well the opponent played.

4. Respect the Officials

Professional sports teams have learned the value of officials. Even the "televised instant replay" cannot make every call right. Though you may disagree with a call, always show respect to the one who made it.

5. Teach Others to be Successful

A good winner takes time to help others rise to the same level of success. A good winner is a role model and a coach to others who want to follow in his or her footsteps.

Be a Good Loser

6. Learn from Your Mistakes

A good loser reviews mistakes and learns from them so as not to make the same mistakes twice.

7. Avoid Trash Talking

A good loser doesn't gain acceptance by putting others down. Displays of anger don't erase defeat.

8. Congratulate the Winner

The mark of a real sport is one who can humbly acknowledge that on a given day at a given time, someone else was better.

9. Build the Whole Team

Because the whole team benefits when one player improves, a good loser invests in the others.

10. Return to Play Another Day

A good loser doesn't quit. He or she prepares for the next game and comes back to win.

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 15:7

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Rom 15:7

The I WILL's of Tolerance

Review

Friday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Tolerance:

Prov 16:24

Ex 14:14

Eph 4:30-32

Orderliness

Monday

how you organize your personal belongings, including your clothes, books, toys, and paperwork.

Attention Grabber Activity

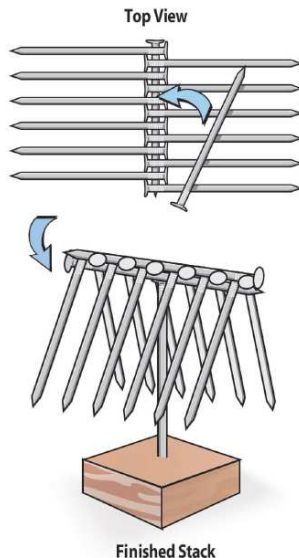
Balancing Nails

Practice this activity ahead of time so you can show your students how orderliness can help them accomplish what seems to be an impossible task.

Gather a hammer, a block of wood, and about two dozen nails. Hammer one nail into the wood, and challenge students to balance as many nails as possible on top of the nailhead. Let them work in groups and encourage them to be creative. After a few minutes of trial and error, gather your students and explain the importance of doing things in a neat and orderly fashion. Then balance a handful of nails using the technique shown in this illustration.

Points to Ponder:

- As with many projects, you have to do things in the right order if you want it to work. What are some other projects or chores that require you to do things in a certain order?
- Beautiful art—including architecture, music, poetry, and drawing—usually has some sort of order, symmetry, pattern, or design. Study different types of art and see if you can find order in each piece.
- The more pieces or parts you have, the more orderliness matters if you want to find what you need. Imagine a large grocery store that was totally disorganized. Think of how long it would take to find what you needed if everything was piled into the store with no aisles, shelves, signs, price tags, or shopping carts. The same principle applies to



Introduction

Opposites:

Orderliness vs Disorganization

What does it mean?

Arranging myself and my surroundings to achieve greater efficiency.

Translation:

Orden vs. Confusión

Go to the root

Order comes from the Latin word *ordo* meaning “row, series”. It was used to describe the battle formation of an army. Can you see how orderliness connotes bringing something into line with its purpose?

Nature Story

Orderliness Nature Story (VID) (5:40)

Poem

Orderliness Poem (VID) (5:02)

Bible Memory Verse

1 Cor 14:40

The I WILL's of Orderliness

To practice Orderliness I will:

- pick up after myself
 - keep my work and play areas clean and neat
 - put things back where they belong
 - use things only for their intended purposes
 - return lost things to their rightful owners
-

Monday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Orderliness:
Don't forget to ask your children the questions: Who? What?
When? Where? Why? and How?

* Set your house in order (2 Kings 20:1)

* Set your words in order (Job 33:5)

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Director and Builder

For this game, divide the classroom into groups of four. One student (the director) in each group takes 10 building blocks. Another student (the builder) takes an identical set of 10 blocks. The two remaining students are deliverymen. In a separate room, the director creates an object out of the building blocks, writing the instructions for the building on index cards. The deliveryman takes these index cards to the second delivery man, shuffling the cards as he walks. The second deliveryman takes these directions to the builder, again shuffling the cards. After receiving the index cards, the builder attempts to organize the directions correctly and build a copy of the director's structure. The winner is decided by which team's buildings match each other. When the game is over discuss how difficult it was to order the cards appropriately. Where there word clues in the directions that helped? How much easier would it have been if the directions were in order?

Songs

Orderliness Song (VID) (7:36) - Review

Poem

Orderliness Poem - Review

Discussion

Austin Meggitt, Model of Orderliness

In 1997, Austin Meggitt, age 9, was riding his bike to the ball field for a baseball game when he nearly had a serious accident. He was trying to carry his baseball glove, bat and ball and steer and stop his bike at the same time. To battle the confusion and danger this caused, he went to his basement and designed a rack to go over the handlebars to organize his equipment for safe transport. His Battie Caddy™ will hold a bat, ball and glove. Meggitt was inducted into the National Gallery for America's Young Inventors (Hall of Fame) 1999. He won the National Grand Prize in the Discovery Network and MediaOne Broadcasting's Ultimate Invention Contest and has appeared on several television news programs.

In 2000, he received U.S. patent no. 6,029,874. In 2008, 19-year-old Meggitt struck a deal with Base4 of Dallas, Texas to license the Battie Caddy and turn it into a commercially available product.

Meggitt knew the importance of safety while on a bike and used the quality of orderliness to make his and other's rides to the park less dangerous.

Bible Connection

Discuss some Bible verses about Orderliness:
Swept, and put in order (Matthew 12:44)

Bible Memory Verse

1 Cor 14:40

The I WILL's of Orderliness

Review

Tuesday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Orderliness:
To see your good order (Colossians 2:5)

Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Suit Sort

Another important aspect of organization is sorting. Employ a simple sorting game with students with an ordinary deck of cards. Divide the class into groups of 3 or 4. You will need a deck for each group. Lay the cards face down on the table in a stack. Designate 4 spots for each of the card suits in a circle around the deck. You may want to mark the spots with the Ace of each suit to start. The first student then picks up the cards, one by one and sorts them by suit into the correct spots as quickly as possible. When the first student finishes, check all the piles of cards for accurate organization. The student who has scored the most points wins. Alternately, you can make the game shared between all of the students in the group by having the students take turns taking a card and sorting it. The competition can be between groups.

You may also use half-decks if time is an issue. When the game is over, discuss how things are sorted. Ask for suggestions on what other criteria you could sort the cards (color, number, face vs. number, etc). Discuss why you need to know how to sort things so that you can order things appropriately. Use the items in the classroom to discuss why things are sorted together. Are all of the art supplies together (sorted by purpose). Is the garbage can by the door? (convenient for janitor to empty). Why wouldn't you put all of the purple things in the room together? Are all of your books for your afternoon classes together in your desk? (based on when they are used). How difficult would it be to find things if we didn't organize them or organized them on the wrong criteria?

Overview: Orderliness is not a natural tendency or event.

Even the second law of thermodynamics states that without direct intervention, all things move toward greater entropy and disorder. You can see this every day as your desk, locker, purse, bedroom, closet, and vehicle become less organized and more dirty without someone making an effort to keep them clean and neat.

The key to an orderly lifestyle is making it a habit—putting things away and keeping things clean one day at a time.

Character Quiz:

1. Why should you clean up after yourself instead of expecting others to do it for you?
2. Imagine playing baseball or your favorite board game. What happens if you do things in the wrong order?
3. Being orderly means you:
 - a. are afraid of getting dirty.
 - b. clean house all day
 - c. take care of your belongings and your space.
4. An orderly person tries to do things efficiently: YES? or NO?
5. What is the difference between being orderly and being a perfectionist?

Story

The Postmaster

Abe Lincoln walked swiftly to his Springfield law office as the cold wind howled around him. Through the windows, he could see some of his friends standing inside. "Oh, good!" thought Abe, "I wonder what the latest news is."

He stepped inside and closed the heavy door behind him.

"Hello!" Abe said as he removed his tall, black hat. A bunch of papers fluttered down to the floor around him.

"Do you always carry your office in your hat?" teased one of the men.

Abe grinned and gathered the loose papers from the floor.

"Actually," Abe answered, "I have been making use of the space inside my hat ever since I was the postmaster in New Salem. It's a good way to keep papers out of the weather." Soon the men were swapping stories and laughing. As they caught up on recent events, they were startled by a loud, booming voice.

"Is there anyone here by the name of Abraham Lincoln?" A large man stood in the doorway.

"That's me," Abe said. "What can I do for you?"

"I am an agent of the United States Postal Service," the man said, "and I have come to receive the money you collected as postmaster in New Salem."

Abe's face revealed his surprise. As postmaster, he organized all the payments and receipts, and kept them in a certain place. But the New Salem Post Office had closed many years ago, and Abe had been working as a lawyer in Springfield.

Abe's friends offered to help. "If you need money, Abe, please let us help you."

Abe rose from the table and slipped out of the room. He returned a few moments later with a small wooden trunk.

Opening the trunk, Abe pulled out a faded blue sock and emptied its contents onto the table.

The postal agent watched as Abe counted exactly what he owed. Through all those years, Abe refused to spend the money, even when he was nearly broke.

"I've never used any man's money but my own," Abe said quietly. Abe handed the money to the postal representative.

Many would have lost track of the money after all those years, but Abe put the money in a safe place. Abe Lincoln knew that it pays to be orderly.

Bible Connection

Proverbs 24:27

Bible Memory Verse

1 Cor 14:40

Songs

Orderliness Song - Review

Poem

Orderliness Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Orderliness

Review

Wednesday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Orderliness:

1 Cor 14:33

Rom 15:33

Thursday

Discussion

Can you think of some Synonyms for Orderly? *Arranged, methodic, neat, precise, systematic*

How about some Antonyms for Orderly? *Complicated, disorderly, disorganized, untidy, chaotic*

Story

"Little Things" by Elisabeth Elliot

When we were growing up our parents taught us, by both word and example, to pay attention to little things. If you do a thing at all, do it thoroughly: make the sheets really smooth on the bed, sweep all the corners and move all the chairs when you sweep the kitchen, roll the toothpaste tube neatly and put the cap back on, clean the hair out of your brush each time you use it, hang your towels straight on the rod, fold your napkin and put it into the silver ring before you leave the table, never wet your finger when you turn pages.

They kept promises made to us as faithfully as they kept those made to adults. They taught us to do the same. You didn't accept an invitation to a party and then not turn up,

or agree to help with a Vacation Bible School and back out because a more interesting activity presented itself.

When I went to boarding school the same principles I had been taught at home were emphasized. There was a hallway with small oriental rugs which we called "Character Hall" because the headmistress, Mrs. DuBose, could look down that hall from the armchair where she sat in the lobby and spot any student who kicked up a corner of the rug and did not replace it. She would call out to correct him, "It's those tiny little things in your life which will crack you up when you get out of this school!" In the little things our character was revealed. Our response would make or break us. "Don't go around with a Bible under your arm if you didn't sweep under the bed," she said, for she would have no pious talk coming out of a messy room.

"Great thoughts go best with common duties. Whatever therefore may be your office regard it as a fragrant in an immeasurable ministry of love" (Bishop Brooke Foss Westcott, b. 1825).

It is not easy to find children or adults who are dependable, careful, thorough, and faithful. So many lives seem honeycombed with small failures, neglectful of the little things that make the difference between order and chaos.

Perhaps it is because they are so seldom taught that visible things are signs of an invisible reality; that common duties may be "an immeasurable ministry of love." The spiritual training of souls must be inseparable from practical disciplines, as Jesus so plainly taught; "the man who can be trusted in little things can be trusted in great; the man who is dishonest in little things will be dishonest in great. If then you cannot be trusted with money, that tainted thing, who will trust you with genuine riches! And if you cannot be trusted with what is not yours, who will give you what is your very own?"

Bible Connection

The story of Creation (Genesis 1-2) (emphasizes Orderliness.)

Discussion

Character Definitions

- Preparing myself and my surroundings so that I will achieve the greatest efficiency.
- Bringing everything within my jurisdiction into conformity with the purposes for which it was created.
- Learning to organize and care for personal possessions.
- Giving attention to personal grooming.
- Learning to write legibly.
- Everything in its place

How to Demonstrate Orderliness to God

- Arrange your schedule to begin each day by spending time with the Lord
- Maintain a prayer journal
- Recognize and dedicate yourself to His plan and purpose for your life
- Follow an orderly Bible-reading program

To Parents

- Take the initiative and tidy the house for your parents
- Purpose to follow your family's schedule
- Maintain a clean and orderly room

To Teachers

- Dress neatly
- Arrive early
- Make a project/homework list

To Church Leaders

- Help with the maintenance and upkeep of the church building and grounds
- Arrive early for church services
- Sit quietly in church services
- Pray daily for church leaders

Discuss the Following Questions with Your Children

- Does he\she think ahead?
- Can he\she use his time wisely to meet deadlines, or is he\she always hurrying to complete tasks at the last minute?
- Can he\she think through the steps required to finish a project?
- Can he\she make a list of tasks and prioritize them?
- Can he\she find his clothes, school books, sports equipment, etc. when needed?
- Is he\she usually prompt?
- Is his\her room orderly and neat?
- Does he\she forget commitments he\she has made?

Bible Memory Verse

1 Cor 14:40

Songs

Orderliness Song - Review

Poem
.....

Orderliness Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Orderliness
.....

Review

The I WILL's of Orderliness
.....

Review

Friday Evening

Thursday Evening

Gideon: Followed God's precise instructions so 300 men could defeat 135,000 in battle WOW! (Judges 7)

Noah: precise instructions given of how many and what kind of animals to place in the Ark
Gen 6-9

Friday

Bible Memory Verse
.....

1 Cor 14:40

Journal Entry
.....

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

1 Cor 14:40

Songs
.....

Orderliness Song - Review

Poem
.....

Orderliness Poem - Review

Generosity

Parents

Parents' prayer

Although we can try to develop character in our children through various methods and programs, only God can bring about permanent change in a child's heart. Begin this study on generosity by inviting God to help you by giving you guidance and wisdom, and by releasing His power in your child. Use the sample prayer below to guide you in praying for your child's character development. If you prefer to personalize your prayers even further, read through the additional verses provided under "Scripture-guided prayer" for direction and inspiration.

Sample prayer

Kind Father, You are the Giver of all good things. You long to be gracious to us (Isaiah 30:18). We thank You for Your generosity in granting us the desires of our hearts, answering our prayers, and making us glad with the joy of Your presence (Psalm 21:1-7).

You pour out unending blessings, far beyond what we deserve. Please help me to recognize that nothing I own is really mine; it is a gift from you. When I reflect on my attitude toward food and possessions, I see how often I satisfy my own desires rather than considering the needs of others. I confess that I think nothing of spending money on little extravagances, knowing full well that others elsewhere are in need of water, food and clothing. I give generously to various causes, but never to the point of significant sacrifice.

According to Your Word, selfishness and greed rank alongside sexual immorality, impurity, debauchery, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, drunkenness, envy, murder, deceit and malice (Galatians 5:19-21, Romans 1:29). Lord, I pray that You would forgive me for the ways I have been inconsiderately selfish with the resources you have given me. I want to be generous with these blessings so I can be a blessing to others (Genesis 12:1-3). In Jesus' name, I ask that you would put to death in my life, the things that belong to the sinful nature, especially greed (Colossians 3:5).

Lord, from birth I have observed in my child the human tendency to be self-centred. Please show me how I can encourage _____ to be concerned about the needs of

others instead of hoarding the things you give to him/her. Thank you that _____ has shown a spirit of generosity when he/she _____. As _____ is tempted to be selfish, remind him/her of 1 Corinthians 10:24: "Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others." Teach the truth of Psalm 112:5 that "Good will come to him who is generous and lends freely, who conducts his affairs with justice." I pray Your grace would abound in _____, so he/she would be "... rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share" (1 Timothy 6:18).

My prayer is that generosity and grace would be hallmarks of our family so others may see You in us.

Please show us who the poor and needy are in our community so we can share our wealth with them.

We ask that our generosity would result in others giving thanks to You (2 Corinthians 9:8-11). May we find joy in refreshing others by being generous with our possessions (Proverbs 11:25). You modelled true selflessness when You died on the cross. You gave Your life away. May our generous kindness to others be a testimony that You are living in us. Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for parents

Read and pray through one or more of the selected scriptures under each heading. Focus on listening to God and allowing His Spirit to direct you as you pray.

Character focus

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate His generosity and grace.

Psalm 103:1-5 | Psalm 104:10-15,24-30 | Psalm 140:12 | Psalm 145:3-9 | Acts 20:35

Heart search

Acknowledge the areas where you tend to be selfish.

Isaiah 58:5-8 | 2 Corinthians 9:6 | Colossians 3:2,5 | James 2:14-17 | 1 John 3:17-18

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have seen generosity exhibited in your family.

Family requests

Ask God to help you and your family to be generous.

Psalm 112:5-9 | Proverbs 11:24-26 | Proverbs 28:27 | Isaiah 58:9-11 | Matthew 25:37-40

Kids talk with God

Use this section to help your child learn to reach out to God in all things. The sample prayers all begin with “Dear God,” however, you may use any other names for God your children are comfortable with (i.e. Jesus, Father God, Lord Jesus, Heavenly Father, Abba Father, Lord).

If your child wishes to pray an original prayer, you’ll find helpful verses in the “Scripture-guided prayer for children” section.

Sample prayers

Dear God, if I am being selfish or greedy, please show me so I can tell You I am sorry. Amen.

Dear God, please forgive me for thinking of myself instead of others. Please send Your Holy Spirit to help me be generous instead. Amen.

Dear God, please help me to be generous so I can refresh others. Amen.

Dear God, sometimes I have selfishness in my heart. Please send Your Holy Spirit to smother it like water smothers fire. Amen.

Dear God, it is so easy to want things for myself. Please help me to think of others instead. Amen.

Dear God, please show my family and me how we can help the poor people who live in our community. Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for children

Read through one of the selected Scriptures under each heading and help your children pray based on the verse you read. Encourage them to listen to God and allow His Spirit to guide them as they pray.

Character focus

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate His generosity and grace.

Psalm 104:24,27-28 | Psalm 145:15-17 | Acts 20:35

Heart search

Acknowledge when and how you are selfish.
Proverbs 18:1 | Philippians 2:4 | 1 John 3:17

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have seen generosity exhibited in your family.

Personal requests

Ask God to give you, your siblings and parents, generous hearts.

Proverbs 19:17 | Proverbs 11:25 | Matthew 25:40

Speak a Blessing

Your affirmation will give tremendous encouragement to your children as they strive to grow in the area of generosity. Use this section as a reminder to “speak a blessing” when you see this godly characteristic in your son or daughter.

- How generous of you, _____!
 - I know _____ is generous and shares his/her things.
 - _____ is a generous girl/boy.
 - It makes us feel so good to give to others
 - Thank you for putting others first, _____.
 - That was sure generous of you, _____!
 - When you share, you are being like Jesus.
-

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

Treasures in heaven

Begin by reading this summary of an idea put forth by Phillip M. Harter, MD, FCAP (Stanford University of Medicine):

If we were to shrink the earth’s population into a village of precisely 100 people, with all the existing human ratios remaining the same, it would look something like the following. There would be: 57 Asians, 21 Europeans, 14 from the Western Hemisphere, 8 Africans, 52 females and 48 males, 70 non-white and 30 white, 70 non-Christian and 30 Christian . . . 6 people would possess 59 per cent of the entire world’s wealth and all 6 would be North American; 80 would live in substandard housing; 70 would be unable to read; 50 would suffer from malnutrition; 1 would be near life; 1 would be near death; 1 would have a college education and 1 would own a computer.

Review this statement and highlight sections that would relate to your children’s lives. Paraphrase these concepts as necessary to explain to your children how fortunate they really are. For example, “50 would suffer from malnutrition”

could be explained to children by getting out some stuffed animals or dolls. Divide them in half and show your children that many children – more than half of them in the world – do not get enough food to eat to help them grow healthy bodies. They are hungry all the time.

The basic message you want to get across is that when we compare ourselves with the rest of the world, we are rich! The Bible indicates that the “rich” of this present world are to share their wealth with those who are less fortunate. In doing so, we please God and will receive a reward from Him in heaven (1 Timothy 6:17-19).

After reviewing age-appropriate sections of the article, read Matthew 6:19-24 and 1 Timothy 6:17-19 and ask the “questions for discussion” included below. To further the learning, find an old shoebox or another box of a similar size. Colour and decorate the box as a treasure chest with you children. Write the week’s memory verse on it. Tell your children to pretend it is a treasure chest they are filling up in heaven. When you see your children being generous, give them homemade paper money or pretend coins to put in their treasure chests. Try to fill the chest by the end of the time of your study. As an alternative, you can use a decorated treasure-chest shaped poster and paper money to stick on the poster instead of in the box.

Questions for discussion

- What are your treasures?
- What can happen to the treasures that we store here on earth?
- What do you think Jesus would have done with His money if He had been rich?
- What would He want us to do with our wealth?
- How does God reward those who share with others?
- How can we fill up our treasure chests in heaven?

Introduction

Opposites:

Generosity vs Stinginess

What does it mean?

Carefully managing my resources so I can freely give to those in need.

Translation:

Generosidad vs. Mezquindad

Go to the root

Generosity comes from the Latin root *generosus* which means “of good or noble birth”. Can you see how being

generous is a noble thing to do?

How do we Sign it?

Generous

Stingy

Bible Connection

Grace like God’s grace

Read

2 Corinthians 8:1-7.

Questions for discussion

1. Has anyone ever been generous to you when you knew you didn’t deserve it?
2. Do we deserve God’s forgiveness?
3. What is it called when we give to others when they don’t deserve it?
4. Would you share with someone who never shared with you?
5. Would God want you to?

Key concepts

When we give to others, even when we think they don’t deserve it, it is called grace. God demonstrated grace when He sent Jesus to die so our sins could be forgiven. It is called grace when God forgives our sins, even though we deserve to die for our own sins.

We practice grace when we share God’s love with others through forgiving them. It is important to excel in faith, in speech and knowledge and in love, but it also important to excel in the grace of giving. Giving can be giving money, but it can also mean sharing what we have and sharing God’s love by forgiving those who have hurt or upset us.

Bible Memory Verse

2 Cor 9:6

God’s Way vs My Way

God’s Way

I am demonstrating godly character when:

- I am generous
- I am willing to share with others
- I allow others to go first

And God is pleased!

My Way

When I am tempted to:

- be selfish
- keep things for myself instead of sharing
- refuse to allow others to go first

I know that I need to go to God for help.

The I WILL's of Generosity

To practice Generosity I will:

- share what I have with others
- recycle
- not expect anything in return for my generosity
- give of my time and talents
- praise the good I see in others

Monday Evening

A generous promise

Questions for discussion

1. What is a promise?
2. *Read Psalm 37:26 and 2 Corinthians 9:7-10.* What does God do for those who are generous?
3. *Read Proverbs 11:24.* On the other hand, what happens to those who are selfish?
4. What will others do because of our generosity?

Key concepts

God is generous and He wants us to be generous too. One way He rewards our generosity is by taking care of our physical needs. The best thing about being generous is that when people see our generosity, they will thank God.

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Family ties

Take out some family photos and enjoy looking at them together. Have some fun by asking your children to take turns imitating your mannerisms and habits while completing various tasks. Examples include driving a car,

cleaning up, making dinner, changing a diaper or any other parenting tasks.

Read or paraphrase the appropriate parts of Ephesians 5:3-5. Use this as an opportunity to explain that we can inherit things genetically from our parents, but it is much more important that we inherit the godly character we see in our parents and grandparents.

Further the discussion by talking about how being generous lets others know we are a part of God's family, since those who are greedy don't fit into God's family.

Questions for discussion

- How can we tell that we belong in this family?
- Other than looks, how can others tell that we are your mommy and daddy? (Same name, similar looks, common personality traits and interests.)
- According to the Bible, how can we tell who is in God's family?

Relevant Scripture

Ephesians 5:3-5

Discussion

Model of Generosity

Since Lulu Cerone was 9 years old, she has taken an active interest in bringing water to international communities in need. After the earthquake in Haiti, Lulu decided to raise money for relief with a lemonade stand at a local park and challenged her friends to do the same. In one weekend, they raised \$4,000 all together.

Lulu turned 13 on May 4th, 2012 and celebrated her birthday with a Water Walk to raise money for the African water crisis. She had rallied a group of friends to walk two miles of Ventura Blvd., in Studio City, carrying jugs of water. As they walked, they encouraged merchants along the way to sell her "lemon-aid". She raised over \$6300 to help build fresh-water drinking wells.

Lulu knows what it means to be generous. By giving up getting gifts on her birthday and encouraging others to get involved in social outreach, she has set a fine example of what it means to be generous.

Lulu calls her endeavors "Lemon Aid Warriors."

Bible Connection

Intentional generosity

Read

Deuteronomy 24:19-22.

Questions for discussion

1. What were the Israelites commanded to do when harvesting sheaves, grain, olives and grapes?
2. Who would benefit from the harvesting not being as thorough as it could have been?
3. Why were they commanded to be considerate of those less fortunate?
4. Who are the poor in our community?
5. How can we be intentionally considerate of these people?

Key concepts

Essentially, God commanded the Israelites to be generous with others because when they were slaves in Egypt, they were at the mercy of the Egyptians. God wants us to be merciful to those less fortunate than we are. "He says blessed are the merciful for they will be shown mercy" (Matthew 5:7). We can intentionally be considerate of those less fortunate by giving generously to those who are poor.

Bible Memory Verse

2 Cor 9:6

The I WILL's of Generosity

Review

Tuesday Evening

An unexpected blessing

Read

Ruth 2 and Deuteronomy 24:19-22

Questions for discussion

1. How did Boaz obey one of God's Old Testament commands regarding generosity?
2. How was Boaz generous to Ruth and her mother-in-law?
3. How did God choose to bless Boaz for his generosity?

Key concepts

Boaz was a successful farmer. He had much land, hired

hands and animals. He noticed a woman picking up the grain that was left over after the harvesters had been through the field. He instructed the harvesters to be generous and leave extra grain for the woman. He did not even know that she was a potential wife. God chose to bless the generosity of Boaz by giving him the young, beautiful woman as his wife. Boaz was just being generous – not expecting anything in return for his kindness – but God chose to bless Boaz with a wife. God promises to reward generosity (Proverbs 14:21).

Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Feed a greedy fire

Make a bonfire or watch a movie of a fire burning. As you watch the bonfire, ask the questions below. Help your children understand that when we eat sweets or get new toys, it is not long before we will want more. People are born selfish by nature and the only way to get rid of this selfish nature is to ask God to fill our hearts with His love instead of the selfishness that is already there. The only way to stop a fire from consuming more wood is to dump water on it.

Similarly, the only way to get rid of our sinful human nature is to dump the power of God through the Holy Spirit into our lives.

If you build a real fire, allow your children to extinguish it with a bucket of water. Then pray together and ask God to douse the greed in your hearts. If it is not a suitable season to build a fire outdoors, you can light a candle and use a spritzer to put it out.

Questions for discussion

- Does a fire ever get enough wood?
- What happens on special occasions when there is a lot of candy around the house?
- Which child would want more toys? The one with many toys, or a few?

Relevant Scripture

Ecclesiastes 5:10-11

Bible Connection

But it's not fair!

Read

Matthew 20:1-16

Tell this "modern" story about a similar situation, or make up a story of your own that your children will relate to:

One Saturday, Dery's dad needed help cleaning the garage. It was nine in the morning and Dery agreed to work until noon for \$5. Halfway through the morning, Dery's brother Keaton offered to help, too, so their dad invited him to come and join in the work.

By lunchtime, all the work was done, and the dad called the boys to the table. "Thank you, my son, for helping" he said to Keaton and handed him \$5. Dery was watching and was surprised that Keaton got paid \$5 for only working half of the time.

"Surely Dad will pay me more than \$5," he thought. But when Dad turned to Dery, he handed him a \$5 bill, too. Dery was about to complain, but then he thought that it would be better to be quiet. He knew he had been given the amount he had agreed to work for. If his dad wanted to be generous with Keaton's pay, who was he to complain? After all, there had been many times his father had been generous with him, too.

Questions for discussion

1. What would you do if the same thing happened at our house?
2. How do you feel when someone else gets more than you do?
3. What does Jesus say about those who are always looking out for what others get instead of appreciating what they were given?

Key concepts

God wants us to be content with what we have rather than complaining and looking at how generous He has been to others. As long as we are comparing what we have to what others have, we will never be content.

Bible Memory Verse

2 Cor 9:6

The I WILL's of Generosity

Review

Wednesday Evening

Greed is not godly

Read

Acts 8:9-24

Questions for discussion

1. What did Peter and John have that Simon the Sorcerer wanted?
2. Why did Simon want it?
3. What did Peter say to him?
4. Do you think God would forgive Simon if Simon asked Him to?

Key concepts

Simon was attracted to the power that Peter and John had through God and the Holy Spirit. He wanted it because he thought that he could make money by laying his hands on people and filling them with the Holy Spirit, too. Peter told Simon that he had the wrong motivation for wanting the power of the Holy Spirit. We don't know for sure if Simon repented, but we know that if he did, God would graciously forgive him and change his heart.

Thursday

Bible Connection

The rich man who didn't share

Read

Luke 16:19-31.

Questions for discussion

1. What did the rich man have?
2. What did Lazarus have?
3. What happened after they died?
4. Where did Lazarus go?
5. Where did the rich man go?
6. What did the rich man ask for?
7. What did Abraham tell him?

8. What do you think God wants you to do when you see someone is in need?

Key concepts

Lazarus was a very unfortunate beggar who was poor and sick. But there was also a rich man who did not share even the crumbs from his table with Lazarus.

Years later, after the rich man and Lazarus had died, the rich man was suffering in hell and Lazarus was in heaven. When the rich man asked for mercy to be granted to him, Abraham, who has in heaven, said no, because in the rich man's lifetime, he did not share the good things he had with Lazarus, who was poor and sick.

Bible Memory Verse

2 Cor 9:6

The I WILL's of Generosity

Review

Activity

Refreshing Others

If it is summertime, pick a hot day and plan to refresh others who need refreshing. Some ideas include giving out (instead of selling) lemonade at a lemonade stand, or going to the park and taking a box of frozen treats to share with others. You could also take a slushy drink to someone you know who is at work on a hot day and can't get the time to get out of the office to buy one for themselves.

If it is wintertime, think of refreshing others with hot cocoa or coffee instead. For example, provide your garbage collector or outdoor workers with portable cups full of something hot or a gift certificate for a local coffee shop. Perhaps you can plan to take a thermos of hot cocoa to share with friends at a skating rink or toboggan hill. Afterwards, have a discussion based on the following questions. Talk about how we experience joy and refresh ourselves when we share with and refresh others.

Questions for discussion

- How do they think felt when we gave them the ?
- How did you feel when you saw how (happy/surprised) was when we gave them ?
- Who do you think felt happier, or us?

Relevant Scripture

Proverbs 11:25

Discussion

Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody

There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that, because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have.

(Author Unknown)

Be generous with your time

Discuss what it means to 'give time' with your students. These activities should only require that you spend time with someone. This could be reading to a younger sibling or playing cards with an aging relative. The focus should be on spending time WITH someone. This is not the time for doing chores for someone.

Time is also required if you are trying to conserve your resources. It takes a few extra minutes to rinse out a can and put it in the recycle bin rather than just tossing it in the trash. Conserving our natural resources and taking care of the environment is being generous to future generations. For one of the weeks of this month challenge your students to find ways to give of themselves by giving time.

Be generous with your talent

Discuss what it means to 'give talent' with your students. These activities should focus on doing a task or chore for someone or for a group. It could be volunteering for a church or community activity or it could be doing something for a family member or neighbor.

Another way to be generous with your talent is to find something that you do well and share it with someone else. For example, if you have skills in soccer, perhaps you could do drills with a younger soccer player. If you can sing, you can organize a neighborhood caroling adventure or perform for a nursing home. If you are good at reading or math, there are always younger students who could benefit from a tutor.

For one of the weeks of this month challenge your students to find ways to give of themselves by performing a job that benefits someone else.

Be generous with your treasure

Discuss what it means to 'give treasure' with your students. It doesn't always have to mean money. These activities

should focus on the giving of something. You can organize a drive to collect a specific item such as loaves of bread or new or used but usable mittens or socks and donate them to a local shelter. (It is much easier to coordinate a drive for specific item than it is to run a food or clothing drive.) If your school already has a clothing, food, or toy drive in place, beef up that activity by having students write short notes to the people that will receive the items and attach the notes to the items. Once the items are collected, pick out a few to use as an example. Have the students imagine the people that their things will go to, and how happy these people will be to receive them. Create a fictitious character and a story about the items. How does it feel to give to those who are not as lucky as you? What will you do the next time you notice someone in need?

Some examples include:

- food – take some food to the Food Bank,
- clothing – pack up clothes that have been outgrown or not being worn, and give them to a charity or needy family,
- blankets and other household items – many inner-city ministries make home starter kits for those in need,
- toys – many organizations collect toys for underprivileged children.

Friday

Thursday Evening

Gimme my share!

Read

Luke 12:13-21.

Questions for discussion

1. Why did the man come to Jesus?
2. What did Jesus say about wealth in verse 15?
3. What happened to the rich man who stored up things for himself?
4. Do we have anything stored up in our house that we could give to someone who needs it?

Key concepts

A man came to Jesus, hoping that Jesus would make his brother share his inheritance with him. Jesus told him a story about a rich man who had such a large harvest from his crops that he had to build more storehouses to hold all his grain and his many possessions. Then God said to the man that his life would be taken from him that night. Jesus ended the story by saying, "This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God."

"What do we have extra?" game

Link this activity with the story found in Luke 12:13-21 in the Bible stories section. After reading the story, ask your children what the rich man could have done with his extra crop and extra possessions. Explain that it would have pleased God if he had chosen to share it with others who needed it. Spend some time thanking God for all He has blessed your family with.

Finish by asking, "What do we have extra that we could share?" Discover what you have extra, package it up and search out a place in your community to donate it.

Bible Memory Verse

2 Cor 9:6

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

2 Cor 9:6

Story

The tale of two families

A day at the park

One family had children named Me First, Gimme the Biggest and That's My Toy. The second family had kids named Go Ahead, You Have It and It's Your Turn. At the park, Me First shoved to the front of the line all the time. At snack time, Gimme the Biggest took the largest chunk of puffed wheat square, leaving almost none for the other kids. That's My Toy wouldn't share any of his sand toys with the others.

These kids went home early from the park because their mother was tired of intervening in the trouble they caused and stopping their fights. When they left, everyone at the park felt like cheering (although they didn't because they

knew this would be rude). The kids in the other family had a wonderful time at the park.

Go Ahead let others go in front of her at the slide. You Have It passed around his snack of oatmeal cookies to the other kids in the park. It's Your Turn delighted the other children by sharing his new sand rocket. When they were going to leave, the other children at the park begged them to stay as they had made everyone else's afternoon at the park so enjoyable.

The lesson to emphasize is that the outcome of the greed in one family is misery. In the second family, their generosity blesses others, and everyone enjoys spending time with them. After the story, use the questions that follow to create dialogue with your children. You can tell a similar story and change the setting if your children would relate more to a family visiting the circus, going shopping, at the swimming pool or even Disneyland. James 3:13-16 can also be reviewed to give a Biblical perspective.

Questions for discussion

- Which child in the story would you like to play with?
- Which child in the story would you like to be like?
- Have you ever seen any of these kinds of kids at the park?
- If so, which ones?
- Would you want to be a part of a family that is full of envy and selfish ambition or full of peace and consideration for others?

Relevant Scripture

James 3:13-16

The I WILL's of Generosity

Review

Friday Evening

Your money or your life

Read

Matthew 19:16-30

Questions for discussion

1. What did the rich young man ask Jesus?
2. What did Jesus tell him?
3. What did he brag about?
4. What did Jesus say to him?
5. What did the rich young man do?

6. Is it harder to share if you have a lot or a little?
7. If you had a penny and someone else had a dollar and you both lost your money, who lost more money?
8. Why can money make it hard for someone to go to heaven?

Key concepts

The rich young man had lived a very righteous life, but he had one problem – he loved money. Jesus asked him to sell all he had and give it to the poor. Jesus did this to show the rich young man that in order to please God, nothing can be more important than loving God. God looks at what is in our hearts, not just at what we do. God wants us to love Him more than we love money or anything else.



Benevolence, Kindness

Parents

Parents' prayer

Although we can try to develop character in our children through various methods and programs, only God can bring about permanent change in a child's heart. Before you begin leading your child through this study on kindness, spend time alone with God interceding for His help. Ask Him to help you grow in the area of kindness, and to release His power in your child.

Use the sample prayer below to guide you in praying for your child's character development. If you prefer to personalize your prayers even further, read through the additional verses provided under "Scripture-guided prayer" for direction and inspiration.

Sample prayer

Gracious Saviour, when I reflect on kindness, I think of You. You exercise kindness, righteousness and justice. These are the things you delight in (Jeremiah 9:24). In Your abundant love and mercy, You gave us Your Son, Jesus, to personify Your love. Your desire is to show us the incomparable richness of Your grace, expressed in Your kindness to us in Jesus Christ. It is by Your grace we are saved (Ephesians 2:4-8). It comforts me to know that You have such far-reaching, kind-hearted, Fatherly love for us.

Your word says that whoever claims to live in Him must walk as Jesus did (1 John 2:6). That is a challenging statement! Please forgive me for the times that I get irritable and impatient, and fail to demonstrate kindness to the people whom I love most. I pray that I would be rooted and established in Your love so that I can grasp how wide, long, high and deep your love for me is! How much I need to be filled with the fullness of Your love, God (Ephesians 3:17-19)! Only with Your power at work in me is it possible for me to offer others the kindness, consideration and grace that You take pleasure in.

Lord, for my child, I pray _____ would be known as a boy/girl who is loving and kind. Please pour out Your wisdom from heaven on _____ so he/she may be pure, peace loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere (James 3:17). As _____ is hurt or feels wronged by another, I pray he/she would not pay back wrong for wrong, but that would recognize that he/she

needs to wait on You instead (Proverbs 20:22). Self-centeredness is often the root of unkindness.

Please give the wisdom to ask for Your Spirit to pour love into his/her heart so he/she can pass Your love along to others in the kind things he/she does. Enable to be considerate, doing to others as he/she would want done do himself/herself (Luke 6:31). In speech, I pray the words that come out of _____'s mouth would

benefit those who listen. May excel in encouraging others. As he/she sees another feeling down and anxious, I pray he/she would be quick to offer kind words to lift them up (Proverbs 12:25, Ephesians 4:29).

God, You are there at the playground when push comes to shove and You are familiar with the weekly grind of getting the laundry and dishes done. You know that it is often easier to be kind to a neighbour than a family member. My prayer is that we would be a family who practices kindness even when we are late, busy, tired or simply worn out. Please allow our love for You to be obvious in the way our family members interact with each other. I pray that we would be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other just as in Christ God forgave us (Ephesians 4:32). If the qualities of goodness, brotherly kindness and love are evident in our family life, we will be effective and productive for You, Lord Jesus (2 Peter 1:3-8). This is our desire. Please send Your Holy Spirit to fill our home and our hearts with kindness. Thank you God, that when we pray according to Your will, You hear us (1 John 5:14). Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for parents

Pray through one or more of the selected Scriptures under each heading. Focus on listening to God and allowing His Spirit to direct you as you pray.

Character focus

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate His love and kindness.

Psalm 36:5-9 | Jeremiah 9:23-24 | Jeremiah 31:3 | Joel 2:13 | 1 John 4:7-10

Heart search

Acknowledge when and how you are unkind.

Romans 2:1-4 | Philippians 2:3-4 | James 3:14-16 | 1 Peter 3:8-9 | 1 John 3:17-18

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have seen kindness exhibited in your family.

Family requests

Ask God to help you and your family members practice kindness.

Psalm 19:14 | 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 | Colossians 3:12-14 | 1 Thessalonians 5:11-15 | James 3:17

Kids talk with God

Use this section to help your child learn to reach out to God in all things. The sample prayers all begin with “Dear God,” however, you may use any other names for God your children are comfortable with (i.e. Jesus, Father God, Lord Jesus, Heavenly Father, Abba Father, Lord). If your son or daughter is ready to learn how to formulate their own prayers, use the verses under “Scripture-guided prayer for children” for inspiration.

Sample prayers

Dear God, I want to be kind. Help me to be kind even when I don't feel like it or when I don't think the other person deserves it. Amen.

Dear God, please show me if one of my family members (or friends) need me to be extra kind to them today. Thank you. Amen.

Dear God, You tell us not to pay back wrong for wrong, but to always try to be kind to each other (1 Thessalonians 5:15). Even when I feel someone has done something wrong, please help me to be kind. Amen.

Dear God, You are so kind to us. Thank you. Please put Your love in my heart so I can be kind to others. Amen.

Dear God, please help me to treat others as I want to be treated. Amen.

Dear God, I have been unkind (with my words/with my hands, etc.). Please forgive me and help me to have (kind words/kind hands, etc.) Thank you. Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for children

Read through one of the selected Scriptures under each heading and help your children pray based on the verse you read. Encourage them to listen to God and allow His Spirit to guide them as they pray.

Character focus

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate His love and kindness.

Psalm 34:8 | Psalm 107:1,8-9 | Jeremiah 9:24

Heart search

Acknowledge when and how you are unkind.

Philippians 2:3-4 | 1 Thessalonians 5:15 | James 3:16

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have seen kindness exhibited in your family.

Personal requests

Ask God to help you, your siblings and parents, be kind to each other.

Psalm 19:14 | Luke 6:31 | 1 Corinthians 13:4

Speak a Blessing

Your affirmation will give tremendous encouragement to your children as they strive to grow in the area of kindness. Use this section as a reminder to “speak a blessing” when you see this godly characteristic in your son or daughter.

- Good job being kind, _____.
- I see you have a lot of kindness fruit growing, _____.
- _____ is such a kind boy/girl.
- Thanks for being so kind, _____.
- You have such a kind heart, _____.
- Thank you for thinking of (name the recipient of your child's kindness), instead of yourself, _____.
- Did you know God delights when He sees kindness (Jeremiah 9:24)? I bet He is happy right now.
- _____, thank you for choosing not to pay back wrong for wrong.

Monday

Story

A Warm Fuzzy Tale
by Claude M. Steiner

Once upon a time, a long time ago, there lived two happy people called Tim and Maggie with their two children, John and Lucy. To understand how happy they were you have to understand how things were in those days.

You see in those happy days everyone was given a small, soft Fuzzy Bag when born. Any time a person reached into this bag they were able to pull out a Warm Fuzzy. Warm Fuzzies were very much in demand because whenever someone was given a Warm Fuzzy it made them feel warm and fuzzy all over.

In those days it was very easy to get Warm Fuzzies. Anytime that somebody felt like it, he might walk up to you and say, "I'd like to have a Warm Fuzzy." You would then reach into your bag and pull out a Fuzzy the size of a child's hand. As soon as the Fuzzy saw the light of day it would smile and blossom into a large, shaggy, Warm Fuzzy. When you laid the Warm Fuzzy on the person's head, shoulder or lap it would snuggle up and melt right against their skin and make them feel good all over.

People were always asking each other for Warm Fuzzies, and since they were always given freely, getting enough of them was never a problem. There were always plenty to go around, and so everyone was happy and felt warm and fuzzy most of the time.

One day a bad witch who made salves and potions for sick people became angry because everyone was so happy and feeling good and no one was buying potions and salves. The witch was very clever and devised a very wicked plan. One beautiful morning while Maggie was playing with her daughter the witch crept up to Tim and whispered in his ear,

"See here, Tim, look at all the Fuzzies that Maggie is giving to Lucy. You know, if she keeps it up she is going to run out and then there won't be any left for you!"

Tim was astonished. He turned to the witch and asked, "Do you mean to tell me that there isn't a Warm Fuzzy in our bag every time we reach into it?"

And the witch answered, "No, absolutely not, and once you run out, that's it. You don't have any more." With this the witch flew away on a broom, laughing and cackling all the way.

Tim took this to heart and began to notice every time Maggie gave away a Warm Fuzzy. He got very worried because he liked Maggie's Warm Fuzzies very much and did not want to give them up. He certainly did not think it was right for Maggie to be spending all her Warm Fuzzies on the children and other people.

Tim began to complain or sulk when he saw Maggie giving Warm Fuzzies to somebody else, and because Maggie loved him very much, she stopped giving Warm Fuzzies to other people as often, and reserved most of them for him. The children watched this and soon began to get the idea that it was wrong to give Warm Fuzzies any time you were asked or felt like it. They too became very careful. They would watch their parents closely and whenever they felt that one of their parents was giving too many Fuzzies to others, they felt jealous and complained and sometimes even had a tantrum. And even though they found a Warm Fuzzy every time they reached into their bag they began to feel guilty whenever they gave them away so they reached in less and less and became more and more stingy with them.

Before the witch, people used to gather in groups of three, four or five, never caring too much who was giving Warm Fuzzies to whom. After the coming of the witch, people began to pair off and to reserve all their Warm Fuzzies for each other, exclusively. When people forgot to be careful and gave a Warm Fuzzy to just anybody they worried because they knew that somebody would probably resent sharing their Warm Fuzzies.

People began to give less and less Warm Fuzzies, and felt less warm and less fuzzy. They began to shrivel up and, occasionally, people would even die from lack of Warm Fuzzies. People felt worse and worse and, more and more, people went to the witch to buy potions and salves even though they didn't really seem to work.

Well, the situation was getting very serious indeed. The bad witch who had been watching all of this didn't really want the people to die (since dead people couldn't buy his salves and potions), so a new plan was devised.

Everyone was given, free of charge, a bag that was very similar to the Fuzzy Bag except that this one was cold while the Fuzzy Bag was warm. Inside of the witch's bag were Cold Pricklies. These Cold Pricklies did not make people feel warm and fuzzy; in fact they made them feel cold and prickly instead. But the Cold Pricklies were better than nothing and they did prevent peoples' backs from shriveling up.

So, from then on, when somebody asked for a Warm Fuzzy, people who were worried about depleting their supply would say, "I can't give you a Warm Fuzzy, but would you like a Cold Prickly instead?"

Sometimes, two people would walk up to each other, thinking they maybe they could get a Warm Fuzzy this time, but one of them would change his mind and they would wind up giving each other Cold Pricklies instead. So, the end result was that people were not dying anymore but a lot of

people were very unhappy and feeling very cold and prickly indeed.

The situation got very complicated since the coming of the witch because there were fewer and fewer Warm Fuzzies around and Warm Fuzzies which used to be free as air, became extremely valuable.

This caused people to do all sorts of things in order to get Warm Fuzzies. People who could not find a generous partner had to buy their Warm Fuzzies and had to work long hours to earn the money.

Some people became "popular" and got a lot of Warm Fuzzies without having to give any back. These people would then sell their Warm Fuzzies to people who were "unpopular" and needed them to feel that life was worth living.

Another thing which happened was that some people would take Cold Pricklies—which were everywhere and freely available—and coated them white and fluffy so that they almost looked like Warm Fuzzies. These fake Warm Fuzzies were really Plastic Fuzzies, and they caused additional problems.

For instance, two or more people would get together and freely give each other Plastic Fuzzies. They expected to feel good, but they came away feeling bad instead. People got very confused never realizing that their cold, prickly feelings were because they had been given a lot of Plastic Fuzzies.

So the situation was very, very dismal and it all started because of the coming of the witch who made people believe that some day, when least expected, they might reach into their Warm Fuzzy Bag and find no more.

Not long ago, a young woman with big hips came to this unhappy land. She seemed not to have heard about the bad witch and was not worried about running out of Warm Fuzzies. She gave them out freely, even when not asked. They called her the Hip Woman and disapproved of her because she was giving the children the idea that they should not worry about running out of Warm Fuzzies. The children liked her very much because they felt good around her and they began to follow her example giving out Warm Fuzzies whenever they felt like it.

This made the grownups very worried. To protect the children from depleting their supplies of Warm Fuzzies they passed a law. The law made it a criminal offense to give out Warm Fuzzies in a reckless manner or without a license. Many children, however, seemed not to care; and in spite of the law they continued to give each other Warm Fuzzies whenever they felt like it and always when asked. Because they were many, many children, almost as many as grownups, it began to look as if maybe they would have their way.

As of now its hard to say what will happen. Will the grownups laws stop the recklessness of the children? Are the grownups going to join with the Hip Woman and the children in taking a chance that there will always be as many Warm Fuzzies as needed?

Will they remember the days their children are trying to bring back when Warm Fuzzies were abundant because people gave them away freely ?

The struggle spread all over the land and is probably going on right were you live. If you want to, and I hope you do, you can join by freely giving and asking for Warm Fuzzies and being as loving and healthy as you can.

Attention Grabber Activity

Everyone loves that warm, fuzzy feeling you get when someone does something nice for you. This activity builds on that concept by associating a warm, fuzzy item with acts of kindness. To get started you can use one of the many stories on the internet or the book *The Original Warm Fuzzy Tale* by Claude Steiner. You can choose any item to be a Warm Fuzzy but the most common are the yarn pom-poms that you can buy at any craft or fabric store. Use the size that is about the size of a large marble or larger. Adding eyes and construction paper feet to them gives them more „personality . You can start by giving everyone a Warm Fuzzy or just make a handful for the the group. One theory about Warm Fuzzies is that they will „die if you keep them so they must be given away. You can start the activity rather simply with the rule of only keeping it for awhile and then giving it away.

After they are in the habit of giving them away, then attach more meaning to them. Give them to someone who does something nice or someone who is having a bad day and needs some cheering up. Let this practice continue for several days or weeks. Once they are in the habit of recognizing good deeds and the needs of the others you can remove the physical object and every day just poll the class for examples of others good deeds or someone who might need a cheer. You can end the activity by having everyone make one that they must give away to someone not in the group. Each time they give it away they must explain the rules of the Warm Fuzzies.



God's Way vs My Way

Introduction

Opposites:

Benevolence vs Selfishness

What does it mean?

Giving to others' basic needs without having as my motive personal reward.

Translation:

Benevolencia vs. Egoísmo

Go to the root

From the Latin words *bene* meaning "well" and *volens* which means "willing". Can you see how Benevolence is willingly looking after the well-being of others?

How do we Sign it?

Kind

Science Connection

Monkeys and Kindness: In *The Age of Empathy*, primatologist Frans de Waal explores how monkeys engage in many acts of kindness - not always, but routinely. One of his experiments, involved capuchin monkeys who were taught to exchange plastic tokens for small pieces of apple. Two monkeys were set up as partners. If a monkey handed in a selfish token, it got a small piece of apple and its partner got nothing. With the pro-social token, however, both monkeys were equally rewarded at the same time. They tended to share, be kind to each other, especially if the monkeys already had strong social ties.

Bible Connection

Discuss some Bible verses about Benevolence:

Proverbs 11:16-17

Bible Memory Verse

1 John 3:18

God's way

I am demonstrating godly character when:

- I am kind
- I am thoughtful
- I am considerate of others

And God is pleased!

My Way

When I am tempted to:

- be unkind, tease or hurt someone
- disregard the feelings of others
- think only of myself

I know that I need to go to God for help.

The I WILL's of Benevolence

To practice Benevolence I will:

- see the needs of others as quickly as I see my own
- give freely without expecting anything in return
- not hoard things for myself
- not profit from the misfortune of others
- give more as I get more

Monday Evening

Acts of Kindness

Read

Luke 5:17-26 and Matthew 6:1-4.

Questions for discussion

1. Who brought the paralyzed man to see Jesus?
2. Have you ever done something kind for a friend?
3. Have you ever shared something with someone who needed it more than you?
4. Why did Jesus heal the paralyzed man? To bring praise to Himself or to honour God?
5. When you do kind things, who deserves the praise for your kindness?

Key concepts

Four friends brought their paralyzed friend to see Jesus so he could be healed. Jesus healed the man to bring praise to God, not Himself. When we are kind, we should do it to honour God, not ourselves.

For example, let's say you give some food to the food bank. God wouldn't want us to brag about our generosity.

However, if someone did find out about it and said how kind you were, you could give honour to God by saying, "God has blessed my family with lots of food, and we wanted to share some of it with another family."

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Kindness is contagious

At an early age, kids learn to be germ-aware. Parents regularly mention concerns about hand washing, nose blowing, nose picking, nail biting and covering mouths when coughing or sneezing. Begin by reviewing basic hygiene rules and expand your discussion to tell your children that there is one germ that they are welcome to spread all over the place: the kindness germ!

Kindness is as contagious as the common cold. Explain that when we are kind to each other, it softens our hearts and makes us want to be kind to others as well.

Discuss ways you can spread "kindness germs" everywhere! Throughout the course of your study, whenever your children wash their hands, cough, sneeze or blow their noses, it can be a reminder to ask God to wash away any unkindness and to ask Him to help you spread kindness germs instead.

Model of Benevolence

Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, Hero of Benevolence
Nicholas, born in the 4th Century, was the only child of wealthy parents who died when Nicholas was still young. He was then raised by an Uncle, also named Nicholas, who was the bishop of Patara.

Nicholas was very generous with his family's wealth but he did most of his kind deeds in secret. He was fortunate to have both wealth and position and he used his gifts to help others. Many stories and legends surround Nicholas but in most of the stories, Nicholas was very specific in what he gave, being careful to know the true needs of those

he helped.

One of the many legends surrounding Nicholas is how he helped a poor man with three daughters. Without the funds for their dowries, the girls' outlook was dim. One night, Nicholas threw three bags of gold coins (some stories say gold balls) down the chimney. The gold landed in the girls' stockings they had hung by the fire to dry. This is one version of how the Christmas stocking began. The practice of putting oranges in the stockings is a remembrance of the gold Nicholas put in the stockings.

Nicholas is revered as a saint among Catholic and Orthodox Christians and is honored by various Anglican and Lutheran churches. In Germany, children hang stockings on his feast day, December 6, to be filled with goodies. The tradition is also honored in many other European countries. While it is not widely celebrated in the United States, some cities of strong German heritage do observe the tradition.

Bible Connection

The Parable of the Good Samaritan - Love Your Neighbors (Luke 10:25 - 37)

Hook

Write the word "love" on the board (or a piece of paper to display). Ask the children to close their eyes and imagine someone they love. Then, take volunteer answers. Try to restate the children's answers into statements about who we should love.

- If a child says "mom" ... you say "Good answer, we should love our moms - God wants us to love our moms.
- If a child says "friends" ... you say "Good answer, we should love our friends - God wants us to love our friends.

Say:

These are all good answers, but today we are going to learn that God wants us to love everyone in our lives. Even people that we normally wouldn't like!

Book

Active Listening: In the story we are going to read from the Bible, Jesus tells a man what it really means to love your neighbor. In that story there are three characters. Listen carefully to see which person really showed love.

Read (and summarize) Luke 10:25-37. Be sure to engage the children with good story telling. Characters the children are listening for:

1. Priest

2. Levite
3. Samaritan

Another Way To Say:

Jesus said that we should love our neighbors as ourselves. Have volunteers suggest another way to say the same thing with different words.

Look/Took:

Agree or Disagree: Tell the children that you are going to read some statements that might be ways to love your neighbor. Ask them to stand if they agree. If they disagree they should sit down with arms crossed. Relate each example back to the idea of loving your neighbor.

1. We don't need to help people if we are watching our favorite TV show.
2. We should be extra nice to kids at school who have trouble making friends.
3. We should obey our parents right away.

Act It Out: Ask for volunteers to act out the story. For variation, assign several older students as 'project leaders' to coach a group of younger students to act out the parable.

Test: Ask for volunteers to suggest ways they can show love to people in their lives.

Prayer: Lead the children in a time of prayer.

Bible Memory Verse

1 John 3:18

The I WILL's of Benevolence

Review

Tuesday Evening

Love your enemies

Read

Luke 6:27-36 and 1 John 3:16-18.

Questions for discussion

1. Is it easy to be kind? If so, when?

2. When are you tempted to be unkind?
3. Who does Jesus say we are to be kind to?
4. Who can help us show love to those who are unkind to us?
5. How did Jesus show He loves us?
6. How can we show love to others?
7. Do you know anyone who needs something that you have?

Key concepts

Jesus talked about a common saying, "Love your neighbour and hate your enemy." He said that He didn't agree. Instead, Jesus encouraged His followers to love their enemies and pray for those who were unkind to them. The Bible says that Jesus showed His love for us by "laying down his life" (dying on the cross for our sins). 1 John 3:16-18 also tells us that the best way to show we have God's love in our hearts is to share what we have with those who need it.

Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

GoodSamaritan_500.MOV (2:40)

Discussion & Bible Connection

Warm-Up

The dictionary defines the word benevolence as an act of kindness. Being kind is putting love into action.

Introduction

Florence Nightingale was born in England in 1820. She had every privilege available but was bored with her life and wanted to do something useful. As she became a young woman she felt most content when she was caring for the poor and sick near her home. At age 33 she became a nurse in a nearby hospital.

When England and France entered into war against Russia, the British government asked Florence to lead a team of nurses to Crimea (now Turkey). There she spent the days and nights trying to improve the way sick and wounded soldiers were care for. Florence used her own money to buy clean clothes, food and medical supplies for the soldiers. All of her time was spent helping others.

A friend summed up her life: "To give less than every ounce of strength would not have been enough for Florence - would not be what God expected of her. For God was the only master she would acknowledge...the work she did was His work. In that thought was all the reward, all the pleasure she desired. Her only thought was, 'Thy will be done.'"

(Adapted from Hero Tales, by Dave & Neta Jackson, Bethany House, 1997, pp. 117-126).

Question:

What's so important about being kind? [It's important to God, to cheer someone up, it honors God, because God has been kind to you].

The first reason is because it's important to God. Kindness ranks right up there with the biggies on God's All-Star Attitude List: "Love, joy peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control" (Galatians 5:22-23).

Jesus said, 37 "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:37-39).

Loving someone is about as important a thing to God as anything we can do. The apostle Paul puts it this way: "Love is kind" (1 Corinthians 13:4). So being kind to someone is loving them.

Let's visit a familiar story from the Bible that's all about kindness.

Benevolence: The Good Samaritan

(Text: Luke 10:30-35)

"In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. 31 A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. 32 So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. 34 He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. 35 The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. "Look after him," he said, "and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have."

Jewish people despised Samaritans. Samaritans had

different beliefs than Jewish people and the Jews did not want to associate with them. But it was more important for this Samaritan to ignore those differences and be kind to the Jewish man that was hurt.

Question:

Are there people you know of who may be hurt because they get passed by on the other side of the hall at school?

Perhaps:

- Someone who is of a different color or a different race.
- Someone who is not very attractive.
- Someone who doesn't seem as smart as others.
- Someone who doesn't wear the "right kind" of clothes.
- Someone who is new in town.
- Someone who has a physical defect.

Question:

How can you practice kindness to someone at school today?

So the first reason to be kind is because it's important to God.

A second reason to be kind is found in the Book of Proverbs. "An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers a man up" (Proverbs 12:25).

Sometimes, people just need to be cheered up. Rather than ignoring someone who seems to be down, say a kind word to cheer that person up.

A third reason is also found in Proverbs. "Whoever is kind to the needy honors God" (Proverbs 14:31).

Do you know any people with needs?

Perhaps:

- Someone who is new in school without any friends.
- Someone whose family is poor.
- Someone not included in the "in group."
- Someone who is always picked last when making up the teams.
- Someone with a learning disability.

It honors God when you are kind and help people with needs. Think about needs that you have that you would like someone to be kind to you about.

Question:

What about when someone does something wrong to you? Should you be kind then?

The Bible says, "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you" (Ephesians 4:32).

The fourth reason is because God has been kind to you. The Psalms say: "He [God] does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities [wickedness]. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear [respect] him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our sins from us" (Psalm 103:10-12). If God treated us as we deserve, none of us would have hope of an abundant and eternal life because He wouldn't have sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to die so that our sins may be forgiven.

Showing kindness:

1. Is important to God.
2. Can cheer a person up.
3. Honors God.
4. Reflects the kindness God shows toward us.

Question:

How can you practice kindness to someone today?

Bible Memory Verse

1 John 3:18

The I WILL's of Benevolence

Review

Wednesday Evening

David, Abigail and Nabal

Read

1 Samuel 25:2-42 and Psalm 94:1-2.

Questions for discussion

1. Have you ever been kind to someone and they were mean in return?
2. How did that make you feel?
3. In this story, what did David do that was kind to Nabal?
4. What did Nabal do when David asked him for a favour?
5. What was David going to do?

6. What did Abigail do?
7. What did David say to Abigail?
8. When someone is unkind to us, what are we to do?
9. What did David say about God in Psalm 94:1-2?
10. Do you always make the right choices?

Key concepts

David and his men had been very kind to Nabal's men, but when David asked Nabal for a favour, he refused to return David's kindness. This made David angry, and he was going to fight Nabal. Fortunately, Nabal's wife Abigail became aware of the situation and went to ask David to forgive her husband for his unkindness. Although David knew that it was wrong to take revenge, he was still planning to do so. In the end, David thanked Abigail for preventing him from fighting Nabal.

When we are tempted to pay someone back for their unkindness to us, we need to remember David and Nabal. God eventually did repay Nabal for his wrongdoing. It is not our job to repay someone for his or her actions; it's God's.

We need to focus on instructions we read in Proverbs 20:22: "Do not say, 'I'll pay you back for this wrong!' Wait for the Lord, and He will deliver you."

Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

Water fun

This illustration is based on Luke 6:45. The goal is to illustrate how actions and speech flow out of the attitude of our heart.

You will need two clear bottles with lids, some dirt or sediment, and water.

1. Fill two clear bottles with water. Leave one full of clean water and put the lid on it. In the second bottle put your dirt or sand and close it. To add interest, you can draw faces on the outsides of the bottles.
2. Begin by showing your children the two bottles of water. Tell them one bottle is like a child who has God's kindness in their heart, while the other one doesn't. Explain that even though they look similar,

when they get shaken up they will be able to tell the difference between the two.

3. Explain that when problems come up we can tell what is in someone's heart. Difficulties might be a fight over a toy, a disagreement over who gets to choose a video, who gets the best seat or the biggest piece of cake. Use an example that is applicable in your household. Tell kids these are life's "shake ups."
4. Then shake the bottles of water to show that during these difficult times, what is in our heart shows. The bottle with dirt in it will become cloudy, whereas the one that is pure will still appear clear during the shaking. Talk about how someone with a kind heart will react in the different situations.

Read some of the Scripture verses to reinforce this Biblical truth. Review the discussion questions and close your time by praying and asking God for a pure heart and kind speech.

Questions for discussion

- Can you clean your own heart?
- Can Mom and Dad clean it for you?
- Who can clean it?
- Think of someone you like being around. How do they show kindness to you?

Relevant Scripture

Luke 6:45
1 John 1:9
Psalm 51:10
Proverbs 22:11

Bible Connection

Cool kids are kind

Read

Luke 10:25-37.

Note: If your children have heard this story many times, you may want to tell a modern-day version alongside the Biblical account. For example, the story can be set in a schoolyard or playground situation where a child has been beaten up. Different kids who know the injured child ride by on their bikes and go by on the other side of the street, fearing that they may get beaten up, too.

Finally, a kid comes along from another neighbourhood who doesn't even know the hurt kid. He stops to help and takes him to a house and offers to pay for the bandages.

After telling the modern version, ask your children to explain how your modern-day version paralleled the Bible story of the Good Samaritan.

Questions for discussion

1. How do you feel when you see someone else is hurt?
2. What do you do?
3. Why did the Levite or priest (or neighbourhood children, in the case of the modern-day story) not stop to help the injured person?
4. Who did stop and why do you think they decided to help?
5. What would Jesus have done?
6. Can you think of a time when you might be tempted to avoid helping someone?
7. If a mean kid got hurt, would you laugh and think, "Serves him right!" or would you offer to help?
8. Can you think of anyone in your neighbourhood who needs your help?

Key concepts

Jesus told this story to help people understand that it is important to show love to everyone. If we only show compassion to some people, we are not truly sharing God's love with others. The Samaritan in the story showed love to the injured man because he had pity on him and cared for him. The Levite and the priest, although they were considered to be spiritual leaders, did not show God's love to the injured man.

Jesus ended the story by saying, "Go and do likewise." We show true compassion and kindness when we go out of our way to help someone else. Jesus expects us to share His love and kindness with people we don't even know.

Bible Memory Verse

1 John 3:18

The I WILL's of Benevolence

Review

Thursday Evening

God's kindness

Read

Acts 14:17, Ephesians 2:7 and Titus 3:4-7.

Questions for discussion

1. Do you think God is kind?
2. How can you know that He is?
3. How does God show us kindness?
4. When someone is kind to you, do you tell other people about their kindness?
5. How can you tell someone else about how God is kind to you?

Key concepts

God shows us kindness by caring for us. He sends us rain to help farmers grow crops to feed us. He provides food for us and fills our hearts with joy! He also showed us His love by sending His Son Jesus to die on the cross to take the punishment for our sins.

When we are kind to others, it is a good way to share God's love with them. We should also be prepared to tell others how God shows His kindness to us.

For example, it may be a rainy day and you may feel like complaining. Instead of whining about the weather, we should thank God for the rain and be happy because it reminds us that God is showing us kindness.

Friday

Bible Memory Verse

1 John 3:18

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

1 John 3:18

Bible Connection

Jesus is kind to children

Read

Mark 10:13-16

Questions for discussion

1. What does it mean to hurt someone's feelings?
2. How do people hurt your feelings?
3. Did the disciples consider the feelings of the little children?
4. What did Jesus do for the children?
5. How can we bless other people?
6. How can we show others that we think they are valuable?

Key concepts

Ignoring others, leaving them out or telling them to go away is unkind and will likely hurt their feelings. We can be a blessing to others by treating them as though they are valuable. This is what Jesus did when the parents brought their children to Him.

The I WILL's of Benevolence

Review

Friday Evening

David's kindness

Read

2 Samuel 9

Prior to reading this story, give a brief history of who Jonathan was and the friendship between David and Jonathan:

Saul was the King of Israel. Unfortunately, Saul was not a king who pleased God, so God chose to give the honour of being the king to another person (1 Samuel 15). The one God chose to be the next king was David, a young man who worked for King Saul.

David spent a lot time in the palace and became very good friends with Saul's son, Jonathan. After some time, King Saul became so jealous of David that he wanted to kill him. Even

so, Jonathan remained David's best friend. Jonathan even gave up his position as the next king of Israel for David, and he risked his life to defend David. Jonathan died in battle before David was made king of Israel.

Questions for discussion

1. Who was Mephibosheth?
2. Who was David?
3. Who do you think ate at the king's table?
4. What do you think it would be like to eat at the king's house?
5. How did David show God's kindness to Mephibosheth?
6. How can you be kind to those who are less fortunate than we are?

Key concepts

David wanted to show kindness to the family members of his friend Jonathan. He did this by returning property and honour to one of Jonathan's remaining relatives. David honoured him by having him eat with him at his own table.



Decisiveness

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

You Choose

For this activity, you will need old magazines or newspapers that can be cut up. You will also need to provide a container in which they will place their cut-outs. The container is the "Magic Hat/ Bucket/ Bag/ Whatever. It does not need to be anything particularly fancy - imagination works fine! Explain that anything placed in the Magic Bag will come true. The task you will give them is to tell their idea of how they would change the world.

Provide the students time to look through the magazines/newspapers for a picture or a phrase that identifies how they want to change the world. They must pretend that the picture they choose will come true if they place it in the Magic Bag. Once everyone has chosen their picture, allow each student to share their wish as they place it in the Magic Bag. (Make sure they know ahead of time they will be sharing their wish.)

If time does not allow for the picture search, you can allow them time to sketch a picture or write a few words before sharing and placing it in the Magic Bag. When all have shared, sum up what the world would look like if their wishes all came true. Point out any common values that are prominent in the wishes as well as the diversity of the responses.

Introduction

Opposites:

Decisiveness vs Doublemindedness / Decisiveness vs Procrastination

What does it mean?

The ability to recognize key factors and finalize difficult decisions.

Translation:

Dominio propio vs. Desenfreno

Go to the root

Decisiveness comes from the Latin root *caedere* which means "to cut; to strike". Adding the prefix *de-* ("off") gives

the meaning to cut off. Can you see how decisiveness *cuts* to the heart of a matter?

How do we Sign it?

Decide

Bible Connection

Read & Discuss

1 Kings 18:21

Joshua 24:15

Bible Memory Verse

Prov 3:6

The I WILL's of Decisiveness

To practice Decisiveness I will:

- Not look back
- Do what I say
- Make the right decision and stick to it
- Look at things from more than one point of view before making up my mind
- Not give in to peer pressure

Monday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Decisiveness:

James 4:8

James 1: 6-8

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Use this poem to prompt the students to identify the woulda-coulda-shouldas in their life and then make one resolution to take some action that will turn one of them into a Did. For younger students, have them reflect on the past week to look for something they can decide to do differently.

Woulda-Coulda-Shoulda By Shel Silverstein

All the woulda-coulda-shouldas
Layin' in the sun,
Talkin' 'bout the things
They woulda-coulda-shouldas done ...
But those woulda-coulda-shouldas
All ran away and hid
From one little did.

Bible Connection

Discuss some Bible verses about Decisiveness:

1 Peter 5:8
2 Corinthians 10:5

Discussion

Model of *Decisiveness*

Anyone who has been to a hospital in an emergency situation has seen decisiveness in action. Beginning with the Triage Nurse, the medical staff are trained in decisiveness. They have studied many years and trained under experienced doctors so that they can recognize key factors in a situation and react appropriately.

In "The Critical Decision Vortex: Lessons From the Emergency Room", Jean-Francois Coge, of California Polytechnic State University and Eugene Keller, of French Hospital Medical Center, San Luis Obispo, CA propose "that the critical decision vortex emerges from a discussion between an emergency room (ER) doctor and a management scholar. The experience of the doctor diagnosing and treating patients in the ER provides the background for a reflection on decision making in critical conditions.

One of the main findings of this collaborative effort is that to be effective, ER doctors, like managers, need to remain centered in the critical decision vortex; they need to attend equally to their analytical conclusions, the intuitive hunches that come from their experience, and remain open and attentive to their emotions."

Can you think of some Synonyms for decisive?

Conclusive, pivotal, key, critical, significant, strong-minded, resolute, determined, clear-sighted, focused

Can you think of some Antonyms for decisive:

Insignificant, uncertain, unfocused, wavering

Bible Memory Verse

Prov 3:6

The I WILL's of Decisiveness

Review

Tuesday Evening

Discussion

Would you say the following examples from the Bible were decisive or double-minded?

Eve in the Garden of Eden (double-minded)
King Saul (double-minded)
Abraham (decisive)
Queen Esther (decisive)

The Example of Jesus to Us:

Matthew 6:24. "No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money."

Mark 3:24. "If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand."

Jesus was always intentional and decisive. The Bible says he was tempted in every way as a human is tempted, yet he never wavered. He knew the purpose for which he was born on this Earth, and he was faithful to seek and obey the will of the Father, even unto death.

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Wednesday

Bible Connection

Discuss some Bible verses about Decisiveness:

1 Thessalonians 5:21
1 Corinthians 14:33

Bible Memory Verse

Prov 3:6

The I WILL's of Decisiveness

Review

Wednesday Evening

Discussion

We live in a "wishy-washy" world. Even some Christians are "wishy-washy". They can't make up their mind in so many circumstances. They SAY they believe one thing and yet when put to the test - relent, give in and go against what they SAID. God's Word is clear about those that are double-minded. James 1:8 says *"he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does."* Instability is one characteristic of a double-minded man. They are easily swayed. They easily change their mind to fit whatever the circumstance, whoever they are around or whatever is going on at the moment. They are not "steadfast".

The Bible is clear - we should "MAKE UP OUR MINDS" and stick with it. Moses made up his mind and stuck with it - Hebrews 11:24-26 and Joshua made up his mind even though it wasn't popular - Joshua 24:14,15.

The first key to being decisive is to choose who we are going to serve with our heart and life. Deciding to follow the Lord means setting aside anything, everything and anyone

that competes with Him in our hearts and lives. Joshua 24:14,15.

It's time for Christians to have the mind of Christ - a decisive mind. What about you? Do you find yourself tossed to and fro? Do you change your mind often? Are you easily swayed? Are you one who prays, makes a decision and STICKS WITH IT? The Lord desires for us to be DECISIVE and not DOUBLE-MINDED.

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Thursday

Bible Connection

Decision Making

We face decisions every day. How can we determine the best choices to make, especially in the big decisions and the ones that seemingly have no clear answer?

It's interesting to consider the decisions Abram (later called Abraham) and Lot made in a conflict situation and the outcomes of those decisions. The story is told in Genesis 13:5-15 (New Living Translation):

"Now Lot, who was traveling with Abram, was also very wealthy with sheep, cattle, and many tents. But the land could not support both Abram and Lot with all their flocks and herds living so close together. There were too many animals for the available pastureland. So an argument broke out between the herdsmen of Abram and Lot. At that time Canaanites and Perizzites were also living in the land. "Then Abram talked it over with Lot. 'This arguing between our herdsmen has got to stop,' he said. 'After all, we are close relatives! I'll tell you what we'll do. Take your choice of any section of the land you want, and we will separate. If you want that area over there, then I'll stay here. If you want to stay in this area, then I'll move on to another place.'

"Lot took a long look at the fertile plains of the Jordan Valley in the direction of Zoar. The whole area was well watered everywhere, like the garden of the Lord or the beautiful land of Egypt. (This was

before the Lord had destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.)

"Lot chose that land for himself—the Jordan Valley to the east of them. He went there with his flocks and servants and parted company with his uncle Abram. So while Abram stayed in the land of Canaan, Lot moved his tents to a place near Sodom, among the cities of the plain. The people of this area were unusually wicked and sinned greatly against the Lord. "After Lot was gone, the Lord said to Abram, 'Look as far as you can see in every direction. I am going to give all this land to you and your offspring as a permanent possession.'"

There's more to this story, of course. But it is interesting to note that God blessed Abram's generous decision for peace. Lot, on the other hand, did not see the spiritual danger he was putting his family in by choosing the fertile but corrupt area of Sodom.

What Does the Bible Say About Decision Making?

The Bible is especially designed to help us make the *most* important decision, the decision to repent, change and follow Jesus Christ for the rest of our lives (Acts 2:38; 1 John 2:6). God tells us to put Him first, to obey Him and thus choose eternal life and blessings (Matthew 6:33; Deuteronomy 30:19-20).

All other decisions in life should contribute toward that ultimate decision and goal. We must avoid decisions that will detract from putting God and His righteousness first in our life.

But not every decision is a choice of good versus evil. Many of our daily decisions have multiple acceptable options. Some of our biggest decisions also have a variety of possible choices, like what career to pursue, who to marry and where to live. Thankfully the Bible also gives us principles that can help us identify and choose the best options. Let's explore biblical wisdom to find some of those keys.

What is the starting point in finding wisdom?

Proverbs 1:7
Proverbs 2:2-6
Proverbs 3:5-6

When we understand how great God is and see how small we are, we will grow in a proper reverence and fear of God. That leads us to ask for His guidance and to study His Bible to grow not just in knowledge but in understanding of the

principles behind those facts. Meditating on and applying that biblical knowledge and understanding with God's Spirit leads to godly wisdom.

So we seek wisdom when we fear God, pray for His help and study His Bible to find principles that apply to the decisions we face.

How else does the Bible tell us to seek wisdom?

Proverbs 11:14

Trusted experts and wise individuals can be a good source of advice. Other people may see our problem from a different angle than we would, allowing them to provide possible solutions we might not see.

How should we approach defining and understanding the problem—the decision we face?

Proverbs 22:3

Proverbs 18:13

John 7:24

A wise person carefully looks ahead to the end, trying to foresee the likely long-term consequences, before making a decision to plunge ahead.

For an important decision, we must invest the time to get the facts, to examine the situation more than superficially and to clearly define the problem. When we are able to accurately state the problem or opportunity, we will be able to see the shape of the ideal solution more clearly.

But determining how to get to that ideal solution can still be challenging. Brainstorm for possible options and include the advice of the counselors you are consulting. So we end this phase of decision making with a clearly stated problem and a list of possible solutions to choose from.

How should we make our decision?

Deuteronomy 30:19

Luke 14:28-30

If a possible solution requires disobeying a biblical principle, delete that option from your list. Then compare the remaining options with positive biblical principles, wise advice from others, the likelihood of success and the effects your decision will have on others. Carefully weigh the pros and cons and "count the cost."

If the decision is still not clear, you may need to repeat some of the fact-finding, brainstorming and wisdom-seeking steps. In the end, if there are two or more options that seem equally good, you may have to just decide and then act on your decision. Indecision and inaction can sometimes

be worse than a less-than-perfect solution (as long as it does not violate biblical principles).

When we strive to seek God's wisdom and follow biblical principles, we can entrust our decisions and the worries that naturally accompany them to God (Proverbs 3:5-6; Matthew 6:33-34).

Bible Memory Verse

Prov 3:6

The I WILL's of Decisiveness

Review

Thursday Evening

Choosing to put God first

A man goes to the store and buys a guitar. It's a real fancy guitar, extremely expensive and top of the line. What sets this man apart is that he has never played the guitar. He doesn't know the first thing about it. He tells himself that he'll learn after he buys the guitar. Therefore, he spends, buys the guitar, and takes it home. A few years later the man goes through his closet and finds the guitar still sitting in the closet, unused and collecting dust.

He never made it a priority to learn how to play. His family would ask him to do things for them and he would. His friends would ask him to play golf and he would. His employer would ask him to stay late and he would. His favorite TV show would be on and he would watch it. His favorite sports team would play and he would follow it. He never put aside any of those things or any number of others and he never spent any time to learn how to play that guitar. He always said he would get to it later, but he never did. Sometimes Christians do the same thing with God, choosing to do other things, planning on doing what God has said later. Things just get in the way.

Putting God first is something that is talked about, but which is rarely understood or practiced. Christians say that God comes first in their lives, but does what we practice reveal this to be true? How often do we actually study our bibles, go to a bible study, a sing, a prayer meeting, or ANYTHING that has to do with God? Then how much time do we substitute watching TV, going to the movies, reading

another book, going to a sporting event or working extra hours? We may say God comes first, but our lives may not reflect it. How often have parents allowed their kids to regularly miss worship services so that they could participate in some extracurricular activities, and then wondered why those children later grew up without any dedication to God or to godly things? Why would we wonder?

In **Matthew 6: 33** Jesus said, *but you must seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and then all these other things shall be added to you.* The people then were concerned about the necessities: clothing, food, and daily life. Who isn't? But they were more concerned about those things than with serving God. Jesus told them not to put those things in first place in their lives. If they would serve God, they would have the things they truly needed. Do we believe that any better now than they did then?

~
Again, the kingdom of Heaven is compared to treasure being hidden in the field, which finding, a man hid; and for the joy of it, he goes and sells all things, as many as he has, and buys that field.

Again, the kingdom of Heaven is compared to a man, a merchant seeking excellent pearls; who finding one very precious pearl, going away has sold all things, as many as he had, and bought it.

(Matthew 13: 44 - 46)

.....
Friday

Bible Memory Verse

Prov 3:6

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Prov 3:6

The I WILL's of Decisiveness

Review

Friday Evening

Read & Discuss some Bible Scriptures about
Decisiveness

John 14:15
John 15:10

Patience

Parents

Parents' prayer

Before you begin leading your child through this study, spend time alone with God interceding for His help. Ask Him to help you grow in patience, and to release His power in your child. Use the sample prayer below to guide you in praying for your child's character development. If you prefer to personalize your prayers even further, read through the additional verses provided under "Scripture-guided prayer" for direction and inspiration.

Sample prayer

God of Love, You demonstrate Your patience for us through Your continual forgiveness of sin. Day after day I fail, yet Your Word assures me of Your enduring love and forgiveness (Psalm 13:5-6, Psalm 85:2-3). It is the riches of Your kindness, tolerance and patience that lead us to repentance (Romans 2:4). Thank you for Your Son Jesus, and for the way he modeled patience with His disciples. Jesus was exasperated with them to the point that He said, "How long must I put up with you?" Yet he still continued to mentor them in the "little faith" they had (Matthew 17:14-21).

Thank you for Your unending patience with all of us. Please forgive me for my impatience, especially when _____. God, I ask that You would enable me to have patience with the everyday innocent and not-so-innocent failings of my children. It is my job to teach them how to be Your little disciples. Please enable me to reprimand my children and restore them with gentleness and mercy as You do. Thank you, that with Your help, I can be patient as You are. Not a day goes by, that I don't need Your Holy Spirit poured out in me so I can be Christlike in my patience, especially with those who live in our home, or _____. (List any other items that challenge your patience personally).

Lord Jesus, I pray You would help me to put up with others, to forgive whatever complaints I have with them and forgive as You forgave me (Colossians 3:13). To live in way that is worthy of You and to bear fruit that is pleasing to You, I need to be strengthened with all power according to Your glorious might (Colossians 1:10-12).

I pray as (your child) grows in You, that he/she would be patient with everyone, not paying back wrong for wrong but instead, he/she would always try to be kind to others (1

Thessalonians 5:14b-15). When things are not going 's way, he/she may be tempted to be impatient with You or others. Please give the faith to trust in Your perfect timing, the patience to wait on You, and the strength to be joyful in hope, patient in affliction and faithful in prayer (Romans 12:12, Psalm 130:5). As circumstances and people are difficult, I ask that would remember to come to You for help when he/ she is tempted to be impatient. In Jesus' name, I pray against any plan Satan would have to cause impatience to take root in 's life. Rather, I ask that You shape 's character, through the power of Your Holy Spirit, so he/she will be patient and gracious as You are.

Lord, I pray that as a family we could be completely humble and gentle, patient, and bearing with one another in love (Ephesians 4:2). I ask that our love for You and each other would be expressed as patience and kindness (1 Corinthians 13:3-4). Please send Your Holy Spirit to work in us so others can see Your love in us, by the way we are patient with each other. Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for parents

Read and pray through one or more of the selected Scriptures under each heading. Focus on listening to God and allowing His Spirit to direct you as you pray.

Character focus

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate His patience and forgiveness.

Nehemiah 9:5-6,29-31 | Isaiah 54:7-10 | Jeremiah 33:6-9 | 1 Timothy 1:15-17 | 2 Peter 3:9,14-15

Heart search

Acknowledge when and how you lack patience.

Psalm 37:7-8 | Proverbs 14:29 | Proverbs 15:18 | 1 Corinthians 13:4-5 | Colossians 3:13

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have seen patience exhibited in your family.

Family requests

Ask God to enable you and your children to be patient.

Proverbs 19:11 | Ephesians 4:2-3 | Colossians 1:10-14 | Colossians 3:12-14 | 1 Thessalonians 5:14-15

Kids talk with God

Use this section to help your child learn to reach out to God in all things. The sample prayers all begin with "Dear God," however, you may use any other names for God your children are comfortable with (i.e. Jesus, Father God, Lord Jesus, Heavenly Father, Abba Father, Lord).

Sample prayers

Dear God, thank You for showing me Your love by being patient with me. Please help me to show others I love them by being patient, too. Amen.

Dear God, I have been finding it hard to wait for _____. Please help me to be more patient. Amen.

Dear God, I have been bothered by _____. Please help me to be more patient with him/her. Amen.

Dear God, please send Your Holy Spirit to give me the fruit of Your Spirit, especially patience. Amen.

Dear God, I have been impatient. Please forgive me and send Your Holy Spirit to help me to be patient like You are. Amen.

Dear God, I have sinned in the way I _____. Please forgive me and help me to remember that love is patient and kind (1 Corinthians 13:4a). Amen.

Dear God, are there ways I am impatient? Please show me so I can say sorry. Amen.

Dear God, please make me more like You. Please send Your Holy Spirit to help me to be patient. Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for children

Read through one of the selected Scriptures under each heading and help your children pray based on the verse you read. Encourage them to listen to God and allow His Spirit to guide them as they pray.

Character focus

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate His patience and forgiveness.

Psalm 78:38 | 1 Timothy 1:16 | 2 Peter 3:9

Heart search

Acknowledge when and how you are impatient.

Proverbs 15:18 | 1 Corinthians 13:4-5 | Colossians 3:13

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have been patient.

Personal requests

Ask God to help you, your siblings and your parents to be patient.

Proverbs 19:11 | Ephesians 4:2 | Colossians 3:12

Speak a Blessing

Your affirmation will give tremendous encouragement to your children as they strive to grow in the area of patience. Use this section as a reminder to "speak a blessing" when you see this godly characteristic in your son or daughter.

- _____ is a patient boy/girl.
- Patience is a quality I admire so much. Thank you for being patient, _____.
- Awesome job being patient, _____!
- The Bible says you are better than a warrior or someone who can't control their temper (Proverbs 16:32)!
- _____, you are doing well to wait so quietly.
- I know it can be hard to wait when you would rather have something right away.
- You have done so well to wait _____. I am proud of your patience, and so is God.

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

Beautiful Butterfly

After learning about the monarch caterpillar and butterfly, use old crayons and wax paper to make your own beautiful butterfly. Remember that it takes a lot of patience for caterpillars to become what they were meant to be!

Use a cheese grater to shave old crayons into colorful bits and pieces. Iron the shavings between two pieces of wax paper. Cut out the wax paper in the shape of a butterfly (use image below as a template).

Make a butterfly's body using construction paper, and glue it to the middle.

Write the word "Patience" on the butterfly. If you're doing this activity as a class, you can write one or two words from the definition or one of the "I Wills" on each butterfly, and hang them in the classroom to form the whole message.

Supplies:

Old crayons, cheese grater, wax paper, iron, construction paper, scissors, glue, marker



Introduction

Opposites:

Patience vs Restlessness

What does it mean?

Accepting a difficult situation without giving a deadline to remove it.

Translation:

Paciencia
esperando con calma sin quejarse (waiting calmly without complaining)

Go to the root

The word patient comes from from Latin *patins*, present participle of *pat*, which means "to endure". Can you see how patience is related to endurance?

Idioms

To sit tight: To wait patiently; to bide one's time

Patient as Job: very patient. (Alludes to the biblical figure Job)

Out of patience: annoyed and impatient after being patient for a while.

Hold on to your hat: to slow down and be patient.

How do we Sign it?

Patient
Restless



Nature Story

Patience Nature Story (VID) (7:47)



Poem

Patience Poem (VID) (4:40)



Bible Connection

God is good

Read

Nehemiah 9

In personal preparation read Nehemiah 9, focusing on verses 7-31. Then read appropriate sections aloud to your children. Close by reading verses 29-31.

Questions for discussion

1. What good things did God do for the Israelites?
2. How did they try His patience?
3. What did God do?
4. What good things do your parents do for you?
5. Is there anything you do to continually disobey your parents and try their patience?
6. Do you think this tries God's patience, too?

Key concepts

God loved and cared for the Israelites, and we (your parents) love and care for you. When the Israelites disobeyed God, He was very patient with them, but in the end He had no choice but to discipline them.

You probably expect us to do good things for you, but you can also expect that if you disobey us, we will discipline you, too. One way we may do this is by removing privileges like treats and toys.



Bible Memory Verse

Rom 5:3-4



God's Way vs My Way

God's way

I am demonstrating godly character when:

Tuesday

- I am patient
- I am willing to wait for things
- I am tolerant of others
- I trust in God's timing

And God is pleased!

My way

When I am tempted to:

- be demanding
- be impatient
- be intolerant

I know that I need to go to God for help.

The I WILL's of Patience

To practice Patience I will:

- Change the things I can change and accept the things I can't
- Keep trying until I succeed
- Make the most of my spare time
- Not interrupt
- Not complain if I don't get my way

Monday Evening

Jesus is patient

Read

1 Timothy 1:15-16 and 2 Peter 3:9

Questions for discussion

1. How hard is it to wait for a special visitor to come and visit?
2. What happens if they are late?
3. What is Jesus waiting for people to do?
4. How is Jesus patient with us?

Key concepts

Paul talks about how Jesus displays unlimited patience, waiting for people to confess their sins. God has a lot of patience. Every day He waits for people to tell Him they are sorry they have sinned. God is so patient that He keeps waiting. He loves us all so much that He doesn't want anyone to miss out on having his or her sins forgiven (2 Peter 3:9).

Attention Grabber Activity

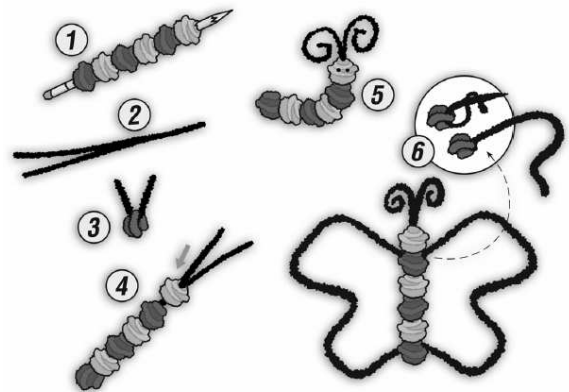
Fuzzy flyers

Use pipecleaners to make your own butterfly as a reminder to be patient!

1. Cut each of the color pipecleaners into three equal pieces and wrap around a pencil to make six bundles.
2. Next, fold one black pipecleaner in half and thread it through one of the coils. Then slide on the rest of the coils, alternating the colors. Swirl the ends of the black pipecleaners to make antennae, and draw eyes with a permanent marker.
3. Finally, shape wings from the two remaining pipecleaners and twist to the fuzzy body.

Supplies:

3 black pipecleaners
 2 color pipecleaners (different colors)
 Pen or pencil
 Black permanent marker



Discussion

The Wright Brothers: Model of Responsibility

The Wright Brothers knew that patience didn't mean being still and quiet while waiting for something to happen.

Patience was carefully researching the concept of flight and conducting tests before beginning to build anything.

Patience is what kept them focused when they were energized about successes and what kept them moving

forward when they were depressed over failures. They succeeded where others before them had failed because they had the patience to take the time to do things the "Wright" way.

Songs

Patience Song (VID) (9:15)

Poem

Patience Poem - Review

Bible Connection

The patient farmer

Read

James 5:7-9 and Mark 4:18-19.

Questions for discussion

1. How long does it take for a crop to grow?
2. What would happen if the farmer tried to harvest his crop too early?
3. What would happen if the farmer got tired of waiting and ploughed the field before it had a chance to rain?
4. What kind of crop would God like to see growing in our lives?
5. What kind of harvest does God want us to have?
6. What stops our lives from being fruitful? (Mark 4:18-19)

Key concepts

Our lives are like a different kind of farm. God wants us to be patient in helping Him bring in a harvest of people for His kingdom. Every time someone asks God to forgive their sins and tells Him they want Jesus Christ as the leader of their life, it is part of the harvest for God's kingdom. When we show God's love to others and/or tell them that God loves them, we are "farming" for God.

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 5:3-4

The I WILL's of Patience

Review

Tuesday Evening

Is God unfair?

Read

Habakkuk 3

Note: If your kids like drama, they will love this story. Read with lots of expression! Prior to reading the passage, share with your children the history of Habakkuk's time found in the summary section.

Questions for discussion

1. Does life ever seem like it is unfair?
2. Do you ever feel like your brother, sister or someone at school always gets away with being bad?

Key concepts

From the book of Habbakuk, we learn that Habbakuk was deeply concerned about the wickedness, strife and oppression in Judah. The thing Habbakuk found even more troubling was that it seemed God was doing nothing about it. Even though Habbakuk was not seeing the results he expected, he waited patiently and rejoiced in God. Likewise, when it seems like life is not fair and God is letting others get away with being bad, be patient and remember Habbakuk. Remember that God will eventually bring punishment on those who do wrong. It is not our job to punish wrongdoers, but God's. It is our job to be patient.

Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

"Patient Polly tossed a bally"

Standing in a circle with a ball, try to accomplish a set number of tosses to each other without dropping the ball. Say the rhyme below as you throw the ball, taking turns deciding what to eat for the treat when you are done

practicing patience. You may also change the person's name in the rhyme. For example, "Patient Mary tossed a cherry."
Patient Polly tossed a bally.

*This is what she said: "Are you ready for my throw?"
Things go better when we're patient, this is how I know.
I throw, you catch - then we all eat cookie dough.*

Predetermine how many passes you want to complete and what the reward will be when you meet your goal. Encourage each thrower to be patient. Talk about how being patient can help you accomplish the task. Emphasize that if you are impatient and throw the ball quickly before the other person is ready to catch it, it makes reaching the goal harder for everyone. Do not set an overly lofty goal or this activity may try the patience of the parents more than the children!



Story

Patience fruit

Tell your children a story about a child who experiences the challenges and joys of growing their own little garden. Kids love these impromptu stories, especially if it fills the time during a car ride. Here is a sample story called "Kari's garden":

Kari's garden

Kari loved springtime because she loved looking for little green leaves sprouting out of the ground. One spring, Kari's mom surprised her by telling her that she could grow her own garden. Kari hoped that her garden could grow all kinds of wonderful things that she had eaten from her grandparents' garden.

Planting patience

Soon, Kari's mother brought her to buy the seeds. "You can choose four different plants to grow,"

Kari's mother explained. Kari decided to plant carrots, peas, and strawberries because they were her some of her favourite foods. She also wanted to grow some pumpkins because she loved the big leafy vines and the golden yellow flowers.

When they came home, Kari was ready to put the seeds in the ground. "Not so quick, sweetheart," her mom said. "First, we must prepare the soil so the seeds will be happy where you put them. We need to throw away old weeds and break up any hard clumps of dirt we find."

After they had cleared the site, Kari was about to start

putting the seeds in the ground, when her mom said, "Wait! We need to read the seed package and see how deep the seeds need to be placed in the soil." Kari sighed. She was surprised how long it took to plant a garden.

Kari's mother helped her measure one-cm-deep furrows in the soil where she planted the seeds. Then, Kari watered the carrot, the peas, the strawberry plants and each hill of pumpkins.

Now that the garden was finally done, Kari's mom went inside, and Kari stayed outside to admire her garden. She wondered how the seeds were doing and decided to check on the pumpkins. She dug a little hole where she thought the pumpkin seeds were. "I wonder if they liked the water.

Maybe they are sprouting already," Kari thought. Her mom looked out the window and called to Kari, "What are you doing, Sweetie? You just planted those seeds. Why are you digging them up?"

"Oh Mommy," explained Kari, "I was just checking to see if they liked the water enough to sprout."

"Gardeners have to be patient, Kari," her mother replied.

"Your seeds will not start to sprout for a few days yet." Kari sighed again and decided to go into the house. She had no idea gardens could take so long.

Growing patience

That night, Kari dreamed about her garden and the magnificent fruit and vegetables it produced. In the morning, Kari looked out the window and saw a patch of black dirt where they had planted the seeds. Kari had to wait for almost a week before any seeds sprouted.

Soon, the carrots came up. Kari thought they looked like baby carrots. Ever so carefully, Kari pulled one up. All she saw was a teeny tiny white root that didn't look at all like a baby carrot. Kari watched and waited for the pumpkin leaves to show too. It took a little longer for them to sprout, but Kari was proud of herself for not digging down into the hill to take a look.

Kari was not so patient with the strawberries. When one turned the slightest bit pink, she gently picked it and tried to eat it. She put it in her mouth, only to find she had to spit it out! The taste was so sour!

Her mom saw Kari's reaction. She smiled and said, "I guess gardeners have to grow patience as well as fruits and vegetables." Kari laughed, too.

Finally one day, Kari noticed the baby peas forming on the vines. "What cute little pods!" she thought. "Maybe I should open one to see what is inside."

Can you guess what she found? You can imagine Kari's disappointment when all she found were eight tiny peas, each the size of the head of a pin. "I am going to get really good at practicing patience this summer," she told her dad when she showed him the miniature peas.

Tantrums don't please God

Kari was also enjoying watching the progress on her pumpkin patch. Under each "female" flower, she would find a little green ball the size of a small marble. Her dad explained that when the bees took nectar from the "male" flower, its pollen would stick to the bee and pollinate the "female" flower so it could turn into a pumpkin.

Some days, Kari would wonder if the bees were doing their job. So Kari decided she could help them. She picked a male flower and sprinkled the pollen into the female flowers to make sure that little pumpkins would form. When her father saw her doing this, he called her his friendly little bumblebee.

"Dad," she asked. "Does God think I am impatient because I am helping the bees do their job? Would He be mad?"

"No, honey," he answered. "The kind of impatience that doesn't please God is the kind that comes along with stamping of feet, whining, crying or a combination all three called a tantrum."

Unfortunately, Kari knew exactly what he meant.

Fruit of the Spirit harvest

As fall came, and the pumpkins in Kari's garden were plump and starting to turn orange, something very good and very bad happened all in the same day. Kari's two-year-old cousin, Benny, saw her beautiful pumpkins and asked, "One for Benny?"

After seeing how her dad had cut a pumpkin off the vine for her, Kari got the scissors and cut a nice, round pumpkin for Benny.

As they were walking towards the house to show his parents, Kari saw Benny throw the pumpkin on the ground. It splattered all over the concrete patio.

Benny laughed, but Kari wanted to scream and cry and jump up and down and shout. The very good part of the day was that she didn't.

"Dear God," she prayed, "please give me the same kind of patience that Grandma has." Kari had tears in her eyes when the parents came out to see what Benny was laughing about.

"Ball broke," laughed Benny. Then Kari started to laugh, too.

Benny had thought the pumpkin she had given him was a ball. That is why he threw it on the ground. Kari was so glad that she hadn't been impatient and yelled at him. It had been an innocent mistake.

Later, when Benny was leaving to go home, Kari's mom helped her pick another pumpkin to send home with Benny. Kari explained that he was supposed to eat it, not bounce it.

Benny laughed and said, "Tank oo, Kari. You are my best cousin!"

Kari's parents both gave her a big hug after their company drove off. "Kari," said her mom. "I really do see that you are letting God grow one of the fruits of his Spirit in your heart."

"Can you guess which one, Mom?" Kari asked. Smiling, her mom said, "Let me guess . . . patience?"

Kari smiled, too, and thought, "Dear God, thank You for growing patience fruit in my heart this summer!"

Bible Connection

1 Thessalonians 5:14
2 Peter 3:9

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 5:3-4

Songs

Patience Song - Review

Poem

Patience Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Patience

Review

Wednesday Evening

Being patient with others

Read

Psalm 37:1-8 and Colossians 3:13

Questions for discussion

1. When do you find it easy to get mad?
2. What do people do that bothers you and tempts you to be impatient?
3. What does the Bible say about getting mad and fretting?
4. What did David do when he was frustrated with the behaviour of other people and when he felt like things weren't fair?
5. How will you remember to "put up with" that behaviour or person in the future?
6. What will you do to help you remember to go to God?

Key concepts

It can get frustrating when it seems like someone else is "getting away with" causing trouble. Often, when someone does something wrong, we want to punish that person ourselves. But the Bible says that fretting and getting angry only leads to evil. When David got angry with people, he talked to God (Psalm 37:1-8).

God wants us to put up with each other and forgive whatever complaints we have about each other. He wants us to forgive as He forgave us (Colossians 3:13).

A suggestion to help your children remind themselves that they are "putting up" with someone is to have your children clench their hands into fists, as though they are preparing for a boxing match. Have them say, "David was a warrior, but he went to God in prayer!"

Then have them fold their hands into a praying position and talk to God about what is bothering them. They can select one of the kids talk with God prayers to pray.

Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity & Bible Connection

Rewarding cotton balls

Start by decorating a clear bottle or jar with fruit stickers or pictures. Explain the connection between patience and the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). Tell your children that each time they are able to wait patiently for something, you will give them a cotton ball for their bottle or jar.

Explain that when we are soft-hearted towards one another like the soft cotton, we will be patient with each other, rather than short-tempered or easily irritated.

Each child's goal is to see if they can fill his/her jar to the top. Pray one of the kids talk with God prayers with your children to encourage them before you begin awarding cotton balls.

There is a famous exercise for diffusing anger that requires a person to count to 10. Most of us forget to do it. Instead of counting to 10, you could have your children count the cotton balls in his/her jar as a patience exercise.

Alternatively, when you see your children being tempted to be impatient, encourage them to say their Bible memory verse. For a Biblical perspective, read aloud your choice of the Bible verses listed below.

Let your children know beforehand that when their container is full, you will celebrate by playing some silly games with the cotton balls. Ideas include using tape to stick the cotton balls onto parents' faces or having a snowball fight with them.

Relevant Scripture

Galatians 5:22-23
Proverbs 14:17
Proverbs 16:32
Proverbs 17:27
Proverbs 25:28
Proverbs 29:11
Proverbs 29:20
Ecclesiastes 7:9

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 5:3-4

Songs

Patience Song - Review

Poem

Patience Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Patience

Review

Thursday Evening

Patience in nature

Animals display significant patience while incubating their eggs. Many go for significant lengths of time without food and water while waiting for their eggs to hatch. Use the questions for discussion to introduce your children to the idea of birds being patient. Birds usually incubate their eggs for at least a couple of weeks prior to their chicks hatching.

- How long does a bird have to sit on her eggs before they hatch?
- What would happen if the bird became impatient and went away, leaving her eggs for too long?
- Is there anything you have a hard time waiting for?

For a patience reminder, ask your children to practice making a bird noise or chirping the next time they are tempted to be impatient. You may also want to start chirping like a bird as a reminder when you see a child beginning to get impatient.

Birds can remind all of us that being patient has its own reward. For their patience, the birds are rewarded with a nest full of baby birds. Likewise, when family members are patient with each other, their reward is a peaceful household.

Read & Discuss

Psalm 37:7

Friday

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 5:3-4

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Rom 5:3-4

Bible Connection

Discuss some Bible verses about Patience

1 Corinthians 13:4

Galatians 5:22-23

Ephesians 4:2

Colossians 3:13

Songs

Patience Song - Review

Poem

Patience Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Patience

Review

Friday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Patience

Proverbs 14:29

Proverbs 15:18

Proverbs 16:32

Proverbs 19:11

Gentleness

Parents

Parents' prayer

Whenever we guide our children toward greater integrity, it's like stepping into the spotlight: our own weaknesses are suddenly highlighted and our unabashed youngsters are quick to point them out. As you spend time in private prayer preparing for this lesson on gentleness, use the following prayer to help you fully embrace the opportunity to "tune up" in this area as well. If you prefer to personalize your prayer, read through the additional verses provided under "Scripture-guided prayer" for direction and inspiration.

Sample prayer

Abba Father, You tend Your flock like a gentle shepherd, gathering lambs in Your arms and carrying them close to Your heart (Isaiah 40:11). Jesus said, "I am gentle and humble in heart" and offers us rest for our souls (Matthew 11:29). Thank you for being our gentle Father and Master. Our sin is deserving of severe consequences, but You continually restore us with gentle prompting and unending grace.

Lord, I desire to have a gentle spirit, which is of great worth in Your sight (1 Peter 3:4). Please send Your Spirit to shape the inclinations of my heart to be kind and tender. In Your Word it says that if someone is caught in sin, those who are spiritual should restore him gently (Galatians 6:1). So often when I correct my children, it is not with gentleness. I humbly ask You to forgive me for being harsh and acknowledge my need for Your Spirit to live in me. Please remind me often of Your gentle grace and prompt me to offer Your love and forgiveness to others.

Jesus, as parents brought their children to You, so I bring before You. Please put Your gentle hands on and bless him/her with the presence of the Holy Spirit in his/her life, especially in the area of gentleness. It is such an attractive quality in anyone – boys, girls, men and women! I pray that others would be drawn to You because shares Your love and grace with others. In the daily grind of life when someone treats in a way that bothers him/her, I ask that You would remind him/her, that "A gentle turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger" (Proverbs 15:1). At play, when interacts with other children, help him/her to be gentle in his/her speech and actions. Satan is sure to tempt to use his/her hands or words to hurt others, to be unforgiving or quick to

point out fault in others. Please send Your Holy Spirit to work in 's life, filling his/her heart with Your love, prompting him/her to be gentle, gracious and tolerant with others.

Lord, I pray that our family would be a welcome contrast to the harsh and unforgiving world we live in. Please allow our gentleness to be evident to all whom we have contact with. Let us be gentle because we know You are near (Philippians 4:5). I ask that gentleness, among the other fruits of Your Spirit, would be reflected in our actions and in our communication, letting others know You are Lord of our hearts and our home. Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for parents

Pray through one or more of the selected Scriptures under each heading. Focus on listening to God and allowing His Spirit to direct you as you pray.

Character focus

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate His gentleness and grace.

Isaiah 40:11 | Jonah 4:1-2,10-11 | Matthew 11:28-30 | Luke 13:34 | Galatians 5:22-23

Heart search

Acknowledge where and how you lack gentleness personally. Proverbs 3:31-32 | Proverbs 15:1 | Galatians 5:24 - 6:1 | Ephesians 4:29-32 | Titus 3:1-2

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have seen gentleness exhibited within your family.

Family requests

Ask God to help you and your family to be gentle in your thoughts and actions.

Luke 11:11-13 | Galatians 5:25 | Colossians 3:12-14 | Philippians 4:5 | James 3:17

Kids talk with God

Use this section to help your child request God's help to grow in gentleness. The sample prayers all begin with "Dear

God," however, you may use any other names for God your children are comfortable with (i.e. Jesus, Father God, Lord Jesus, Heavenly Father, Abba Father, Lord). If your child is ready to formulate an original prayer, you'll find helpful verses in the "Scripture-guided prayer for children" section.

Sample prayers

Dear God, please help me to be a boy/girl who is gentle in the things I say and do. Amen.

Dear God, I need to talk to someone who has done wrong. Please help me to do it in a gentle way. Amen.

Dear God, when I am angry or upset, please help me to be gentle in the things I say and do instead of being harsh or mean. Amen.

Dear God, please tell me if there are ways I could be more gentle. Amen.

Dear God, please send Your Holy Spirit to help me to be gentle. Amen.

Dear God, Jesus was so gentle! Please help me to be like Him. Amen.

Dear God, I have been instead of being gentle with my words/hands. Please forgive me and send Your Holy Spirit to help me be gentle. Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for children

Read through one of the selected Scriptures under each heading and help your children pray based on the verse you read. Encourage them to listen to God and allow His Spirit to guide them as they pray.

Character focus

Begin by telling God that you appreciate His gentleness and grace.

1 Kings 19:10-13 | Jonah 4:2 | Matthew 11:28-29

Heart search

Acknowledge when and how you are not gentle.
Proverbs 15:1 | 1 Corinthians 13:4-5 | Ephesians 4:29

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have been gentle. Personal requests
Ask God to help you, your siblings and your parents to be gentle in your thoughts and actions.

Ephesians 4:2 | Colossians 3:12 | Colossians 3:13-14

Speak a Blessing

Breaking old, sinful habits is hard work. But your enthusiastic affirmation will help your child find the determination they need to keep striving to be their best. Here are some ideas you can use to compliment your child as they grow in gentleness.

- I know you are gentle, _____. You have such kind and tender hands.
- I know you are gentle, _____, because you use such kind words.
- _____ is a gentle boy/girl.
- Thank you, _____. We all appreciate it when you are gentle.
- You have gentle hands, just like Jesus!
- Gentleness is a quality I admire so much.

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

Make a "gentleness quilt"

Directions

1. Begin by helping each of your children cut a rectangular shape from stiff cardboard. A cereal box works well if you use the neutral grey/brown side.
2. Next, help your children draw squares on the cardboard to form a "patchwork quilt." You can make a more elaborate design if you wish, perhaps including a heart to represent love.
3. Write a memory verse of your choice on the cardboard backing.
4. Sort through your fabric supply or visit a store to find cloth for your quilt. As you choose materials, ask your children to select those that remind them of gentleness. This will likely be fabrics that are soft or silky. Be sure to have them touch some burlap and other scratchy types of cloth, too, so they can feel the difference. Choose a variety of colours and textures so that they can be arranged in a pattern.
5. Next, prepare the small squares of fabric that will be pasted on to the sketch of the quilt. Cut them

into the same sizes and shapes that have been drawn on the cardboard.

- To get the quilt started, allow your children to select one cloth square to paste on the cardboard. During the week, when you see your children being gentle, reward them with a square to add to their quilt. Practice saying the memory verse each time a square is added.

Other ideas

If you are skilled with a sewing machine, you may want to work with your children to make a real quilt they can keep and use for a doll or a stuffed animal.

Introduction

Opposites:

Gentleness vs Harshness

What does it mean?

Showing consideration and personal concern for others.

Translation:

Ternura vs. *dureza*

demonstrando importancia y preocupacion personal por otros (demonstrating importance and concern for others)

Idioms

A gentle giant - a man who is very tall and strong, but has a very quiet, gentle character that does not match his appearance

Be as gentle as a lamb - to be very calm and kind

How do we sign it?

Gentle

Harsh

Activity

Mr. North Wind

To reinforce your lessons on gentleness, ask your children to close their eyes and use their imaginations as you describe two contrasting weather situations.

Here are some sample descriptions:

Think of the coldest winter day you can imagine. The wind is

blowing hard, carrying sharp ice crystals and snowflakes that sting as they cut into your cheeks.

Now think of a mild, spring day. The sun is shining. There is just a gentle breeze blowing, barely strong enough to lift your hair. It touches your face softly.

Questions for discussion

- What does it feel like to be outside on a stormy winter day?
- What does it feel like to be outside on a warm summer day?
- How are people like harsh winter days?
- How are people like warm spring days?
- What kind of person would you like to have for a friend or family member?
- What kind of person would you like to be?

Bible Memory Verse

1 Thess 2:7

God's Way vs My Way

God's way

I am demonstrating godly character when:

- I speak with gentleness
- I am gentle and kind in my actions

And God is pleased!

My way

When I am tempted to:

- speak harshly or unkindly
- treat others roughly

I know that I need to go to God for help.

The I WILL's of Gentleness

To practice Gentleness I will:

- show good manners
- reject violence as a solution to my problems
- look for ways to ease the pain of others
- not annoy or irritate others
- be a peacemaker

A harsh king and a gentle king

Read

1 Kings 12:12-17, Zechariah 9:9 and Matthew 11:28-30.

Questions for discussion

1. Did Rehoboam sound like nice king?
2. Did the people want to serve him?
3. If you were a king, what kind of king would you be?
4. What kind of a king is Jesus?
5. Can you think of someone whom you just love to be with? Who is it?
6. What is it that makes them nice to be around?
7. What do you think Jesus was like when He lived on earth in a human body? Do you think He would have had a mean voice or a gentle voice? Do you think that He would have had kind and gentle hands?
8. Do you think that He would have liked kids or do you think that He disliked being around kids?
9. When Jesus lived on earth He told the people He was gentle and humble. Why do you think Jesus said this?
10. Have you told Jesus you would like Him to be the king in your life?

Key concepts

Rehoboam was a harsh and cruel king. The Israelites, also known as Jews, had become used to living under the authority of harsh kings or rulers. In fact, at the time that Zechariah lived, the Jewish people had just been released from living in slavery in Babylon and had been allowed to go back to Jerusalem.

Zechariah encouraged the people by telling them that they could look forward to the coming of another king. He told them the coming king would bring salvation, and righteousness. He also said the new king would be gentle and come to them riding on a donkey. He was talking about Jesus.

When Jesus did come, the Jews were still waiting for their "Messiah" or "Saviour." They were expecting an earthly king, but God sent a heavenly king. Jesus told the people He was gentle and humble and that He would carry their burdens and give them a light "yoke." He was reminding them that He would not be a harsh and cruel ruler, but a kind and gentle leader.

Jesus came to save the Jewish people from their sins and He came to do that for us, too.

Story

A gentleness story personalized

While you're driving, or during a quiet moment at home, tell a story that emphasizes the value of treating others gently. Use the plot below, or invent a similar one of your own. Feature a character and a special stuffed animal your child will relate to.

When Jordan's grandma returned from a holiday in Texas, she brought him a special stuffed animal - one that resembled a wolf. Jordan had never seen such a wonderful stuffie. He loved wolves, and although he had other toy animals, Jordan had never had one that looked like a wolf.

Jordan named his new stuffie "Wolfie." He took Wolfie to bed with him every night and felt safe when he cuddled Wolfie.

At first, Jordan was gentle with Wolfie, but soon he started treating his new stuffie roughly. If his mom or dad did not read him an extra bedtime story, or if he had to go to bed early, he would throw Wolfie to the floor. "Don't do that," Jordan's parents cautioned, "or Wolfie will get hurt." But Jordan didn't listen. Sometimes, when he was feeling frustrated, Jordan would even punch or hit Wolfie.

One day, Jordan had a fight with his sister. While he was still feeling very angry, he went to his room and kicked Wolfie against the wall. But as Wolfie fell to the floor, Jordan noticed a large tear in Wolfie's side. Wolfie's stuffing was even starting to fall out.

Jordan called, "Mommy, I've hurt Wolfie! Come quickly!" Jordan's mother came running. When she got to his room, she found Jordan holding Wolfie and crying. She hugged Jordan and said that she would help him try to fix Wolfie.

Together they picked up the stuffing and pushed it back into the large hole in Wolfie's side. Wolfie looked a little better, but he was still lumpy and torn. Jordan's mom got out her sewing machine and did her best to fix the tear.

When she was done, Wolfie looked like himself again, but he had a large scar down his side where Jordan had kicked him. Although the hole had been fixed, it was still obvious that the fabric had once been torn.

Jordan loved Wolfie as much as ever and took care to be gentle with Wolfie. Every day, when he saw the scar on his

special stuffie's side, he remembered how important it was to be gentle with his toys and his friends. He didn't want to cause anymore scars.

The essential truth you'll want to share with your children is that toys can be repaired or replaced, but when we hurt people, we can't fix the hurt as easily.

When we hurt others through using unkind words or rough actions, we can't see the pain we have caused in a person's heart.

Questions for discussion

- Do you ever hit stuffed toys?
- Are you ever rough with your toys?
- Have you ever hit a person?
- Did you know that hitting can really hurt people and toys?
- Do you ever speak unkindly to your toys?
- Do you ever say mean things to your friends or brothers and sisters?
- How do you think God wants us to treat each other?

Relevant Scripture

Colossians 3:12-14

Bible Connection

A gentle shepherd

Read

Psalm 23:1-3, Isaiah 40:11 and Hebrews 12:1-11.

Questions for discussion

1. How do shepherds care for their sheep?
2. If a sheep wanted to stand in the middle of the road where it might get hit by a truck, what do you think the shepherd would do?
3. Where do shepherds take their sheep?
4. What kind of shepherd does the Bible say Jesus is?
5. Why do you think a shepherd would discipline a sheep that always wandered off?
6. How does Jesus lead us?
7. What kinds of things do your parents have you do that are "good for you," but not necessarily enjoyable?

Key concepts

The Bible compares Jesus to a shepherd. The description in Isaiah refers to Him as leading gently and carrying lambs close to His heart. He is a loving shepherd. Psalm 23

describes how shepherds take their sheep to green pastures where there are quiet waters. It also says that Jesus guides the sheep, meaning us, in "paths of righteousness." This means that when we follow Jesus, He will lead us to do what is right.

God gives children parents for the same reason that sheep need shepherds. As a shepherd guides sheep to safe places to eat and drink, parents guide their children in life and in following God in righteousness.

Children may not enjoy eating vegetables or obeying all of the rules their parents give them, but these things are for their benefit. Ultimately, God is our Heavenly Father who cares for parents and children, and disciplines everyone as He sees best. As sheep trust their shepherds, we can completely trust God.

Bible Memory Verse

1 Thess 2:7

The I WILL's of Gentleness

Review

Tuesday Evening

Jesus is gentle

Read

John 8:1-11 and Galatians 6:1

Questions for discussion

1. What was the punishment for someone who was caught in adultery? (*You might want to explain the woman's adultery as "giving her heart to another man, even though she already had a husband."*)
2. Why did the Pharisees bring the woman to Jesus?
3. What did Jesus say and do?
4. Was this a gentle or harsh way to point out to her that she had sinned?
5. Would she have learned to love Jesus if He had thrown stones at her?
6. What did Jesus tell the woman to do?
7. What are we to do when we "catch" other people sinning?

Key concepts

The Old Testament law said that a man or woman who gave their love and attention to someone who was not their wife or husband should be stoned to death. The Pharisees brought the woman to Jesus who had sinned in this way.

They wanted to try and trap Jesus so they would have a reason to accuse Him of wrongdoing. Instead of telling them to stone her, Jesus began writing on the ground.

Then Jesus said, "If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her" (John 8:7).

People began to leave, one by one. Finally, only Jesus and the woman were left. Jesus didn't throw any stones at her, but He did tell her to leave her life of sin. We can follow Jesus' example by gently correcting those who do wrong and offering them forgiveness.

Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Tone and expression matter

This game works well while driving in the car. Speak a phrase and have your kids tell you if your tone is harsh or gentle. For example, say "Please stop doing that," in a variety of ways. Let your kids give you feedback on whether or not they would like to be spoken to that way.

Let the game lead into a discussion about tone of voice and how people are more willing to listen when we speak gently.

Questions for discussion

Use the following questions to help your children think about they should aim to speak to others:

- How would you like me to ask you to put away your toys?
- How should a parent tell a child that it is time to go home when the child is having fun visiting at a friend's house?
- What should you say when you want a treat and I don't give you one?

Relevant Scripture

Proverbs 16:24
Proverbs 16:21

Bible Connection

Gentleness is contagious

Read

Ephesians 4:2-3, Proverbs 22:24-25 and Luke 6:31

Questions for discussion

1. How would you describe a peaceful home?
2. When someone corrects you harshly, how do you feel?
3. Can you think of ways that children boss each other around?
4. How do you feel when someone tattles every time that you do something wrong?
5. How do most people act when other people are harsh with them?
6. Can you think of someone who is gentle?
7. How do most people act when other people are gentle and kind to them?

Key concepts

We often begin to treat others the same way that they treat us. The Bible says we are not to make friends with a hot-tempered person or we will learn to act like them. It also says we are not to envy a violent man or choose to act like him because God is not happy when people are violent.

God's basic instructions on how to treat people are found in the Bible. Jesus tells us we are to love others as we love ourselves and we are to treat others the way you would like to be treated (Matthew 22:39, Luke 6:31). It is much more pleasant to be with friends and family members who are gentle and gracious than those who are harsh and unforgiving.

Bible Memory Verse

1 Thess 2:7

The I WILL's of Gentleness

Review

Wednesday Evening

Salty owies

Read

Colossians 3:12, Proverbs 16:21 and Ephesians 4:15-16.

Questions for discussion

1. Would you prefer to eat a spoonful of sugar or a spoonful of salt?
2. What does it feel like when you get salt on a cut or a scratch?
3. How does it feel when you have done something wrong and someone corrects you harshly?
4. How does the Bible say we should speak to each other?
5. Is it easy to be gentle and loving to others all of the time?
6. Who can help us?

Key concepts

When we correct people harshly, it can make them feel worse than they already do, just like it stings when you get salt in a cut. When a person has done something wrong, they usually know it. It makes that person feel bad when another person corrects them aggressively, instead of gently.

The Bible says that we are to correct those who are caught sinning gently and to speak the truth in love. We can do this by praying before we talk to people about their wrongdoing. When we have God's love in our hearts, we will find it easier to be gentle, kind, patient and humble when we talk to those who have hurt us or done wrong.

Have your child pray a prayer from the kids talk with God section, or have your child come up with their own prayer requesting the Holy Spirit's help in developing a gentle attitude.

Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

Gentle heating

In this lesson, kids will change solids to liquids to learn about the importance of allowing God to shape a gentle attitude in their heart. You will need solid chocolate, a teaspoon of salt, aluminum foil, scissors, a desk lamp and a stir stick such as a wooden skewer or a drinking straw.

Directions

1. Cut two squares of tin foil approximately 10 cm wide. Fold the edges up on all sides, pinching the corners to make two small square dishes.
2. Put some chocolate into one foil dish; put the salt into the other dish.
3. As the adult supervising the experiment, you need to adjust the lamp until it is about 2 cm above the boxes. Turn the lamp on.
4. While you are watching and waiting, tell a story about gentleness or review a story from the Bible stories section of this lesson. After five minutes, turn the lamp off and put it aside so no one will accidentally get burned.
5. Use the stir stick to see if there have been any changes in the substances. As you stir the chocolate, mould it into a heart shape. Try to do the same with the salt.
6. Tell your children that after it has cooled, they can taste your experiment. As the substances cool, read Zechariah 7:11-12, Hebrews 3:7-10 and Luke 6:45 (see below).
7. Prior to sampling the substances, explain to your children that when we refuse to allow God to soften our hearts and put His love in them, we are like the salt that was not changed by God's Holy Spirit (represented by the lamp). But when we listen to God's directions in the Bible and allow Him to put His love in our hearts, we are like the chocolate. God softens our hearts with His love, and we are kind and gentle with our words and actions.
8. Sample the substances, then pray, asking God to send His Holy Spirit to put His love in your hearts and to help you to speak with words that are sweet like the chocolate.

Relevant Scripture

Zechariah 7:11-12
Hebrews 3:7-10
Luke 6:45

Bible Connection

Gentle words are "God's bandages"

Read

Proverbs 15:1, Proverbs 16:24 and Proverbs 12:18.

Questions for discussion

1. What are some examples of how people speak harshly to you?
2. When someone speaks to you unkindly, how do you feel?

3. What does the Bible say about people who speak angrily?
4. How does the Bible say you should respond to those who speak in anger?
5. How do you imagine it would feel if you were pierced with a sword?
6. What are reckless words?
7. How does God want us to talk to each other?
8. How can words be like adhesive bandages?

Key concepts

Use your discussion time to talk respectfully about people who have spoken harshly to your children. Possible examples include children who speak unkindly during playtime and neighbours who yell at children.

Emphasize the following ideas during your discussion:

The Bible tells us that we accomplish more by responding to those who are cruel or angry with gentleness. When people lash out and say hurtful things, it is often because they have pain in their hearts. God wants us to be people who say kind things that will help “heal” the hurt in others. Kind words are like “God’s bandages” for people who have “bleeding hearts.”

* Pray with your children and ask God to help all of you show His love to hurting people by speaking words of encouragement.

Bible Memory Verse

1 Thess 2:7

The I WILL’s of Gentleness

Review

Thursday Evening

Creative discipline

Your loving correction does not represent a “failure” – it’s essential to the learning process. Use these ideas to help your child recognize situations that call for greater gentleness.

Biblical basis

This discipline is based on the concept of “working off a debt” as described in Exodus 21:18-19. In the law given in this

passage, if a man injured another man, he was required to pay the injured man for his lost time. If the injured man could not return to work, the man who injured him was required to pay his wages until he was healed.

Suggested disciplinary action

You can put this Old Testament version of workers’ compensation into action in your home! Here’s how. When one of your children hurts a sibling physically or emotionally, explain that you will lose work time while you are comforting and caring for the injured child. Therefore, the disciplinary action will involve helping you to catch up with the work that he/she has caused you to get behind on.

The choice of “work” is up to your discretion. Appropriate tasks may be folding clothes, tidying away toys, vacuuming, clearing dishes, taking out or collecting garbage, or washing walls and windows. (Although you may actually “waste” even more time while supervising this “work,” it *is* worth it.)

When you think the child has “worked” long enough, say something like, “I think you have helped me catch up on the work that I didn’t get to because I was attending to your brother/sister. Let’s pray together, then you can go back to playing.”

Affirmation

Reassure your child that you believe that they will soon be an expert at showing real love, according to 1 John 3:18, which states: “Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.” Pray with your child, using a kids talk with God sample prayer.

Friday

Bible Memory Verse

1 Thess 2:7

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

1 Thess 2:7



The I WILL's of Gentleness


Review



Friday Evening

Discuss some Bible verses about Gentleness:

Psalm 19:14
1 Thessalonians 5:11
Proverbs 3:31-32



Courteous Communication

Parents

Parents' prayer

As parents, we need to be positive role models for our kids. If you feel that courteous communication is an area of personal weakness, know that many parents struggle in this area. Use this sample prayer to ask God to help you, as well as your children, take this lesson to heart.

Alternatively, build your own prayer using some of the verses suggested under "Scripture-guided prayer for parents."

Sample prayer

Lord of All, Elihu heard Your voice in nature, and this is how he described it:

"Listen! Listen to the roar of His voice, to the rumbling that comes from His mouth. He unleashes His lightning beneath the whole heaven and sends it to the earth. After that comes the sound of His roar; He thunders with His majestic voice. When His voice resounds, He holds nothing back. God's voice thunders in marvelous ways; He does great things beyond our understanding" (Job 37:2-5).

In contrast, Elijah heard You speak in a gentle whisper, rather than in the wind, the earthquake or the fire (1 Kings 19:11-13). Father God, thank you that all of Your communication is based on Your great love for us.

Thank you for Your Son Jesus, whose sacrifice made it possible for me to have direct communication with You. It is a life-changing privilege to know, "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us" (1 John 5:14).

Thank you for the gift of Your Holy Spirit, who allows me to commune with You intimately (Romans 8:26-27).

Luke 4:22 says, "All spoke well of Him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from His lips." They were talking about You, Jesus. What an example for us to follow! Lord, sometimes I hear my children speaking with impatience, sarcasm, unkindness or . They sound so much like me, and it is an embarrassing indication of my own sinful nature. I would rather be Christ-like so that when my

children imitate me, they are also a reflection of You and Your character.

You tell us in Your Word that out of the overflow of my heart my mouth speaks (Luke 6:45).

Please fill me with Your mercy so I speak with kindness and gentleness, in a way that encourages rather than discourages. In all aspects of my communication, verbal and non-verbal, I would like to reflect a Christlike attitude (Philippians 2:3). Jesus, my desire is to see people as You do. When I communicate with others, I want them to see Your love for them in me.

I bring my child to You. When is feeling upset, self-centered, or , rather than venting these negative feelings through hurtful language and actions, I pray that would have a desire to go to You. Proverbs 13:3 says that "He who guards his lips guards his life, but he who speaks rashly comes to ruin." I pray that Your Holy Spirit would help to guard his/her lips. At times when is tempted to use his/her tongue to speak unkind words, please give the strength of character to bless those who curse him/her (Luke 6:28).

I pray that 's heart would be full of Your love and grace so that he/she can respond in all situations with gentleness, kindness and respect.

"Before a word is on my tongue, You know it completely, O Lord" (Psalm 139:4).

In the name of Jesus Christ, I ask that You would protect our family from Satan, who seeks to tempt us to use our tongues for harm instead of good (James 3:6). My prayer for our family is that the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be pleasing in Your sight O Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer (Psalm 19:14). Thank you, God, for the victory You have given us through Your Son, Jesus Christ. We want to live with Your power in us so that You can receive glory and honour through the way we interact with others. Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for parents

Read and pray through one or more of the selected Scriptures under each heading. Focus on listening to God and allowing His Spirit to direct you as you pray.

Character focus

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate His sovereignty and desire to hear His voice.

Job 38:1-2,34-36 | Job 42:1-6 | Mark 1:21-24 | John 14:23-27 | John 15:12-15

Heart search

Acknowledge when and how you demonstrate a lack of courtesy personally.

Psalms 34:11-13 | Proverbs 10:19 | Matthew 12:35-37 | James 1:19-20 | James 3:7-12

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have seen courtesy exhibited in your family.

Family requests

Ask God to make you and your family courteous and Christ-like in your communication.

Psalms 19:14 | Psalm 141:3 | Luke 4:22 | 1 Corinthians 13:1,4-7 | 1 Thessalonians 5:11



Kids talk with God

Resolving to learn how to speak graciously is an act of love and obedience to God, but it's not easy. Use these sample prayers to help your children ask for God's help.

Alternatively, use the verses listed under "Scripture-guided prayer for children" to help your child formulate an original prayer.

Sample prayers

Dear God, please help me to guard my lips (Proverbs 13:3). Amen.

Dear God, please help me to have a wise tongue that heals instead of a reckless tongue that hurts others (Proverbs 12:18). Amen.

Dear God, I am very angry right now. Please help me to get a right attitude before I open my mouth. Amen.

Dear God, I have sinned in the way I (spoke unkindly etc.). Please forgive me and send Your Holy Spirit to set a guard over my mouth and to keep watch over the door of my lips (Psalm 141:3). Amen.

Dear God, please watch over the door of my mouth so I don't say things to discourage others. Instead, help me to

think of things I can say to build others up (Psalm 141:3, 1 Thessalonians 5:11).

Scripture-guided prayer for children

Read through one of the selected Scriptures under each heading and help your children pray based on the verse that you read. Encourage them to listen to God and allow His Spirit to guide them as they pray.

Character focus

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate Him and desire to hear His voice.

Job 40:9 | Luke 4:22 | John 14:23,25-26

Heart search

Acknowledge when and how you are not courteous. Proverbs 13:3 | Proverbs 15:1 | James 1:19

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have seen courtesy exhibited in your family.

Personal requests

Ask God to make you, your siblings and parents, courteous and Christ-like in your communication.

Psalms 19:14 | Psalm 141:3 | 1 Thessalonians 5:11



Speak a Blessing

Compliments are a wonderful motivator! Try using these statements to draw attention to your child's progress - you'll keep him or her determined to make it a habit to speak respectfully.

- What kind words those are, _____ .
- _____, when you speak that way, it shows others that you respect them.
- _____, when you speak that way, it encourages me/others.
- _____ speaks courteously.
- You have blessed your friend by speaking that way, _____.
- You were wise to wait until you had calmed down before you spoke, _____.



Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

Honeycomb poster

Directions

1. Proverbs 16:24 says, "Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones." To begin your poster, write this verse on a large sheet of paper. Use felt markers or stickers to decorate your poster with honeybees and a honeycomb design.
2. Glue a paper "tongue" along the bottom of the poster for each member of the family.
3. Draw or glue a picture of each family member above his or her "tongue."

During the course of each day, listen for examples of your children speaking "pleasant words." When pleasant words are spoken, place a check mark on the corresponding tongue. Let your children know that they can record your "score" as well. Allow each member of the family to exchange their check marks for sweet treats such as scoops of ice cream, honey on a spoon, candy or dried fruit snacks.

Other ideas

If you prefer not to use food as a reward, add stickers to the chart instead.

Introduction

What does it mean?

To speak respectfully

Translation:

Para hablar con respeto

How do we Sign it?

Polite

Bible Connection

David has burning anger

Read

Psalm 39:1-4,9,11.

Questions for discussion

1. Have you ever felt "burning" anger?
2. What did you say or do?
3. How did David describe his anger?
4. Who did David talk to when he was mad?
5. Why did David remain silent?

Key concepts

It can be hard to restrain ourselves from saying things we shouldn't. In Psalm 39, David said he remained silent when he was angry because he recognized that God was in control. Talking to God and remembering that God is in control can help us stay quiet even when we feel like yelling or saying hurtful things to others. God gives us instructions in the Bible to help us stay in control of the words we say (James 1:19-20). Pray, asking that God would give you wisdom to talk to him first when you are angry or upset as David did.

Bible Memory Verse

Psalm 19:14

God's Way vs My Way

God's Way

I am demonstrating godly character when:

- I speak with kindness, gentleness and respect
- I use good listening skills
- I consider the feelings of others before I say something
- I encourage others

And God is pleased!

My Way

When I am tempted to:

- speak unkindly or disrespectfully
- interrupt when others are speaking
- ignore others when they are speaking
- speak without considering the feelings of others

I know that I need to go to God for help.

Monday Evening

Courteous communication habits

Read

James 1:19-20.

Questions for discussion

1. Do you prefer talking or listening?
2. Which is easier for you to do?
3. What is the first thing many people do when they get mad?
4. What should we do first?
5. What should we be slow to do?
6. Why should we be slow to speak and become angry?
7. If we were to follow the Bible's instructions on communication, how would things be different at our house?

Key concepts

The Bible has very clear instructions on how to have harmony in communication. James wrote that we are to be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to get angry. Most people use poor communication skills, rather than those described in the Bible. Communication works better when we are focused on listening rather than speaking. Choosing to be patient and forgiving, rather than being quick to get angry with each other, helps keep our home peaceful.

1. Have your children practice filling in the blanks in this phrase from James 1:19: "Everyone should be quick to _____, slow to _____ and slow to become _____."
2. Now pray James 1:19 aloud, allowing your children to fill in the missing words as you pray.

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

The powerful tongue!

Here are a number of activities that help illustrate the power of the tongue, as described in James 3:2-12.

As you participate in these activities, talk about how much power our tongues have. Discuss ways that words can be used to encourage and build others up, or to discourage and destroy others.

- Light a fire in a fireplace or fire pit and observe how quickly the initial flame grows and spreads.

- Light a candle and carefully supervise your child as you guide them to hold their hand close enough to feel the heat. This is a good way to demonstrate how much pain we can cause others if we let our tongues "burn" out of control.
- Visit a stable and allow your children to witness first-hand how a rider can control a horse by the bit in its mouth. Alternatively, rent a small sailboat to give your children a hands-on opportunity to feel how a rudder controls the course of the boat.

Relevant Scripture

James 3:2-12

Bible Connection

Building what?

Read

Psalm 52, Ephesians 4:29 and Jeremiah 9:23-24.

Questions for discussion

1. How do you feel when someone brags about what they have done?
2. How do you feel when another kid keeps talking about a new toy they have?
3. Do you like it when people talk about themselves a lot?
4. In Psalm 52, what were the people boasting about?
5. What do you or your friends boast about?
6. What will God do in the end for the person who boasts about evil?
7. Does boasting encourage others?
8. What kinds of things can we say that do help build others up?
9. In Jeremiah 9:23-24, what does it say we should boast about?

Key concepts

It is better to let others praise us than to praise ourselves. No one likes to hear people boast and brag. We encourage others when we say kind things about them. The Bible tells us that the only thing that we should boast about is knowing God.

Close by praying a prayer similar to this one: "God, please watch over the door of my mouth so that I do not brag about myself. Instead, help me to think of things that I can say to encourage and build others up."

Bible Memory Verse

Psalm 19:14

Tuesday Evening

Where does our talk come from?

Questions for discussion

1. Have you ever said something that hurt someone else's feelings?
2. What were you thinking at the time you said it?
3. Were you happy, sad, mad or just careless?
4. *Read Matthew 12:34-37.* Where do our words come from?
5. Who will ask us to give an account of every word we have said?
6. *Read Psalm 139:1-4.* Who knows what we are thinking?
7. Who knows how we feel?
8. Who knows what we are going to say before we say it?
9. *Read Psalm 141:3.* Who can help you to be careful about the words you say?

Key concepts

Before we speak, it is important to consider how we are feeling. Prior to voicing our thoughts, we should ask ourselves, "Am I angry, sad, hurt, jealous or feeling bad in some other way? Then we need to take those feelings to God and ask Him to help us get our feelings under control before we speak. God already knows what we are feeling and thinking. He is our best helper in times when we are frustrated, upset, angry, hurt or disappointed. God can help us control our emotions and allow us to speak to others with gentleness, kindness and respect, even though we are feeling bad.

Close by reading 1 John 1:9. Pray together, asking God to forgive any sins like hatred, discord, fits of rage, selfishness and envy and to fill your hearts with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness and gentleness instead (Galatians 5:22-23).

Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Matching words and actions

Use this matching lesson to explain the truth of 1 John 3:16-18.

First, cut out some cardboard shapes, making matching pairs of squares, triangles and circles. Have your children identify which items match and which ones don't.

After you have had fun playing "the matching game," explain that our words should match our actions. Give examples that your children will understand. For example, hold up a triangle and say, "I love you."

Hold up another triangle and say, "You can share my doll," while you place the triangles on top of each other to show that they match.

Next, use an example where words do not match what we do. Hold up a circle and say, "You are my friend." Then hold up a square beside the circle and say, "I will not share my cookies with you."

Following this discussion, speak a blessing to your children when their words and actions match.

Conversely, you can remind them of the shapes when their words and actions are not congruent.

Relevant Scripture

1 John 3:16-18

Bible Connection

Please listen to me!

Read

Proverbs 16:21,24

Questions for discussion

1. How do you feel when someone speaks harshly to you?
2. What kind of animal sounds harsh when it is upset?
3. How do you feel when someone speaks gently to you?
4. What kind of animal makes gentle sounds?
5. When you are trying to get someone to listen to what you are saying, what do you do?
6. Who would you rather listen to – someone who is yelling or someone who is speaking calmly?
7. Do you think the Bible can give us wise counsel on how we should speak in order to make others want to listen to us?

8. What does the Bible say about speaking gently?
9. When do you yell like a ? (Name the animal selected for question 2).
10. When do you sound like a ? (Name the animal selected for question 4).

Thursday

Bible Connection

For problems due to speaking without thinking first

Read

Proverbs 12:23
Proverbs 10:19

Suggested disciplinary action

When your child speaks harsh or hurtful words, take a bin full of blocks or other small items and dump them on the floor. Instruct your child to pick up the spilled items. While they are picking the items up, talk to them about the power of hurtful words.

- Is it harder to dump toys or pick them up?
- How many toys did you have to pick up?
- Is it harder to speak or remain silent?
- We can clean up dumped toys, but can we clean up the hurt that your unkind words have caused?
- When are you most likely to say hurtful things?
- Discuss how easy it is to say things without thinking, and how words that have been spoken cannot be taken back. Remind your child that the more we say, the more likely we are to sin (Proverbs 10:19).

Instruct them that sometimes it is better to be quiet than speak aloud the words that we are thinking. The toys can be put back in a bin, but the hurt (mess) caused by saying unkind words can be impossible to clean up completely.

Affirmation

Assure your child that you believe they want to control their tongue. Remind them that God will help them. Then read or quote Psalm 141:3: "Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord; keep watch over the door of my lips" or Proverbs 16:24: "Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones." Challenge your child to be someone who speaks words that heal rather than hurt. Pray, asking God to help your child guard his/her mouth.

Bible Memory Verse

Psalm 19:14

Key concepts

It's tempting to raise our voices, talk louder or yell to get others to listen to us. But when we speak with soft and gentle words, others are more likely to listen to us than when we yell or scream. Let's pray, confessing that at times we have spoken with harsh or unkind words. Let's ask God to help us speak with pleasant and kind words instead.

Give your children the opportunity to pray, repeating your words after you.

Bible Memory Verse

Psalm 19:14

Wednesday Evening

The best way to say, "I love you"

Questions for discussion

1. Does an angry dog wag its tail? Or does an angry cat purr?
2. What does an angry dog do? What does an angry cat do?
3. Has anyone ever told you they feel a certain way, but you know or suspect that they are really feeling another way?
4. *Read 1 John 3:16-18.* What type of actions fit with the words, "I love you"?
5. How can we do this in our home?
6. How can we do this in our community?

Key concepts

Actions that express concern for the needs of others indicate love for that person. Saying "I love you" carries little meaning unless it is accompanied by actions that show love. Pray, asking God to help you show love to others through actions and words.

Thursday Evening

For problems with speaking unkindly

Read

James 3:9-11

Suggested disciplinary action

When your child speaks inappropriately, "cursing" another person, have them gargle with a small spoonful of salt water or put some salt on their tongue. Ask the following questions to help your child understand that taste of salt water is a reminder to speak words that are kind and refreshing to others, rather than hurtful, stinging words.

- How did the salt taste?
- How do you think your words sounded to ?
- Would you be able to drink water from a salt spring?
- If you were lost in the desert and horribly thirsty, which would you want to find: a salt spring or a freshwater spring?
- Which kind of water is more refreshing, salty or fresh?
- What kind of words would you rather speak? Salty or fresh?

Affirmation

Pray with your child, asking God to wash the sin out of his/her heart so that he/she can produce encouraging words instead of hurtful words. Use Luke 6:45 as a basis for your prayer, which says, "The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks."

Friday

Bible Memory Verse

Psalm 19:14

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Psalm 19:14

Bible Connection

Life has its share of spills

This is another suggestion that can be used to illustrate Luke 6:45.

Begin by showing your children a glass full of warm water and another glass full of hot water. Shake each glass and show how it spills all over the table. Then, explain that each glass represents a person and the water represents what is in that person's heart. When life shakes us up, what is inside comes out.

Tell your children a story of two different people: one who has good things in their heart (generosity) and one who has bad things in their heart (selfishness). You can be creative and invent your own story, or use this one:

At the playground, Jenny begins to play with an unattended toy shovel. Brandon, who owns the shovel, is feeling selfish. He has a tantrum and yells some mean things at Jenny. Curtis is also at the playground. He sees how upset Jenny is. Curtis has God's love in his heart and decides to offer to share his toys with Jenny and her friend.

Questions for discussion

Use the following questions to help emphasize the point that we need to make sure that our hearts are full of God's love so that kind, gentle and respectful words come out of our mouths, even when we are "shaken."

- How would it feel to have hot water spilled on you?
- Would you prefer to have warm water on your hand?
- What kind of water did Brandon (the first boy in the story) spill?
- What kind of water do you think Jesus would spill if He were at the playground?
- What kind of water would you like to spill on others?
- What could make you feel shaken or ready to spill hot water? (Ideas include being teased, losing at a game, or someone taking something that belongs to them.)

- Who can help you when you feel hot water boiling up inside of you?

Together with your kids, brain-storm some difficult situations they are sometimes faced with. Imagine these are “real” scenarios, and role-play how you might respond. After each scenario, discuss which responses were appropriate, or how they could be improved.

Refer to the kids talk with God section for prayer examples and have each child choose a prayer that they can use when they are upset or angry.

Relevant Scripture

Luke 6:45



Friday Evening

Communication capers - the cow and the parrot

Begin by sharing the following knock-knock joke with your kids:

First person: “Knock, knock.”

Second person: “Who’s there?”

First person: “Interrupting cow.”

Second person begins to say: “Interrupting cow, who?” but is interrupted part-way through when the first person says, “Moo!”

Help your children to understand that although this joke is funny, it is not funny when we interrupt others in daily conversation. Continue the lesson by modelling two conversations between you and your spouse, or involving another adult.

In the first conversation, have one person behave like the “interrupting cow,” continually interrupting the other person. The second conversation, however, should demonstrate good listening skills.

Ask your children to point out the differences between the two conversations. Emphasize that good listening skills involve facing the speaker and looking at them with undivided attention.

Introduce this next exercise by explaining that you want your children to communicate like a parrot, and not like an “interrupting cow.” Point out that people train parrots to talk by rewarding them for repeating back phrases spoken by their trainer. Explain that, like the parrot, your kids can show they have listened well by repeating back what someone has just said.

Then introduce this “game” that allows your children to practice being “parrots” by reflecting back what others say. Take turns being the one who speaks first and the one who “parrots.”

Here are some examples for you to begin with:

Dad: “Please do up your seat belts before I start driving.”

Child: “What I heard you say, Dad, was that you want us to do our seat belts up as soon as we get in the car.”

Child: “It would be nice to have hamburgers for supper tonight.”

Mom: “I think you are asking for hamburgers for supper tonight. Is that right?”

Mom: “I’m exhausted. While you were at school, I bought the groceries, paid some bills and met with.”

Child: “Are you tired from all the running around you have done?”

Mom: “Yes. Thank you for listening.”

To further reinforce good listening skills say, “I think I can smell a cow!” whenever you notice your child interrupting. (Or create a similar gentle reminder.)

Likewise, when your child “parrots” back what you have said, affirm them and let them know that you prefer the “parrot” over the “cow.”

Relevant Scripture

Proverbs 10:19

Proverbs 18:13



Sincerity

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

What a Deal!

This activity requires a deck of playing cards, even a deck that is missing cards works for this game. Deal out several cards to each student. Go around the room and one by one the students need to play a card by laying it down in front of them and telling something about themselves in one sentence based on the suit of the card as described below.

Heart - Open up your heart and tell us something you are passionate about

Diamond - Put on your shades and tell us something brilliant about yourself

Spade - Dig into your past and tell us a funny story about yourself

Club - Name a club or team that you belong to or like to follow.

You can choose to have them do all of their cards at once or go around for as many cards as dealt. You can also deal more cards than intended rounds and let them choose which cards to use. For younger students, you may want to base it only on the color and offer just 2 options to discuss. When the game is over, ask if anybody learned something new about a classmate? Did anyone have a similar answer to one of yours? How boring would it have been if we all had the same answers?

Introduction

Opposites:

Sincerity vs Hypocrisy

What does it mean?

Eagerly doing what is right with transparent motives.

Translation:

Sinceridad vs. Hipocresía

Go to the root

The word sincerity comes from the Latin word *sincerus* meaning "sound, pure, whole," perhaps originally "of one growth" i.e. "not hybrid, unmixed". Can you see where being sincere is being an unmixed whole - being same on the outside as you are on the inside?

Discussion

** A Sincere person is one who is "Eager to do what is right with honesty and transparent motives." "As a clear glass lets you see inside, a transparent individual lets you know who they really are. They do not give false impressions or have hidden motives. Sincerity is doing what is right for the right reasons. You help others without wanting something back. You respect your parents and teachers, whether they are watching or not. Sincerity carries a lot of weight!

- Why is being a sincere person important?
- What do you think about someone who says one thing and does the opposite? How does this affect relationships?
- How can we become more sincere?

Bible Connection

Zacchaeus, the Tax Collector

(Read Luke 19: 1-9 in preparation for this message)

Background Story:

Zacchaeus was a tax collector, meaning he was a man that no one likes. Tax collectors were usually the ones who stole from people and never helped people out. But read this story about Zacchaeus and see if you sincerity.

Read to the group Luke 19: 1-9

- Why do you think Jesus chose Zacchaeus to spend time with?
- How did Zacchaeus show sincerity and transparency to Jesus?
- Do you feel you are a transparent person? Do people truly know who you are? Do others know who you really are?

Have a group discussion on ways we can figure out who we truly are in God's eyes and how to be transparent and sincere with others.

Discussion

Practical applications to show Sincerity in your life:

1. **Say What You Mean** - Do not try to manage what others think by giving half truths, false impressions, exaggerations, or slight distortions. Say what you mean instead of being vague or dancing around the issue.
2. **Mean What You Say** - If you express an opinion or share your feelings, you should communicate what you really think and feel. It is better to remain silent than to give compliments you don't mean, and it is better not to promise than to make promises you can't keep.
3. **Practice What You Preach** - Saying one thing and doing the opposite makes you a hypocrite. If you say character is important but disrespect your teachers, you lose credibility. Don't just say what is right - do what is right!
4. **Check Your Motives** - Build a habit of asking, "Why am I doing this?" Beware of selfish motives such as getting attention, winning approval, gaining power, or controlling others.
5. **Do Not Take Advantage of Others** - Relationships are not opportunities to get what you want. Find ways to invest in others and contribute to something bigger than yourself.

Begin the exercise by telling this story:

A long time ago (before cell phones), a rich and famous man took a trip in his car. He had traveled far and was thinking about other things and didn't pay attention to his gas tank. He ran out of gas. Since it was very late, he decided to walk back to a hotel he had recently passed. When he went in to get a room, he realized he had forgotten his wallet. He tried to convince the hotel clerk that he was rich and that one of his assistants would bring his wallet to him in the morning. The clerk didn't believe him and sent him on his way. The rich man walked back to his car and spent the night there. In the morning, he went back to the hotel and used the phone to call someone from his office to bring his wallet.

The point? It doesn't matter how much money you have if you can't get to it. Same goes for skills and talents. The human brain is capable of so much more than what the average human uses it for. If you don't spend time to recognize and develop skills and talents, you will not have them to use when you need them.

For this exercise, give the students each a piece of paper with the outline of a wallet drawn on it. They are to write down a skill or a talent that they have and would like to increase or one that they would like to develop. They will also need to write down a few things they would need to do in order to develop that talent. Sometimes we hold dreams or wishes inside and not act on them. This exercise will help to turn some of those into goals on the outside.

Also read and discuss the following Scripture(s) about Sincerity
Romans 12:9

Bible Memory Verse

1 Pet 1:22

The I WILL's of Sincerity

To practice Sincerity I will:

- I will be all that I can be
- I will take responsibility for my own actions
- I will respect others' opinions
- I will always mean what I say
- I will not take advantage of other people

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Sincere Compliments

Start this activity by creating a list of all of the students in the class. Make a copy for each student. Make sure that there is room next to each name for the students to write compliments to each other. Before you pass out the sheets,

spend some time talking about what a sincere compliment is. (always willing to help other students) Also explain what an insincere compliment is. (nice shoes) Brainstorm ideas so they get the idea of what they are to write. When they are done writing, collect the pages and police them to make sure that positive things were written. If the class is large, you may want to divide the list in 2 and half the class gets one list and the other half gets the other list. Cut apart the compliments and place all of the compliments for a single student in an envelope with their name on it. If time allows, you can have them glue the strips onto a single sheet to create a keepsake.

Discussion

Two True Stories of Acting with Sincerity

STORY NUMBER ONE

Many years ago, Al Capone virtually owned Chicago. Capone wasn't famous for anything heroic. He was notorious for promoting all types of crime in the city. Capone had a lawyer nicknamed "Easy Eddie." He was his lawyer for a good reason. Eddie was very good! In fact, Eddie's skill at legal maneuvering kept Big Al out of jail for a long time. To show his appreciation, Capone paid him very well. Not only was the money big, but also, Eddie got special dividends. For instance, he and his family occupied a fenced-in mansion with live-in help and all of the conveniences of the day. The estate was so large that it filled an entire Chicago City block.

Eddie lived the high life of the Chicago mob and gave little consideration to the atrocity that went on around him. Eddie did have one soft spot, however. He had a son that he loved dearly. Eddie saw to it that his young son had clothes, cars, and a good education. Nothing was withheld. Price was no object. And, despite his involvement with organized crime, Eddie even tried to teach him right from wrong. Eddie wanted his son to be a better man than he was. Yet, with all his wealth and influence, there were two things he couldn't give his son; he couldn't pass on a good name or a good example. One day, Easy Eddie reached a difficult decision.

Easy Eddie wanted to rectify wrongs he had done. He decided he would go to the authorities and tell the truth about Al "Scarface" Capone, clean up his tarnished name, and offer his son some semblance of integrity. To do this, he would have to testify against The Mob, and he knew that the cost would be great.

So, he testified. Within the year, Easy Eddie's life ended in a blaze of gunfire on a lonely Chicago Street. But in his eyes, he had given his son the greatest gift he had to offer, at the greatest price he would ever pay.

STORY NUMBER TWO

World War II produced many heroes. One such man was Lieutenant Commander Butch O'Hare. He was a fighter pilot assigned to the aircraft carrier Lexington in the South Pacific. One day his entire squadron was sent on a mission. After he was airborne, he looked at his fuel gauge and realized that someone had forgotten to top off his fuel tank.

He would not have enough fuel to complete his mission and get back to his ship. His flight leader told him to return to the carrier. Reluctantly, he dropped out of formation and headed back to the fleet. As he was returning to the mother ship he saw something that turned his blood cold: a squadron of Japanese aircraft were speeding their way toward the American fleet. The American fighters were gone on a sortie, and the fleet was all but defenseless. He couldn't reach his squadron and bring them back in time to save the fleet. Nor could he warn the fleet of the approaching danger.

There was only one thing to do. He must somehow divert them from the fleet. Laying aside all thoughts of personal safety, he dove into the formation of Japanese planes. Wing-mounted 50 caliber's blazed as he charged in, attacking one surprised enemy plane and then another. Butch wove in and out of the now broken formation and fired at as many planes as possible until all his ammunition was finally spent. Undaunted, he continued the assault. He dove at the planes, trying to clip a wing or tail in hopes of damaging as many enemy planes as possible and rendering them unfit to fly. Finally, the exasperated Japanese squadron took off in another direction.

Deeply relieved, Butch O'Hare and his tattered fighter limped back to the carrier. Upon arrival, he reported in and related the event surrounding his return. The film from the gun-camera mounted on his plane told the tale. It showed the extent of Butch's daring attempt to protect his fleet. He had, in fact, destroyed five enemy aircraft. This took place on February 20, 1942, and for that action Butch became the Navy's first Ace of W.W.II, and the first Naval Aviator to win the Congressional Medal of Honor. A year later Butch was killed in aerial combat at the age of 29. His home town would not allow the memory of this WW II hero to fade, and today, O'Hare Airport in Chicago is named in tribute to the courage of this great man. So, the next time you find yourself at O'Hare International, give some thought to visiting Butch's memorial displaying his statue and his Medal of Honor. It's located between Terminals 1 and 2.

SO WHAT DO THESE TWO STORIES HAVE TO DO WITH EACH OTHER?

Butch O'Hare was "Easy Eddie's" son.

Bible Connection

1 John 3:18

Bible Memory Verse

1 Pet 1:22

The I WILL's of Sincerity

Review

Tuesday Evening

Ruth (Ruth 1) (Key Verses: 16-17)

Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

0 What A Tangled Web We Weave

Have a student volunteer to sit in a chair facing the class. Using the I wills, prompt the class to come up with examples that are the opposite of the I wills. For each example that they give, wind a strand of yarn around the student and the chair.

Explain that when we are being deceptive and not sincere, it is like getting tangled in a web. When you are not acting sincere, you have to remember what you have said or done because it wasn't being your true self. Remove the web of yard from the student and discuss how when we act according to our true self, we feel free.

Bible Connection

Three Bible Tips: Sincerity

Several Greek words are translated *sincerity* and *sincere*. These three verses use the words *eilikrineia* (Strong's G1506), which means "clearness" and "purity," and *eilikrines* (G1506), which means "judged by sunlight, that is, tested as genuine." (Have you heard of testing pottery for cracks filled with wax by holding it up to the sunlight? See more in the suggested reading below.)

1. **God wants us to do everything with sincerity and truth—a right heart and right mind. (He doesn't want hypocritical truth or sincere falsehood.)**

"Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Corinthians 5:8; Joshua 24:14 also puts sincerity with truth).

2. **Paul contrasts pure, godly sincerity with selfish, worldly wisdom.**

"For our boasting is this: the testimony of our conscience that we conducted ourselves in the world in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God, and more abundantly toward you" (2 Corinthians 1:12).

3. **Sincerity can help us avoid stumbling or causing others to stumble as we approach Jesus Christ's return.**

"So that you may surely learn to sense what is vital, and approve and prize what is excellent and of real value [recognizing the highest and the best, and distinguishing the moral differences], and that you may be untainted and pure and unerring and blameless [so that with hearts sincere and certain and unsullied, you may approach] the day of Christ [not stumbling nor causing others to stumble]" (Philippians 1:10, Amplified Bible).

Bible Memory Verse

1 Pet 1:22

The I WILL's of Sincerity

Review

Wednesday Evening

What is your motive

We can look good by doing the right thing but unless we have the right motives it is all as dirt. I am reminded of the 1 Cor 13 verses, unless I have love, my actions are nothing, are as a loud clanging cymbal.

Why do you do good?

- out of fear for the consequences
- because you think you'll get something from it (selfish gain)
- because it is right?

To be sincere our actions need to be driven by a love for Jesus and a desire to be like Him. We need His help though as we are no more able to keep all His commands than the people of the Old Testament. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to help us. We need to ensure we don't grieve the Holy Spirit by being humble when we fail, asking for forgiveness and committing in our hearts to walk in His ways.

We know what a person thinks,
not when he tells us what he thinks,
but by his actions.
- Isaac Basheuis Singer

Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

The Orange

This exercise can be done one of several ways. You can start with a discussion of what you expect from certain people based on the behavior that you have witnessed already. Use an orange to demonstrate this expectation. You can place a small slice in the orange and then squeeze the orange juice from the orange into a glass. When you see an orange you expect to get orange juice from it. If you want to get really tricky you can use a needle-like turkey baster to inject food dye into the orange. Injecting via the navel of the orange is the best way to disguise the injection site. When you squeeze this prepared orange, it won't look like orange juice. This will demonstrate insincerity - being different on the inside than how we act on the outside.

Bible Connection

Philippians 1:10
Revelation 14:5

Bible Memory Verse

1 Pet 1:22

The I WILL's of Sincerity

Review

Thursday Evening

Read & Discuss the following Scripture(s) about Sincerity
Psalms 32:2

Friday

Bible Memory Verse

1 Pet 1:22

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

1 Pet 1:22

The I WILL's of Sincerity

Review

Friday Evening

Joshua 24:14
1 Timothy 1:5

Responsibility

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

Responsible Hands

Let the kids outline both hands on a sheet of paper. Inside each hand, let them write (on each hand) at least three ways they can do their best at school or home. Let them decorate their hands.

E.g. Ways to Do Your Best:

- Listen to my teacher/coach
- Finish my homework
- Follow the rules
- Respect everyone
- Clean my room
- Feed my pet
- Help in the kitchen
- Have a cheerful attitude

OR

Hand Activity

Have the students trace their hand on colored paper. For younger children, you can call them helping hands and have them write or draw a picture of what they can do to be more responsible around the house with chores. For older children, call them the High Five and have them write 5 things, one on each finger/thumb that they can do to be more responsible.

Introduction

Opposites:

Responsibility vs Unreliability

What does it mean?

Knowing and doing what is expected of me

Translation:

Responsabilidad vs. Irresponsabilidad

Go to the root

The word responsible comes from two Latin roots, *responsum*, which means “an answer, a reply” and *spondere*, which means “to promise”. Can you see how responsibility is a promised response?

How do we Sign it?

Responsible

Neglect

Idioms

Pass the buck: placing blame on someone else

On somebody's shoulders: to be responsible for someone

The buck stops here: to take responsibility for something

Discussion

A scientist must be Responsible when conducting research and reporting outcomes. What do you think would happen if a scientist was unreliable in the way an experiment was conducted? What about companies that pay for research with the intent of swaying the outcome to one that is favorable for their product or service? What would happen if a scientist released a scary finding before it was totally proven?

Nature Story

Responsibility Nature Story (VID) (6:21)

Poem

Responsibility Poem (VID) (4:00)

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 14:2

The I WILL's of Responsibility

To practice Responsibility I will:

- Keep my promises
- Not make excuses
- Do all my work to the best of my ability
- Make things right when I do wrong
- Know my duty and do my duty

Monday Evening

Discussion about Responsibility

1. **Ask children, do you have responsibilities? What are they?** (feeding the dog/cat, washing dishes, doing homework, cleaning room, etc)
2. **How does completing chores make you responsible?** (learn skills, to follow directions, become trustworthy,) Being responsible is its own reward and is expected behavior. Write the responsibilities on the Responsibility poster as children mention them.
3. **What does the Bible say about being responsible?** Ask who needs is being responsible in each verse.
 - a. **Colossians 3:20** Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.
 - b. **Proverbs 22:6** Teach children how they should live, and they will remember it all their life.
 - c. **Proverbs 13:24** If you don't punish your children you don't love them. If you do love them, you will correct them.
 - d. **Proverbs 13:1** Wise children pay attention when their parents correct them, but arrogant people never admit they are wrong.
 - e. **Exodus 20:12** Respect your father and your mother, so that you may live a long time in the land that I am giving you.
 - f. **Ephesians 6:1** Children, it is your Christian duty to obey your parents, for this is the right thing to do.
4. Explain that God directs us through the bible to be responsible for our actions. It is our parents, teachers, ministers, etc. to help guide us in being responsible Christians but it is also our job to listen to them and obey.
5. Ask children to identify people from the bible who God asked to be responsible for something,
 - a. Adam Responsible for Garden of Eden and all God's creations
 - b. Joseph Took responsibility for Mary and baby even though he wasn't Jesus' father
 - c. Moses Given the ten commandments and led people out of Egypt.
 - d. Jonah obeyed God even though he didn't want to go to Nineveh
 - e. John Responsible for baptizing followers of God
 - f. Mary and Joseph Responsible for caring for Jesus
 - g. Joshua Led the Israelites into Canaan under God's protection after Moses died
 - h. Abraham Father of all nations obeyed God when asked to sacrifice his son
 - i. Noah built the ark as God asked him to

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

No excuses!

Cut along the dotted lines (see folder for No Excuses Activity.pdf). Write some common excuses you've heard or used so you know what phrases you should avoid. Remember, responsibility means taking ownership of your actions instead of making excuses.

Discussion

Responsibility is essential for becoming a healthy, happy, and productive person, and it is the basis for a free and civil society where each person does what he or she is expected to do. This begins at home where children learn to take care of their belongings, clean up after themselves, do chores with a good attitude, finish their homework, and resolve conflicts peacefully.

Encourage your children to take responsibility in "little things" so they are ready for greater opportunities in the future!

The Bald Eagle is a great example of responsibility. Both male and female do their part to take care of the nest, their young, and one another.

Character Quiz:

1. What are some different roles you play, or "hats" you wear?
2. A responsible person...
 - a. tells the truth
 - b. helps other people
 - c. finishes chores
 - d. all the above
3. What do bald eagles throw to one another when choosing a mate?
4. How do parent eagles care for their young?
5. What should you do when you realize you made a mistake?

Songs

Responsibility Song (VID) (9:49)

Poem

Responsibility Poem - Review

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 14:2

The I WILL's of Responsibility

Review

Tuesday Evening

Introduction

Many schools follow a programme of key values throughout the school year. These values can be an important framework for helping to define and validate the work of the school 'beyond the curriculum'. Each value can be used as the theme for collective worship, the focus for classroom reflection and the subject matter for main hall or quiet corner displays.

The Bible has so much to offer in this area of positive personal, relational and community values, and its timeless wisdom can help all schools pass on to the next generation the qualities of life that are most valuable and which, as Christians, we believe are not only God-given but also can be God-energised in our lives.

Preparation

What follows is a series of ideas linked to the value of 'Responsibility'.

It includes: key themes to explore, a key Bible verse to use, key concepts to unpack, ideas for displays and reflective corners, as well as Bible story links with further connections to material on the Barnabas websites.

Development

1. Key themes to explore

Taking responsibility for our actions - recognising when we are at fault, not trying to pass the blame on to someone else, owning up to our mistakes, having the courage to face the music

Taking responsibility for a task - being a responsible person, honouring another's trust in you, doing a job to the best of your ability, being a willing volunteer, seeing the job through, taking the blame if the job goes wrong

Taking responsibility for someone or something - looking after another person or a pet, making sure

someone is properly looked after, being a reliable carer, not giving up halfway through, focusing attention on another's needs

Sharing responsibility for our environment - not leaving it up to others, playing your part in making the classroom, school and community a safer and better place, doing what you can to care for the world

2. Key Bible verses

We are called to be responsible stewards of God's creation:

Genesis 1:27 - God said to human beings, 'Fill the earth with people and look after it. Care for all that I have made' (paraphrase).

And Jesus commanded his followers to 'care for one another, as I have cared for you' John 13: 34 (paraphrase).

3. Key concepts to unpack

Becoming responsible citizens means being people who can be trusted to do their best for the good of others.

Being responsible means being prepared to stand up on behalf of others and act and speak for them.

Being responsible means that others can expect you to make a sensible 'response' in a situation - you won't just give up or stay quiet. You will be ready to act.

An irresponsible person acts in a way that hurts others, doesn't care about their feelings, just does what pleases him/herself.

An irresponsible person refuses to face up to the damage or hurt that he or she may cause.

Responsibility is thinking about the good of everyone, not just what suits one individual.

Children are introduced to responsibility when:

- they are given a job to do in the class/school on behalf of others, for example, school council representative, monitor, buddy, the job of tidying up the classroom
- they are prepared to own up to something that they have done wrong
- they care for a younger sibling or friend
- they represent the school as part of a team or choir on a special occasion
- they have the job of looking after a pet, maybe at home or for the class

4. Display or reflective corner ideas

Include pictures of people who have responsible jobs and who care for the welfare of others, for example crossing patrol ladies/men, the police, security guards, childminders, travel guides, guide leaders, and so on.

Include references to responsible jobs in schools or in clubs such as school council representatives, a buddy scheme, team captains, a sixer in cubs, a prefect or house captain.

Include badges or certificates awarded for responsible positions.

Key questions to include:

Can I be trusted with an important job? How can I behave responsibly today? Who relies on me to act responsibly? Am I too quick to blame others for my mistakes? Am I ready to own up to what I've done wrong?

Include a Bible verse, such as:

Cain says to God about his brother Abel: 'Am I supposed to look after my brother?' Genesis 4:9 (CEV).

I wonder what God's answer was?

5. Some Bible story links

- a. God gives human beings the responsibility of caring for the world and of naming the animals - see Genesis 2:4-20.
- b. The story of Cain and Abel - see Genesis 4:1-16.
- c. Jethro advises Moses to share the heavy responsibility of leadership - see Exodus 18:13-27.
- d. Moses hands over his responsibilities to Joshua - see Deuteronomy 31:1-8.
- e. Jesus gives responsibility to 72 followers to carry on his work - see Luke 10:1-9
- f. The church at Antioch gives Barnabas and Saul the responsibility of being missionaries - see Acts 13: 1-3; and they report back on a job well done in Acts 14: 27.
- g. God gives human beings a job to do - see Psalm 8:5-9.

6. Ideas for collective worship and the classroom

- a. Collective worship for responsibility
- b. Cain and Abel
- c. Staying on Task
- d. Every day, a special job to do



Attention Grabber Activity

Cartoon Character

Discuss famous cartoon characters from Looney Tunes to Disney. Once you have named several characters, allow time for each student to decide which cartoon character they would like to be and what their most visible and positive character trait would be as that cartoon character. If time allows, let each student share who they would like to be and what they like about that character. They can also share in small groups. When the sharing is over, look at the results. More than likely, there will be a few characters chosen by multiple people. Did they choose this character for the same reason or different reasons? Did anyone choose a character that no one else had heard of before? Did girls choose only girl cartoons and boys only boy cartoons?

Discussion & Bible Connection

Responsibility

Key Bible passage: 1 Samuel 1-3

Samuel is given the responsibility of working in the Temple and of telling Eli what God's message is.

Aim: to see that we all have responsibilities whether we're children or adults

1. Have three different sized packages. One should be small and light, one should be small and heavy and one should be big but light. Ask for three responsible people to help you in a job. You want some people who aren't going to let you down. Choose one child with their hand up, one who hasn't volunteered, and an adult. Give each person a parcel and ask them to hold onto it. The adult needs the big light one.
2. Point to the parcels in turn. Some responsibilities are really light ones that are easy and fun to do. Can you think of any? Some are heavy ones that are hard to do. Can you think of any?

Some look really big, but when we're old enough and big enough, we'll be able to do them without a

problem. Can you think of big responsibilities grown-ups have?

Say that sometimes we ask for responsibilities and sometimes we are given them whether we like it or not.

Say that you picked the first person because they asked to do it, and you picked the second person because although they didn't ask to do it, you knew they could do it and would do it really well.

Say that you picked an adult too, because both children and grown ups have responsibilities.

Through the assembly, keep encouraging the three to hold onto their packages

3. In today's Bible story, we see the way God asks both children and adults to take on big responsibilities. I wonder if you can spot whether the child or the grown up is more responsible?

Perhaps someone can come and play the part of Samuel for me as I tell the story?

When Samuel was three years old, his mother Hannah took him to the Temple at Shiloh, where Eli was the priest. Hannah said to Eli: 'I promised God could have this child as soon as he was old enough, so I'm giving him to you to bring up in the Temple. He can work for God here.'

Hannah was very sad to say goodbye to Samuel, but every year she came to see him and brought him a new set of clothes that she had made for him. And Eli taught him how to serve God in the Temple. (*Mime sweeping and carrying things in a ceremonial procession.*)

Eli had two grown up sons of his own, but they did very bad things and wouldn't do any work for God in the Temple as they were supposed to. And Eli didn't stop them doing bad things. But Samuel kept on doing the things Eli taught him. Then one night when Samuel had gone to bed in his usual place, all alone in the Temple, in a corner near the great chest of God, he heard a voice: 'Samuel!' Samuel ran to Eli through the dark temple, thinking it was Eli calling him. 'Here I am!' he said. 'What do you want?'

Eli grunted, 'I didn't call you. Go back to sleep.' So Samuel went back to his bed. But the voice called again, 'Samuel!'

And Samuel ran back to Eli through the dark temple. 'Here I am!' he said. 'What do you want?'

'I didn't call you!' grumbled Eli sleepily. 'Go back to bed!'

This happened a third time.

'Samuel!'

But this time, when Samuel ran to Eli, Eli realised what was going on. 'Go back to bed,' he said. 'And if the voice calls again, say, "Speak Lord, your servant is listening."'

So Samuel went back to bed and when the voice called again, he said, 'Speak Lord, your servant is listening.'

And God spoke to Samuel and gave him messages to pass on to Eli. And even though the messages were very hard ones, Samuel did what God had asked him to do. And God spoke to Samuel many times after that.

4. Who was responsible in this story? (Samuel - he did his jobs and he gave Eli the message. Hannah kept her promise to God and kept visiting Samuel. Eli brought Samuel up well.)

Was it hard or easy for Samuel to do the job he'd been given? (Probably quite hard - a mixture of boring everyday jobs (a bit like school) and a hard message to give to Eli.)

Who wasn't responsible? (Eli and his sons.) What should they have done? (Eli should have stopped his sons behaving badly, and his sons should have been working in the temple.)

5. God gives us responsibilities at any age. It might be that like Samuel he has a special job for us from when we're very small. Maybe we need to wait until we're older to find out what it is. He knows we're never too young to love other people and to try to do the right thing. And he will never give us more responsibility than we can handle. If God thinks we can do it, we can do it! Just like these good people have held these objects for so long, even though they might have wanted to put them down and have a rest. Let's give them a clap.
6. Let's have a moment of quiet now to reflect on the responsibilities we have at school, at home, and in other places. And let's ask God to help us to fulfil our responsibilities and not to let people down, even when it gets hard.
7. Finish with a song

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 14:2

Songs

Responsibility Song - Review

Poem

Responsibility Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Responsibility

Review

Wednesday Evening

Exploring friendship using Bible Stories 1: Cain and Abel - brotherly hate!

Introduction

Genesis 4 records that one of the tragic consequences of leaving God out of the picture is the breakdown of trust between people. In the story this is first seen within the family of Adam and Eve. Cain, the elder brother, turns against Abel and in a fight murders him. The choice to become enemies, not friends, tears the family apart and leads to a life of restless wandering and revenge. In the garden of Eden, friendship with God had been broken (Genesis 3) and here in the field, friendships between people are broken, too.

The following lesson outline explores the theme of making good and bad choices in response to what happens to us as friends. Christians believe that by the power of the Holy Spirit, God can give the strength to choose what is good.

Development

1. Introduce the story by playing one of the following games:
 - a. Each child should find out who is his or her famous partner or brother. Stick labels on

the backs of the children with the names from the list of suggestions below. They should find their other half, but in response to questions others can only answer with 'yes' or 'no'; likewise they themselves can only say 'yes' or 'no' when questioned. Here are some possible pairings:

- b. Prince Andrew and Prince Charles; Liam and Noel Gallagher; Harry and William; Ant and Dec; Andrew and Peter (disciples of Jesus); Jamie and Andy Murray; Les and Rio Ferdinand; Dick and Dom. (Add in any other well-known pairings from your own school, community or even well-known book characters.)
- c. Ask the children to work in small groups of two or three. They should become a group of friends. Now using the following list of make-or-break friendship words, call out some randomly and ask the group to interpret what this would mean dramatically for the friendship of the group:
- d. jealousy, difficulties, unfairness, sadness, favouritism, success, bullying, fear, secrets, new arrivals to the group, good news, bad temper, impatience.

2. Tell the story of Cain and Abel
The two brothers were clearly very different in character.

Cain farmed the land. He grew vegetables and grain. Maybe it meant he stayed near home most of the time. He clearly didn't like being told what to do and possibly he had a bit of a temper. He lacked self-control and maybe his faith in God wasn't very strong. His first response to being found out was to lie himself out of trouble.

Abel tended sheep. As a shepherd, he was probably often away from home for days on end, searching for good pasture land. He would be no stranger to fighting off wild animals to protect his flock. Clearly, he took trouble about worshipping God, offering the very best of his flock. He liked to do the right thing.

Talk to the class about which of the brothers the children identify with most. Which seems the most likeable? Do they see some aspects of their own characters here? Or the characters of others they know?

Invite the class to tell the story from different points of view. Here are some ideas:

- Imagine what Adam and Eve would say about their sons, if they were interviewed. Do you think they had favourites?
- I wonder what each brother would have said about the other, prior to the murder.
- I wonder what the new brother Seth (he was born later; see Genesis 4:25) was told about how his one brother had died and his other brother had disappeared off the scene.
- I wonder what Cain said to his new friends about what happened back home and to any others he met on his wanderings.

3. Link the themes of this story to life today. How do situations escalate into becoming something as bad as this? Talk about how the following can happen:
 - someone else's success can trigger jealousy;
 - jealousy, when nursed, can become hatred;
 - hatred often seeks revenge;
 - revenge looks for an opportunity to hurt the other person;
 - hurt can get out of hand, producing anger, sworn enemies and worse.

Can the class create *freeze-frames* of some of these scenarios to explore the feelings linked to the breakdown of friendship?

4. Talk about how in the story God did step into the situation to stop it falling apart. For example:
 - God spoke to Cain very clearly. He knew that his heart wasn't really in the worship that he had offered.
 - God warned Cain that danger was lurking, but he left the choice of what to do up to Cain
 - God gave Cain a chance to own up and say sorry - but Cain fobbed God off with the words: 'Am I supposed to be looking after my brother?'
 - God did punish Cain - God doesn't pretend that bad things have not happened, but...
 - God also protected him (Genesis 4:15). God did not give up on Cain. Christians believe that God does not give up on us.

From this example, what can we learn when dealing with breakdowns in friendships?

Can the class devise a five-step plan that may help friends to say together when that friendship is under pressure?

5. Let the class now decide how they might illustrate the breaking and mending of friendship by using four strips of paper of equal length, each shaped like an arrow at one end. Use some or all of these arrows to illustrate the following:

- Cain and Abel as friends
- Abel pleasing God
- Cain disappointing God
- Cain hating Abel
- Cain killing Abel
- Cain leaving the family forever
- God helping Cain to choose the way of friendship
- You and me helping each other to mend, not to break, friendships

6. In the Bible story, it is clear that God wants people 'to look after each other', contrary to what Cain says (see Genesis 4:9 and also 1 John 3:11-12, which is a New Testament comment on this story).

In a time of reflection, focus on those who are feeling uncared for, who have lost friends or who are the victims of hatred. Then, celebrate the positive things about being a good friend.

Thursday

Bible Connection

Staying on task

Introduction

The suggested SEAL theme for the first half of the spring term is 'Going for Goals'. The following outline is for an assembly and classroom follow-up on this topic and is based on the story of Jesus facing temptations in the desert. Jesus knew the work he had to do but the devil tried to knock him off course from the goal of rescuing the world. Jesus used the words of the Bible to stay on task and go for his God-given goal, even though it was costly and painful. This resource helps children to consider the temptations there are to give up on their own goals and it encourages them to stay on task to the end.

Preparation

Use the retelling of this story in The Barnabas Schools' Bible, Jesus is tested, story 256, pages 224-226; see also Matthew 4:1-11.

You will need some running magazines, a stopwatch and a pair of trainers, some stones, some building bricks to make a tower and a globe.

Finally, prepare five large 'temptation bubbles' for the assembly, which read respectively:

- Just think of all the fun things you're missing.
- Just think of all the free time you're wasting.
- Just think of all the TV programmes you're missing.
- Just think of all the other things you could be doing.
- Just think of the computer games you could be buying.

Development

1. Introduce some simple keep-fit exercises that the children can do while sat down. Start the assembly by suggesting that we all need 'to get in shape' for the day with some sit-down aerobics, but include some silly ones, too. For example: Hands in the air, stretching and wiggling fingers; rolling heads this way and that; rolling shoulders left and right; clenching and unclenching fists; pulling back the forearm to the elbow; some finger exercises (like pointing the index finger up and then to the side rapidly and doing the same with the other hand but pointing it in a different direction to the first); screwing up your nose; raising your eyebrows; smiling, then grimacing; rubbing the tummy with one hand while patting your head with the other, and so on.
2. Well, that's not exactly a full-on keep-fit routine but it's a start! Keeping fit is important, especially for anyone who is planning to enter a race like the marathon.

Produce some running magazines and begin to go through all the preparation and build-up that is suggested in these. Invite some children up to mime the following activities:

- Eating a good diet (*mime eating*).
- Going for short regular runs building up to longer ones (*slow-motion running on the spot*).
- Doing daily exercise (*doing some press-ups*).
- Timing yourself (*holding a stopwatch*).
- Getting a good pair of trainers (*displaying some new trainers*).

NB: It may be that someone on the staff has done or is planning to do a marathon or half-marathon and so you can introduce some true-life information about the training that they may have undertaken or which they plan to do.

Phew! It's going to be hard work. It's not easy having the goal of running a marathon.

- Now introduce the five temptation bubbles behind each of the children who have been miming the preparation for the marathon. Each of these could be held by another child and then read out loud by a whole class group:
 - Just think of all the fun things you're missing (*held behind the child eating a special diet*).
 - Just think of all the free time you're wasting (*held behind the child doing slow-motion running*).
 - Just think of all the TV programmes you're missing (*held behind the child doing press-ups*).
 - Just think of all the other things you could be doing (*held behind the child with a stopwatch*).
 - Just think of all the computer games you could be buying (*held behind the child with the new trainers*).
- There are always reasons to give up on the goals we set ourselves - reasons to be tempted not to stay on task. It happened to Jesus, too. He knew that God wanted him to rescue the world from all that was bad but he was tempted to use God's power to do things for himself instead.

Read the story 'Jesus is tested' from Matthew 4:1-11.

- To unpack the story briefly produce some stones, some building bricks (to build a tower) and a small globe.

These objects represent the ways in which Jesus was tempted to give up on his goal

He could have turned the stones into bread but that would help people only until they were hungry again. *God wanted Jesus to help people in a way that would last forever.*

He could have jumped off the tower and landed safely like a superhero but people soon forget such stunts. *God wanted Jesus to help people in a way that would last forever.*

He could have used evil ways to force the world to change but war and fighting never really solve anything for long. *God wanted Jesus to help people in a way that would last forever.*

Jesus knew that the way of love was the only way to go, so he stuck to his goals. Just like sticking to a good diet, proper training, daily exercise and proper equipment is the only way to achieve the goal of running a marathon.

- Whatever the goals may be that you set for yourselves, there will always be voices tempting you to give up, telling you there's an easier way, offering you a short cut, suggesting that you cheat.

I wonder what goals you are setting yourself this week/today?

Maybe to try harder in lessons, to make a new friend, to be kind to others, to learn a new skill, to be more thoughtful, to remember to say 'thank you'.

We need goals, but don't be surprised if you sometimes feel like giving up or not bothering.

Christians believe that God offers us the strength to say 'no' to these temptations to give up. God can help us stay on task.

- Put up a picture of the temptations of Jesus, such as *Christ in the Wilderness* by Ivan Kramskoy or Stanley Spencer's *Christ in the Wilderness*.

Use one of these pictures as a focus for a final reflection:

- I wonder what your goals are for today.
- I wonder what might get in the way of those goals.
- I wonder if Jesus felt like giving up.
- I wonder if Jesus thought it would be easier to use his position to become powerful and popular rather than go the way of love.
- I wonder what hard choices I might have to face today.
- I wonder if God can give me the strength to stick to what I have decided is my goal.

Classroom follow-up

- In a circle start with some keep-fit exercises to link up to the assembly; this time involve the whole body by standing up! After this quick warm-up, sit down and ask the class why they think people don't bother doing any keep-fit exercises. What gets in the way?

They might suggest: it's too much like hard work; it takes up too much time; it's not worth it; there are more interesting things to do.

2. Create a large cube/dice with the following goals written on the six sides:

- Do better in my schoolwork.
- Help more at home.
- Be kinder to others.
- Say no to fighting and backchat.
- Be polite to everyone.
- Make friends, not enemies.

Invite different children to roll the dice. Talk about the goal on the side that turns up and about what sort of temptations come in to make us give up on that goal. How do they think they can beat these temptations and stay on task?

3. There are various strategies for staying on task to any goals you set. In groups ask the class to decide which of the following they like the best and why.

- Write down your goals and read them every day.
- Ask a friend to help you keep on task.
- Give yourself a reward to look forward to at the end.
- Practise saying 'no' to temptations.
- Keep a tick chart of the good things you manage to do.
- Join a group of people with the same goal.
- Set yourself small steps toward your goal.
- Learn about how other people have avoided temptations.

When Jesus faced his temptations to do things the devil's way, he remembered what God had said in the Bible and he prayed. Christians find help and inspiration to keep on track from reading the stories in the Bible and by praying regularly to God. Are there any Bible stories that have helped them/you keep going?

4. Reaching a goal can be like climbing a ladder but at every rung/step there is the danger of being distracted and falling off!

Give out a pre-prepared sheet to each child on which there is a five-step ladder drawn. At the top of the ladder, invite the children to write their goal for that week/day/term.

Next, on the five steps towards that goal, they should decide on the stages that they want to go through to reach their goal.

Finally, all around the ladder, draw in some temptation bubbles (like in the assembly). In these they should write some of the things that might put them off. They might work in pairs at this point

to help each other discover what the temptations might be.

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 14:2

Songs

Responsibility Song - Review

Poem

Responsibility Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Responsibility

Review

Thursday Evening

Every day, a special job to do

Introduction

The SEAL theme suggested for the first half of the Spring Term is 'Going for Goals'. The following outline is for an assembly and some classroom follow-up on this topic and is based around the story of the calling of the disciples by Jesus on the shores of Lake Galilee. Jesus knew what his work was and he invited others to join him in bringing in God's rule. The first disciples discovered a new goal for their everyday lives and this resource encourages children equally to discover who God wants them to be and what work he has for them to do each day.

Preparation

Use the retelling of this story from [The Barnabas Schools' Bible](#), The Four Fishermen, story 257, page 226, based on Mark 1:14-20.

You will also need some netting to represent the fishing nets in the hands of the fisherman, a freestanding signpost that can be moved to point in two directions with signs to hang from it for 'The Market' and 'The Sea of Galilee'.

Also have ready a child's school bag with a pencil, a lunch box and a book inside.

Finally you need a mini football goal or basketball net.

Development

1. Invite the children in the assembly to mime with you your usual morning routine: waking up (yawning and stretching), washing your face (hands over face), getting dressed (mime putting on clothes), combing hair, having breakfast (add in some colourful details of your favourite cereal and so on), having a drink, brushing your teeth, driving/cycling/walking to work, arriving in school to a new day. End with a big sigh!
2. Most of us have routines to help us get the day going. We need these patterns to life to give shape to our living. Without them life could fall apart. But just getting from bed to school isn't enough reason for me to live every day. I need a goal!
3. Produce a mini football or basketball net. We all need something to aim at. It's the way we're made. If we don't have goals, then all we do becomes pointless, like trying to play the game of football without any goals or play basketball without a net.
4. Christians believe that God has given us goals to aim at. In fact there are two big goals: *to love God and to love other people.* That's why God made us. Let's hear how Jesus reminded some fisherman by the lake once that there is a bigger reason for living each day than just catching fish. He invited them to join his special group of friends.
5. Read the story from The Barnabas Schools' Bible, page 226 (The Four Fishermen). See also Mark 1:14-20.
6. Now invite some children to come up and join you at the front to act out the story of the fishermen's routines. Give them some netting to hold to help them with the mime. Their typical day might include: packing the boat with a net, rowing the boat out to sea, casting the net, waiting and looking, pulling in the net, sorting the fish, rowing back to land, unpacking the fish and the net, taking it to the market and then sitting and mending nets.
7. This would be each day's routine! Use the freestanding sign to point first in one direction to 'The Sea of Galilee' and then in the other direction to 'The Market'. Move it back and forth in each direction again and again and again. Boring! And maybe these fishermen had become bored and

were looking for something more when Jesus came.

He told them there was a bigger goal for their lives. It was to go and tell other people about God's love.

It will be like fishing, but this time it would be fishing for people so they could be caught in the net of God's love. These fishermen had a new goal for each day. They joined the group of Jesus' friends. Peter and Andrew, James and John were the first of his disciples.

8. And their new goal had a link to their old routine. It can be same with us. Produce from a child's school bag several items which are used for life at school but which also have a link to a bigger purpose just like the nets did for the disciples. For example:

Here is a pencil. It could be used to do your work in class but also to write a letter or draw a picture to encourage someone and share God's love.

Here is a lunch box. It will be used of course to feed us but we might feel we can share a bit with someone else as a way of showing God's love.

Here is a book. It can of course help us to learn to read but it can also give us a way of sharing a story with someone and so share God's love.

9. God's big goal for all of us is to love God and to pass on God's love to others. This can change everything we do. It gives us a real goal every day.
10. Hold up the nets or project a picture of a net with the following reflective questions caught in it, for a time of quiet and prayer:
I wonder why Peter, Andrew, James and John decided to follow Jesus?
I wonder how they felt when they left their fishing life to do some fishing for God instead?
I wonder how I can share God's love with other people today?
I wonder what things I have in my life that I can use not just for me but for others?

Jesus called his disciples to follow him. Christians still follow Jesus today and share God's love in all sorts of ways.

Classroom follow-up:

1. Sit the class in a circle and invite everyone to participate in a warm-up mime of the children's

own routines in the mornings before they come to school, taking suggestions for various activities from the children.

- Put down various objects in the middle of your circle. How could these be used to help you to care for others and not just for yourself?
 - a mobile phone
 - a blank sheet of paper and pencil
 - a postcard
 - a bag of sweets
 - a book
 - a fold-up umbrella
 - a box of tissues

Talk about the ways we can share good things with others as a goal for each day.

- There are all sorts of goals we could set ourselves every day. In small groups talk about the following possible goals. Which ones do they like best and why?
 - to learn a new word
 - to make new friends
 - to make someone laugh
 - to be kind to someone you don't normally get on with
 - to avoid losing your temper
 - to listen when someone is speaking
 - to wait patiently in a queue
 - to smile more often
 - to follow instructions more carefully
 - to try your best in everything you do
 - to try a new skill
- But how can we know whether we've reached these goals?
- Talk about how goals might be recorded in some way.

Jesus' goal was to spread God's rule everywhere, and where God ruled things changed for the better. Is this a clue to knowing whether our goals have been achieved? At the end of today's story crowds of people were coming close to Jesus and his friends. Things were changing for the better!

- On the outline of a football goal or a basketball net invite the children to write or draw something that they want to make their goal this coming week. Talk about their choices and make a class display of their goals within a larger goal framework.

Friday

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 14:2

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Rom 14:2

Songs

Responsibility Song - Review

Poem

Responsibility Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Responsibility

Review

Friday Evening

Every day, a special job to do

Into the Lesson

To begin class, share these creative excuses with your students, or substitute some that you have heard or used! (These examples are printed in the student books.)

I can't come in to work; it's Friday the thirteenth, and I'm really superstitious.

I won't be in to work today because my dog has to have emergency cataract surgery.

I didn't meet the deadline because I couldn't find matching socks.

I'm locked in my car, and I have to go to the dealership so they can get me out.

There was a bomb scare at my office building, and I couldn't call the personnel manager for my phone interview. I can't help it, officer; someone hypnotized me to park illegally.

Next, ask your students to share some excuses they have heard or used. After you have heard several examples, tell your students that today's lesson deals with taking responsibility for our behavior and not making excuses to God.

Into the Word

Develop a mini-lecture from the Lesson Background to introduce today's text. After this introduction, divide your class into three small groups of three to five students each. For larger classes create additional groups in multiples of three. Each group will cover one section of the lesson text. Distribute the following instructions, along with pencil and paper (or direct attention to the student book). Allow several minutes for each group to complete its activity.

Group #1. Read Ezekiel 18:4, 20. Identify three absolute principles stated by God in these verses. For each principle write down at least one excuse that is invalidated by that principle.

Group #2. Read Ezekiel 18:20-23, 30. Compare verse 20 with Exodus 34:6, 7. How can both passages be true? Identify three promises that God offers to the repentant sinner in Ezekiel 18:21-23, 30a. Also identify any conditions connected with those promises. What reason does God give for offering the promises?

Group #3. Read Ezekiel 18:30-32. List the steps God required for the ancient Israelite to move from spiritual death to life and to avoid God's judgment. Explain what was involved in each step and why it was essential.

When your groups have completed their work, discuss their findings. Be sure to address the implications for evangelism, missions, and preaching today.

Into Life

Assign one of the following scenarios to each group from the previous exercise. Each team is to write a brief plan of action. The plans will use today's text to challenge the recipient(s) to take responsibility for personal actions and to allow God to renew a relationship with Him.

Scenario #1. Kim and her two young children occasionally attend worship services at your church. She wants her boy and girl to have some religious training, since she never received any from her own parents. Kim has never been married but currently lives with her boyfriend. He is not the father of her children. She blames her parents for her situation because they showed her little affection as a child. What would you say to help her?

Scenario #2. Dave is despondent about his lifestyle. He has been in and out of treatment centers for alcohol abuse but can't kick the habit for good. Dave's friends and coworkers try to encourage him to stay sober but he blames them for his addiction because they drink socially. Now he's come to your church for help. What can you do for him?

Scenario #3. Bill and Stacy have a troubled marriage. They fight often and have separated on several occasions. They have no children. Stacy blames Bill for not wanting a family, for being gone from home too often, and for failing to meet her emotional needs. Bill blames Stacy for spending too much money so that he has to work a second job to pay the bills. How can you help them?



Discernment, Discretion

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

Tell an Alien

Ask your students to describe how to do a simple task to you, only you are to pretend you are from Mars. Interrupt their description to ask more detailed questions as Martians do not understand anything about life on our planet. Some ideas for descriptions are how to catch a bus, how to use the U-Scan at the grocery store or how to record a TV show. When they have finished their explanation, ask them how difficult it was to think in such detailed terms. Relate this to discernment by explaining how assumptions can get in the way of getting to the true deeper meaning. If you, as the Martian, hadn't asked the specific questions, you may not have understood the task completely. If time allows, let them partner and take turns explaining something and being the Martian.

Introduction

Opposites:

Discernment vs Judgement / Discernment vs Shortsightedness

What does it mean?

Understanding the deeper reasons why things happen. Wisdom to know the difference between right and wrong

Translation:

Discernimiento vs. Imprevisión
Entender las razones profundas de lo que sucede

Go to the root

"1300-50; Middle English (< Old French) < Latin discernere to separate"

This root description draws a visual of untying a knot, separating the various pieces until the knot is loosened, the problem solved. It is as if you are separating good from bad or fact from fiction to arrive at the proper understanding of a situation.

Bible Connection

Solomon's request for discernment and how he used it (1 Kings 3).

Bible Memory Verse

Prov 22:3

The I WILL's of Discernment

To practice Discernment I will:

- ask questions
- not judge hastily
- learn from experience
- not repeat mistakes
- trace problems to their causes

Songs

Be careful little eyes what you see

Monday Evening

The story of Mary and Martha (Luke 10)

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Fact or Opinion

Part of being discerning is determining Fact from Opinion. Start a discussion on the differences between Facts and Opinions. A statement of fact expresses only what actually

happened, or what could be proven by objective data. A statement of opinion expresses an attitude toward something – it makes a judgment, view, or conclusion, or gives an opinion that cannot be proven true or false. Help them to come up with some clues as to whether a statement is a fact or someone’s opinion. Be careful to distinguish that you are not debating True or False. For instance, the statement “Eighty-five percent of all cases of lung cancer in the U.S. are caused by smoking” is considered a fact. You may not know if the 85% is true but the statement is at least in the form of a fact. It can be verified. There are several sites listed below that contain games and lessons on teaching the difference between fact and opinion.

Bible Connection

The story of Adam and Eve in the Garden and how they failed to distinguish between what is good and what is evil.

Bible Memory Verse

Prov 22:3

The I WILL’s of Discernment

Review

Songs

Be careful little eyes what you see

Tuesday Evening

Rehoboam who forsook the counsel of his elders and listened instead to the disastrous counsel of his peers (1 Kings 12)

Attention Grabber Activity

A Challenge to Critical Thinking

The following is a passage from the management bestseller “In Search of Excellence” by Peters and Waterman:

If you place in a bottle half a dozen bees and the same number of flies, and lay the bottle horizontally, with its base (the closed end) to the window, you will find that the bees will persist, till they die of exhaustion or hunger, in their endeavor to discover an opening through the glass; while the flies, in less than two minutes, will all have sallied forth through the neck on the opposite side. ... It is the bees’ love of flight, it is their very intelligence, that is their undoing in this experiment. They evidently imagine that the issue from every prison must be where the light shines clearest; and they act in accordance, and persist in too-logical action. To bees glass is a supernatural mystery. ... And, the greater their intelligence, the more inadmissible, more incomprehensible, will the strange obstacle appear.

Whereas the featherbrained flies, careless of logic ... flutter wildly hither and thither, and meeting here the good fortune that often waits on the simple ... Necessarily end up by discovering the friendly opening that restores their liberty to them (Peters and Waterman, 1988, p. 108).

Read the passage to the class. Ask them to relate it to the statement “Think outside the box.” Compare critical thinking with creative thinking. One is looking for facts and the other is a matter of coming up with new and useful possibilities. The bees were so focused on one solution that they thought should be right that they were unable to see any other possible solutions to the problem. Discuss the importance of creative and critical thinking in problem solving.

Discussion

Joshua

Discernment is not a gift that operates regardless of our daily conversations with the Lord. The fact that you have discerned a situation is not a guarantee of automatic discernment of other situations.

In Joshua 5:14, Joshua recognized that the man who approached him was the angel of the Lord and fell on his

face. If Joshua had been blinded by pride or position he would have rebuked the man. But as a result of his proper discernment he received a clear word from the Lord and instructions for the coming event.

However, in the situation with the Gibeonites in Joshua 9, discernment was sadly lacking, and the men of Israel were deceived. The Gibeonites wore old shoes, dusty clothes, carried cracked wineskins and moldy bread to convince the Israelite leaders that they had come from a far off country. Joshua 9:14 tells us that, "the Israelite men sampled their provisions but did not inquire of the Lord." In other words, they ate up their story, but did not discern the Lord's mind. Consequently they were deceived and the results produced much frustration in the years to come.

We must learn that outward appearances can be deceptive and only discernment guided by the Holy Spirit can preserve us from being deceived. Let us learn to "inquire of the Lord," even if the outward facts appear obvious.

Bible Connection

1 Corinthians 2:15

Bible Memory Verse

Prov 22:3

Songs

Be careful little eyes what you see

The I WILL's of Discernment

Review

Wednesday Evening

Peter

Although Peter had earlier problems in discernment he matured in this area. In Acts 8: 20-23 he correctly discerned the motives of Simon the Sorcerer. He was also able to

recognize God at work with Cornelius in spite of it being contrary to his past traditions (Acts 10:34).

Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

Discretion and Peer Pressure

Use this activity to illustrate the consequences of "getting sucked into doing wrong."

Choose a large glass bottle with a mouth just slightly smaller than a smoothly peeled hard boiled egg. Wad up some newspaper. Light the paper at a corner and drop it into the bottle. Quickly place the egg on the neck of the bottle. The egg may bounce as the air rushes out of the bottle. Once the fire goes out the egg will be sucked into the bottle with a "pop".

In this demonstration we are the egg. The fire represents the invitation to do wrong. Placing the egg in the neck of the bottle represents accepting an invitation to do wrong. And, becoming trapped in the bottle illustrates the consequences of doing wrong.

For an explanation of the chemistry principle behind this lesson (and instructions on how to get the egg back out) visit the following website:
<http://chemistry.about.com/od/chemistrydemonstrations/a/egginabottle.htm>

Introduction to Discretion

Translation

Discreción vs. Simpleza (Discretion vs Simplemindedness)

What does it mean?

Recognizing and avoiding words, actions, and attitudes that could bring undesirable consequences

Go to the root

Discretion comes from the Latin word, *discretionem*, which means "the power to distinguish, to separate". Can you see how we each have the power to be discreet?

Idioms

Be the soul of discretion - to be good at not talking about things that other people want to keep secret

At one's discretion - refers to the discretion that each of us owns and controls

Throw discretion to the wind - to disregard the rules of discretion and do something anyway

Thomas Jefferson - Model of Discretion

Thomas Jefferson practiced great foresight in his many accomplishments during the birth of America. His carefully worded Declaration of Independence demonstrated great ability to look ahead to how the colonies could become a great nation.

In 1786, he was proud when the Virginia House of Representatives passed his Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom. He helped to plan the city of Washington and was the first President to be inaugurated there. While in office as the third President of the United States, he determined that purchasing the port at New Orleans from France would be advantageous to the fledgling nation and so the Louisiana Purchase was negotiated. It was his idea to send Lewis and Clark to explore the new territory. After leaving office, he devoted himself to building a public university. He was 82 when the University of Virginia opened its doors in 1825. When Jefferson died in 1826, he had written this for his tombstone: "Author of the Declaration of Independence and of the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom, and Father of the University of Virginia" to Jefferson's use of discretion in his political career, we have a firm foundation for our country.

Bible Connection

Ananias and Sapphira attempted to deceive the Holy Spirit by keeping back part of the price of the land which they had sold, yet making out that they had given all the money to the church. They did not demonstrate discretion by considering what would happen if they lied to the Lord. As a result of their deceit and lack of discretion, they were both struck dead (Acts 5:1-11).

Bible Memory Verse

Prov 22:3

The I WILL's of Discretion

To practice Discretion I will:

- Consider Reactions
- Choose Words Carefully
- Check My Attitude
- Mind My Manners
- Learn From My Critics

Thursday Evening

When Hezekiah became king, he exercised great discretion. The bronze serpent, which Moses had made at the command of the Lord when there was a plague of poisonous snakes, had become an idol. The Israelites had even begun to burn incense to it. Although the immediate consequences of destroying the idol could incur the Israelites' wrath, Hezekiah knew that the long-term consequences of idol worship to the spiritual health of the nation would be far worse (II Kings 18:1-7).

Friday

Bible Memory Verse

Prov 22:3

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Prov 22:3


The I WILL's of Discretion

Review



Friday Evening

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah demonstrated discretion by purposing to stand alone. They refused to eat the king's meat that had not been killed according to the standards which the Lord had given to Israel. They realised that the immediate consequences of their actions (possible death) would be nothing compared to the long-term outcome of disobeying the Lord (Daniel 1:8-19).



Creativity

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

The tangelo is a citrus fruit that is a hybrid of a tangerine and either a pomelo or a grapefruit. Hybrid plants are created when two different plants are bred together to create something new and different. Sometimes this is done to create a stronger variety such as disease-resistant corn. Other reasons include pleasure as seen in flower varieties. Challenge your students to discover the origin of peppermint.

Introduction

Opposites:

Creativity vs Underachievement

What does it mean?

Approaching a need, a task, or an idea from a new perspective.

Translation:

Creatividad vs. Conformismo

Go to the root

Cre-a-tiv-i-ty *n.*

- 1: The quality of original thinking
- 2: Bringing about; causing to exist
- 3: Imagination; the ability to visualize.

Creativity comes from the Latin word *creo*, meaning “to bring forth; to give origin to.” Thus, creativity brings forth or is the origin of new ideas.

In a literal sense, to create is the power to bring something out of nothing. No one has ever created physical matter, and rarely does a person actually create new ideas. Rather, creativity, like cooking, combines previously existing ingredients to bring about something better than any of the ingredients would be alone.

How do we Sign it?

Create

Palindromes

A palindrome is a word, phrase, verse, or sentence that reads the same backward or forward. Did you know that SWIMS reads the same way upside down?

Riddles

A question in which the answer is usually a play on words, contains a double meaning or is a trick question.

Mary's father has 5 daughters -Nana, Nene, Nini, Nono. What is the fifth daughters name? *If you answered Nunu, you are wrong. It's Mary!*

Bible Connection

Read & Discuss Romans 12:6

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 12:2

The I WILL's of Creativity

To practice Creativity I will:

- use my talents for good
- see things from more than one perspective
- use principles to solve problems
- learn all I can
- look for new ways to be a person of character

Monday Evening

Creativity in Nature

All the family had just gone to bed. Everything was quiet in the house and the father was tired. As he dozed off, he heard something on the roof. It sounded like footsteps. He could hear a gentle “pad, pad, pad” walk up the roof to the peak and down the other side. Someone or something was on his roof.

The man reached for a flashlight in the nightstand next to his bed and quietly pulled back the covers. “Pad, pad, pad.” The footsteps seemed to follow him as he walked toward the bedroom window. Then as suddenly as they had begun, the footsteps stopped.

Everything was still. He could hear his own heartbeat as it pounded with fear. The something on the roof was headed for the dormer window. “Pad, pad, pad.” The footsteps began again. The something was just outside the window now—just on the other side of the curtains. There was a gentle scraping sound on the glass, then a rustle, and a thud.

He gripped the flashlight like a club, and slowly drew back he curtains.

AAAYYYYYGH!

There, in the darkness, silhouetted by the beam of the flashlight, stood a masked bandit. A masked bandit that had been trying to break into the house! Its eyes glowed brightly in the night. AAAYYYYYGH!

As the masked bandit leaped to a nearby branch, the man realized that these were not the eyes of a robber. They were the eyes of a neighborhood raccoon his family later named Henrietta. Henrietta lived in a large oak tree behind the house. The man discovered that she wasn’t trying to break into his house. She was just looking for dog food. Henrietta liked dog food. She liked it a lot. She’d do almost anything for dog food.

The family that had previously lived in the house had also known Henrietta. Each night as they went to bed, they had thrown a handful of dog food on the roof for her. Each night, Henrietta came looking for her treat. Ever since the new family had been there, Henrietta had been disappointed.

As the new owners learned how much Henrietta liked dog food, she became a family friend. When they heard that “pad, pad, pad.” on the roof, they weren’t frightened anymore. They knew that it was just Henrietta.

Each spring Henrietta had a litter of babies. During those early weeks when the babies were still very small, Henrietta often wanted more dog food than was on the roof. One night the man heard the normal “pad, pad, pad,” when suddenly there was a new sound—the squeaking of a door.

Grabbing his trusty flashlight, the man went to investigate.

He wondered, “What is Henrietta up to now?” The squeaking sound continued. Then he heard a commotion in the garage, and putting on shoes and a coat, the man ventured outside. The back gate was open. It had been unlatched and was swinging back and forth in the breeze. The man looked inside the storage room where he kept he dog food. The dog

food bag was moving! As he watched, the sides bulged first one way and then another.

He heard the sound of paper ripping as a hole gradually appeared in the bottom of the bag and dog food spilled out all over the floor.

Henrietta was inside the dog food bag helping herself! She’d torn a hole to make a self-dispensing dog food feeder. As the man watched, Henrietta climbed out of the bag, and seemed to smile as she picked up the pieces of dog food, waddled through the open gate, and disappeared into the night.

How Henrietta opened the gate and knew to tear a hole in the bottom of the bag (not the top) no one will ever know. You might say that raccoons are just creative.

A few weeks later, Henrietta had a runin with the family dog, Junior. Junior claimed the yard as his, and nobody entered without his permission.

Henrietta also claimed the yard as hers, and she was just as determined as Junior to keep it that way. One day, the family had enjoyed a meal of fresh sweet corn and had thrown the husks and cobs in the garbage can. The smell of that fresh sweet corn tempted Henrietta out of her nest.

During the middle of the day Henrietta climbed down from her tree to search for the source of that sweet smell. Finding the husks and cobs stored tightly inside the garbage can, Henrietta seemed a bit annoyed and puzzled.

She wanted that corn! Taking a closer look at the can, Henrietta worked her fingers over every inch of the lid. Finding no openings, she began throwing her weight from side to side on the top of the can. The can teetered back and forth as Junior walked into the backyard. This was *his* yard, *his* garbage can, and *his* sweet corn.

As Junior charged up to challenge Henrietta, the garbage can tumbled over, knocking off the lid, spilling the corn, and hitting the dog right in the middle of the back. Tucking his tail between his legs, Junior retreated to his doghouse while Henrietta stuffed herself on the sweet silks of corn.

When you face a problem, don’t give up. Look for a new way to solve it. It is important to see your circumstances from more than one perspective. Remember Henrietta, and be creative!



Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Two Pictures in One

Find two distinctly different pictures of the same size. Cut each picture into one inch strips. Tape the strips back together alternating successive strips from each picture. Now fold the pictures like an accordion and crease the edges. Unfold the accordion just enough so that you see one complete picture from one angle and the other picture from a different angle.



Color Outside the Lines!

Challenge your students to create a picture using crayons colored pencils or markers. The only rule is they cannot color inside of their picture. They may only color around it so that the blank space in the middle actually defines the picture. The background can be solid colors, stripes, dots or whatever they wish it to be.

To visualize a completed assignment, picture the shape of a heart where the heart is blank and the rest of the page is colored completely red (or a variety of colors).

For younger students you may want to get a First Coloring Book with simple line drawings and give a page to each student. The same challenge exists -they can not color inside the lines.

For much older students you may want to give them the item or a scene to draw so that it is more complicated.

Examples would be two children tossing a ball, or a cloud raining on a flower.

You can come up with one for each student or a single one for the class and compare the different interpretations.

Model of Creativity

Leonardo da Vinci - Model of Creativity

Leonardo da Vinci was a scientist, engineer, artist, instrument inventor, anatomist, philosopher, and composer. He embraced all types of learning and he didn't differentiate between disciplines because he believed that they were all inter-related. He believed that the learning and discoveries made in one area affect your understanding and knowledge of another subject of study. He also believed that true creative intelligence comes with the development of all your intelligences.

Da Vinci employed many techniques to get in touch with his creative genius. He would paint with both hands, he would practice writing backwards, he looked for images in the ashes of his fireplace and he used a notebook to record his thoughts, ideas and observations using both words and sketches. For creative thinkers everywhere, da Vinci is a hero and awe-inspiring role model.

Leonardo da Vinci left us a code of four principles to stimulate and encourage creative genius:

1. Study the science of art.
2. Study the art of science.
3. Develop all your senses especially your ability to see.
4. Study all the above in the light of the idea that every-thing connects, in some way, to everything else.

Bible Connection

Read & Discuss

Ephesians 2:10
Colossians 3:23

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 12:2

The I WILL's of Creativity

Review

Tuesday Evening

Creative Carver

Plants just a foot high waved in the breeze. These were no ordinary plants. They had strange, string-like runners which hung down and burrowed into the ground.

At the end of each runner, hidden from sight, grew an odd-shaped, brown shell. People usually fed these to hogs. Sometimes children would crack them open and eat the round pieces inside. But no one thought they were important. After all, they were only peanuts.

George Washington Carver rattled the newspaper over his breakfast. "I see the boll weevil has come to Louisiana," he declared with a frown. "Our farmers don't seem to realize what that tiny bug can do to our cotton. If we don't plant other crops, the boll weevil will destroy the whole southern economy!"

Carver was right. In his little laboratory in Tuskegee, Alabama, Professor Carver desperately searched for a plant, *any* plant, that might survive the attack of the boll weevil across the South. Surprisingly, his experiments finally centered on that brown and curious shell called the peanut.

"Boll weevils won't harm peanut plants," he explained to a group of farmers who had come to visit him. "Why, peanuts would replenish the ground and keep your fields green!"

Did you spot the "I Will"? George used his talents in agriculture for good by helping the farmers.

The farmers weren't convinced. "If we plant peanuts, then what will we do for money? Nobody will buy peanuts! We can sell cotton. We *can't* sell peanuts."

Sooner or later, however, every Alabama farmer woke up to the same horrible surprise. All the cotton plants turned yellow and their stalks drooped. The boll weevil had arrived!

"What can we do?" Doctor Carver heard them ask.

"We're ruined!"

Carver was ready with a plan. He had a drastic yet simple remedy. "Plow up your infested cotton, burn it, and wait a month. Then plant peanuts! They'll do fine."

Did you spot the "I Will"? Dr. Carver used principles of biology to solve problems.

This time the farmers followed his advice. They planted peanuts, and in the year 1915, they brought in the biggest crop ever seen!

There was just one problem. One day Dr. Carver heard a knock on his door.

"Yes ma'am, how can I help you?"

"Dr. Carver," began the widow, "on my plantation, I planted peanuts like you said, but now I have so many, they are rotting in my fields. I have so many peanuts that no one will buy them!"

This news forced Carver back into his laboratory. "How could I have been so foolish?" he asked himself. "I only thought of half the solution! There are peanuts to sell, but no market for them!" Carver knew it was up to him to create a market for the peanut. He had advised farmers to plant them, now he would have to find a use for them. He went to his laboratory, put on a floursack apron, and went to work.

Did you spot the "I Will"? George looked for new ways to be a person of character.

First, he shelled a handful of peanuts and put the hulls aside. He squeezed the oil out of the meat using a press and drained it into a cup. The remainder of the peanut looked completely dry, but Carver knew that there had to be more oil left. His creative mind prompted him to add a bit of solvent to the dry mass. Much to everyone's surprise, except Carver, it yielded even more oil.

He then mixed the dry mass with water, placed it in a glass, heated it, and stirred until it looked like creamy Jersey milk. Further tests revealed an amazing thing—it was like milk!

"Mmm . . . this is every bit as delicious as cow's milk!"

He had just set the glass aside, when a student rapped on the laboratory door. "Professor Carver, aren't you going to eat?" "Yes," answered the professor, still concentrating on his work.

"Dr. Carver, we've brought a tray of food for you," the voice said again.

"Oh, set it down, please," he said, opening the door slightly.

"And thank you, thank you." Carver barely noticed as the tray thumped down, and without touching it, went right back to work.

Carver worked all through the night separating the peanut into its different parts. Finally, he spread out twelve different ingredients before him. He found fats, acids, sugars, starches, and . . . "Quite a tiny package to hold all

that!” chuckled the professor. Like a skilled cook, he mixed the ingredients back together again. Carver chose two ingredients and pressed them together over a burner. He tried a hotter flame, then added even more pressure. Over and over, he combined different parts of the peanut at different pressures and temperatures.

Did you spot the “I Will”? Carver looked at the peanut from more than one perspective, looking for every possible combination.

The sun rose again, but Carver paid no attention. He was busy examining the peanut milk. After settling for several hours, it looked different.

A thick, yellowish substance formed on top. “Well, I declare,” murmured the scientist as he scraped it up, “it’s just like cream!”

Carver couldn’t believe his eyes. He dumped the cream into a churn, and quickly turned the peanut cream into a fine lump of butter!

More work yielded cheese! The red peanut skins made paper! The shells produced a smooth, hard square of imitation marble! Hour after hour he worked, ignoring the voices and knocks at his door. When he finally stepped out of the lab and turned off the light, he had worked for two whole days and nights.

And he still had not eaten his breakfast! The next morning, after a hearty breakfast, George met some of his students.

He said to them, with a twinkle in his eyes, “Come with me.” Excitedly, they followed their remarkable teacher to the lab.

“Look at these bottles!” exclaimed one. “What’s in them?”

“Looks like flour in here,” replied another before Carver could answer.

“And this looks like soap,” said someone else.

“You’ll find ice cream, ink, shaving cream, and candy,” smiled the professor proudly like a mother hen. “Over 20 products in all—each and every one made from peanuts! Tell all the farmers to bring in the harvest! We have a use for every single peanut they can grow, and more.”

Though the immediate problem was solved, Carver did not stop. He continued to question his own research and look for more ways to use the peanut. In fact, his labor didn’t end until he had found over 300 new uses for the humble peanut!

Did you spot the “I Will”? George prepared the farmers for success by learning all he could about peanuts.

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Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Rice, Rice, and Paper Clips

Fill a bowl with uncooked rice, puffed rice, and paper clips. Determine how many creative ways a class can separate the three different ingredients. Keep adding ideas over a period of a week or more, and don’t quit till you have at least 20 different ways which work.

By keeping the problem simple, students have to look at it from different perspectives and create new solutions based on the differing attributes of the rice, puffed rice, and paper clips.

Needed:

- Large bowl
- Box of uncooked rice
- Puffed rice
- Paper clips

Mix in any combination. However, 1 cup uncooked rice, 1 cup puffed rice and ten paper clips works well.

Folding a Napkin

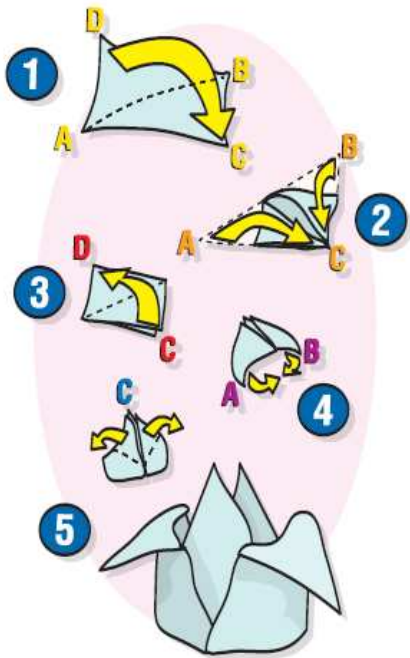
Folding a napkin adds a creative touch to any dinner setting. Practice so you can fold one quickly whenever the occasion offers the opportunity for a touch of creativity.

Advanced Creative Version:

1. Open the napkin to full size and fold in half to form a triangle
2. Fold corners A & B to point C to form another square
3. Turn the napkin over and fold C to D
4. Bend the napkin into a circle so that Corner A tucks inside corner B
5. Fold down corners C and D to make a decorative pair of “wings” for the napkin—which now resembles a crown.

Needed:

- Package of ordinary paper table napkins



Discussion

I Will Use My Talents For Good

Creativity is a lot like fire. When directed toward good, fire cooks our food, keeps us warm, and propels our cars. But fire misused can destroy and ravage a countryside.

Frank Abagnale used his creativity to steal money until 26 nations issued warrants for his arrest. After years in prison, where he nearly lost his life, Mr. Abagnale paid back every penny he had stolen and steered his creative talents toward helping the FBI prevent fraud.

I Will Learn All I Can

“Chance favors the prepared mind,” said Louis Pasteur, who perfected the method of making food—particularly milk—more appealing for human consumption. This method is now called *pasteurization*. Pasteur was a slow, but careful student. He took time to learn all he could and saw many things that others passed over. By learning all he could, Pasteur applied his knowledge to such diverse industries as medicine and silk worms. In 1865 he saved the French silk worm industry from disaster, and in the field of medicine his methodical preparation produced the first vaccines for anthrax and rabies.

I Will Use Principles To Solve Problems

A student can plan many creative ways to succeed on a test, but a truly creative child will reject any actions that violate principles of character. Creativity always looks for

solutions within the framework of acceptable behavior. It understands that only solutions based on right principles bring lasting results. Compromising principles because of circumstances or pressure leads to confusion and hurtful consequences.

I Will See Things From More Than One Perspective

A person’s circumstances look different when viewed from different angles. A creative individual steps back, takes a fresh look, and views each situation from a different perspective.

Years ago, two salesmen who sold shoes visited China. One wrote home and said, “No one wears shoes here,” and sent his boxes back. The other wrote, “*Everyone* needs shoes here—send as many as you can!” Perspective made the difference.

I Will Look for New Ways To Be a Person of Character

Just as a pilot uses a checklist when preparing for take-off, creative people must also review their own character checklist to make sure that nothing is missing.

Sometimes there are blind spots or cracks that prevent us from seeing our true character image. Good friends, parents, and teachers can help to tell us where our character image is distorted and in need of improvement.

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 12:2

Bible Connection

Read & Discuss James 1:17

The I WILL’s of Creativity

Review

Wednesday Evening

Read & Discuss Proverbs 6:6-11

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Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

Creative Inventions

Bring five or more objects from home:

- a rubber band
- a pop-sickle stick
- a paper clip
- a twist-tie
- a button

Give each child a piece of paper, along with scissors, tape, glue, pencils, crayons, and an equal amount of time. Using the five objects, invent something which has a purpose.

When finished, display the inventions along with their written explanation.

Needed:

- 5 objects. These may vary depending upon the age of the children. Make sure that at least one item is able to store energy, i.e., a rubber band, spring, battery, etc.
 - Paper, scissors, tape, glue, pencils, and crayons.
-

Bible Connection

Read & Discuss Isaiah 44:10-13

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 12:2

Songs

A new Perspective

It's the same old work done the same old way,
At the same old time of the same old day;
It's the same old scene from the same old view,
It's the same old thing that I always do!

That's why I need a new perspective, a whole new way to see!

If I'm to be effective, I must select a different key!

For it can be fun to get the job done,

Or meet a need I see,

If I am wise and use the eyes,

Of creativity!

For a brand new work done a brand new way,

At a brand new time of a brand new day!

It's a brand new scene from a brand new view!

It's a brand new thing that I'm happy to do!

The I WILL's of Creativity

Review

Thursday Evening

Read & Discuss

Isaiah 64:8

Psalms 139:13-16

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Friday

Bible Memory Verse

Rom 12:2

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Rom 12:2

The I WILL's of Creativity

Review

Friday Evening

Read & Discuss Matthew 25:14-30

Self-Control

Parents

Parents' prayer

Although we can try to develop character in our children through various methods and programs, only God can bring about permanent change in a child's heart. Before you begin leading your child through this study on self-control, spend time alone with God interceding for His help. Ask Him to help you grow in the area of self-control, and to release His power in your child.

Sample prayer

Jesus, You, are the Lord of self-control. Satan tempted You to flaunt Your power, to show off and to indulge Your appetite. But You were "full of the Holy Spirit" and used Scripture to rebuff Satan (Luke 4:1-13). Thank you for choosing to experience life in a human body. You really do know how challenging it can be to exercise self-control (Hebrews 4:15).

Self-control doesn't come easily to me. Please forgive me for the times I have said and done things rashly. Please remind me to consider self-control as "God-control" – not trying to control myself with human effort, but rather depending on You to fill me with the Holy Spirit so I can be self-controlled. I ask that You would make that supernatural change in me so I can keep in step with the Spirit. My desire is to have the fruit of Your Spirit evident in my life, especially self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). You know that I struggle with self-control when.

Please remind me to go to You when I am tempted, as I know Your promise to "provide a way out so that [I] can stand up under it" (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Thank you for promising Your Holy Spirit to all who ask (Luke 11:13)! As I wake each morning, please remind me to ask for a fresh filling of Your Spirit. If, as an adult, I sometimes struggle with impulsiveness, I wonder what it must be like to be a kid trying to exercise self-control. My child struggles with maintaining self-control when.

Wonderful Counsellor, please pour out Your heavenly wisdom on so he/she is able to recognize temptation when the devil comes prowling around to tempt him/her to lose self-control in this area. Do not give Satan the joy of seeing him/her "like a city whose walls are broken down" (Proverbs

25:28). Instead, please prompt to go to You for help when he/she is tempted, so the walls of his/her heart remain intact. Please give the wisdom to ask to be filled with Your Spirit so he/she can be self-controlled.

As a family, I ask that we would be strong in You, Lord, and in Your mighty power. Remind us of our need to put on the full armour of God so we can take a stand against the devil's schemes. I ask that in addition to the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of faith, and the helmet of salvation, that we would hold firmly to the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, and that we would be a praying family! Please fit our feet with readiness that comes from the gospel of peace (Ephesians 6:10-18).

How better can we be equipped to have victory over the plans of the devil? None of this can be accomplished in human might or power, but by Your Spirit, Lord Almighty (Zechariah 4:6). Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for parents

Pray through one or more of the selected Scriptures under each heading. Focus on listening to God and allowing His Spirit to direct you as you pray.

Character focus

Begin by letting God know how much you appreciate His ultimate control and the promise of His Holy Spirit.

John 14:15-17 | Romans 8:26-27 | 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 | Colossians 2:9-10 | Hebrews 4:14-16

Heart search

Acknowledge where and how you lack self-control personally.

Proverbs 25:28 | Proverbs 29:11 | Proverbs 29:20 | Romans 6:11-14 | Galatians 5:16-21 | James 1:19-20

Gratitude

Thank God for the ways you have seen self-control exhibited within your family.

Family requests

Ask God to help you and your family to be self-controlled in your thoughts and actions.

Luke 11:11-13 | Galatians 5:22-26 | 1 Thessalonians 5:5-8 | 2 Timothy 1:7 | 2 Peter 1:3-4

Kids talk with God

Use this section to help your child learn to reach out to God in all things. The sample prayers all begin with "Dear God," however, you may use any other names for God your children are comfortable with (i.e. Jesus, Father God, Lord Jesus, Heavenly Father, Abba Father, Lord). If your child is ready to pray an original prayer, you may wish to use the Bible verses provided under "Scripture-guided prayer for children."

Sample prayers

Dear God, I am having trouble controlling my tongue. I say unkind things without thinking. Please help me to be full of Your Holy Spirit so I think before I speak. Amen.

Dear God, I am having trouble controlling my hands /thoughts/feet. I do/think things that do not please You. Please help me to be full of Your Holy Spirit so I can honour You with my thoughts and actions. Amen.

Dear God, if I am upset and getting close to losing self-control, please remind me to ask for the help of your Holy Spirit. Amen.

Dear God, I have a problem with trying to solve problems using rough and hurtful actions instead of kind and gentle words. Please help me to remember to talk about problems rather than acting out towards others. Amen.

Dear God, when the devil comes prowling around trying to devour me, please remind me to pray and ask You to protect me and not to give in to his temptation. Amen.

Dear God, please forgive me for losing self-control. I know it does not please You. Please help me to be full of Your Holy Spirit so I can be self-controlled. Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for children

Read through one of the selected Scriptures under each heading and help your children pray based on the verse you read. Encourage them to listen to God and allow His Spirit to guide them as they pray.

Character focus

Begin by telling Jesus you appreciate knowing that He understands what it is like to be a kid and thank Him that He promises to share His Holy Spirit with you to help you be self-controlled.

Romans 8:26,37 | 2 Corinthians 12:9 | Hebrews 4:15-16

Heart search

Acknowledge where and how you lack self-control.
Proverbs 25:28 | Proverbs 29:11 | James 1:19

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have been self-controlled.

Personal requests

Ask God to help you, your siblings and your parents to be self-controlled in your thoughts and actions.
Luke 11:11-13 | Galatians 5:22-23 | 2 Timothy 1:7

Speak a Blessing

Use this section as a reminder to "speak a blessing" when you see your son or daughter growing in the area of in self-control.

- Good job using self-control, _____!
- I see that _____ is self-controlled.
- I'm proud to see you're solving your problem using words instead of actions, _____.
- You kept the walls of your city intact, _____. Good job! (Proverbs 25:28)
- I'm proud you went to God for help in using self-control, _____. I see that the Holy Spirit is living in you, because I see your self-control.
- Jesus is proud of you and so am I.
- I'm glad you used a Bible verse to fight off temptation. It feels so much better to deal with a problem using self-control than losing it, doesn't it, _____?

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

Kick-off craft

The craft suggested here will help remind your children to practice self-control and is based on 1 Peter 5:8: "Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around looking for someone to devour."

A self-control poster

Directions

1. Help your children draw or trace a picture of a lion on the poster.
2. Next have your children place their hands over the lion and trace around their hands.
3. Write the memory verse of your choice on the poster.
4. Use the poster as a reminder that the best way to defeat Satan when he tries to devour us is to pray.
5. Review the questions for discussion below to enhance your children's understanding of the concepts.

Throughout the day, encourage your children to clasp their hands together tightly when they feel like they are going to lose self-control. Have them come to you so you can help them pray. Explain that Satan is strong like a lion, but we can be stronger than Satan when we go to God for help. Just as the tracing of their hands covers the lion, they can be stronger than the temptation Satan sends when they are full of the Holy Spirit. Tell your children that putting their hands together will help remind them to talk to God and ask for His help in maintaining self-control. At these times, you may also select a kids talk with God prayer to pray with your children.

Questions for discussion

- Could you win in a fight against a real lion?
- Who could help you and how?
- Who does the Bible say is like a lion?
- Why does the Bible say you need to be alert?
- How does Satan try to devour you?
- How can you beat Satan when he is acting like a lion?

Introduction

Opposites:

Self-Control vs Self-indulgence

What does it mean?

Rejecting wrong desires and doing what is right.

Nature Story

Self-Control Nature Story (VID) (9:31)

Poem

Self-Control Poem (VID) (6:13)

Bible Memory Verse

Proverbs 25:28

God's Way vs My Way

God's way

I am demonstrating godly character when:

- I use self-control
- I think before I act or speak
- I trust God to help me control my thoughts and actions

And God is pleased!

My way

When I am tempted to:

- act or speak without thinking
- react quickly when I get hurt or angry
- speak or act

I know that I need to go to God for help.

The I WILL's of Self-Control

To practice Self-Control I will:

- not act impulsively.
- not equate desires with rights.
- set my own limits.
- see my anger as a sign that something is wrong in me.
- walk away from things that are not right.

Monday Evening

Jesus fights temptation

Read

Luke 4:1-13

Questions for discussion

1. Tell me about a time when you were really, really hungry.

2. How badly do you want to eat when you are just starving?
3. Can you imagine how hungry Jesus must have been after not eating for 40 days?
4. If you had not eaten for 40 days and you had the power to turn stone into bread, would you?
5. Jesus had all the power in the world and Satan tempted him to show it off, but Jesus didn't. How did Jesus resist temptation?
6. How can we use Scripture to help us maintain self-control?

Songs

Self-Control Song (VID) (10:00)



Poem

Self-Control Poem - Review



Discussion

Key concepts

The Bible says Satan tempted Jesus for forty days. During this time, Jesus did not eat. Satan tempted Jesus with food, power and the opportunity to show off His power and to honour Himself instead of God.

When Satan tempted Jesus, Jesus used Bible verses to tell Satan why He wasn't going to do what he asked Him to do. The Bible also tells us Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit, which means God helped him be self-controlled. It is the same for you and I. If we try to fight Satan and temptation on our own, it is difficult, and perhaps impossible. If we ask God to fill us with His Holy Spirit to help us fight Satan and temptation, we can be strong and victorious like Jesus.



Tuesday



Attention Grabber Activity

How do you see yourself?

Tape a piece of aluminum foil, (heavy duty works best) to a sheet of paper. Have the students reflect on some of their positive attributes and write them on the foil using a pen. They will not be able to correct mistakes as the writing will make an engraving on the foil. Younger students may want to illustrate something that identifies a good quality they possess.

Self-Control is learning to manage how we think of ourselves. It is important that we take time to reflect on how we react to situations for the purpose of improving our behavior. It is very easy to let these evaluations become negative and self-defeating. It takes self-control to keep our focus on the positive and looking for ways to improve rather than belittle ourselves.



Overview:

A car that drifts out-of-control is dangerous to everyone in its path-and to everyone inside the car.

Similarly, losing control over your temper, emotions, or will-power can cause a lot of unnecessary pain. Self-control means steering your life in a positive direction and doing what is right. When you say "no" to one thing, think of it as saying "yes" to something better-something that can help you reach your goals!

The Black Bear demonstrates self-control as it prepares each year for winter hibernation. The bear stops eating, slows its breathing, and lowers its heart rate while it sleeps.

Character Quiz:

1. Why is it important to do what is right, even when you don't feel like it?
2. What could happen to someone who has very little self-control?
3. Self-control includes:
 - a. going to bed on time
 - b. not over-eating
 - c. showing good manners
 - d. all of the above.
4. Self-control means you never have any fun: TRUE? or FALSE?
5. What are some healthy habits that can make you a stronger person?
6. Athletes make a lot of sacrifices in order to reach their goals. Can you think of ways athletes show self-control or self-discipline?

Model of *Self-Control*

Alexander Graham Bell

When we think of Alexander Graham Bell we immediately identify him as the inventor of the telephone but this is not how he saw himself. He spent most of his time as a teacher of the deaf. His inventions were his "spare time" activity. His

interest in speech, voice and sound is what interested him in improving the telegraph. His father, Alexander Melville Bell, had created a system for teaching deaf people to speak called Visible Speech. Graham Bell mastered his father's method and taught it at a school for the deaf in Boston. The image to the right demonstrates this method. One aspect of self-control is taking your time to discover options, weigh their differences and choose the best option. As an inventor and a teacher, Alexander Graham Bell had to exercise much self-control in choosing options whether it was a teaching method or an electrical conduction experiment. A scientist must exercise self-control to look at results as they actually are rather than jumping to conclusions that could be wrong.

Story

The Storm

A salty breeze blew gently into her face as she watched Boston harbor slowly fade into the distance. Abigail Adams, her daughter, Nabby, and two friends were on their way to Europe aboard a ship named the *Active*.

Soon Abigail would see her husband, John, and her son, John Quincy. Abigail remembered when her husband prepared to sail almost seven years earlier. John Quincy's young voice rang in her memory.

"Please Mama, let me go with Father to France. Please? I want to be a diplomat, too!"

John Quincy was only ten years old. If he left home there would be no "man" in the house. On the other hand, the education and the experience of meeting important leaders would be invaluable. Abigail would miss John Quincy, but she gave up her desire to keep him home and let him go with his father.

Abigail and Nabby's cabin was just eight feet wide, with barely enough room between the beds to turn around. It was quite a change from their large farmhouse in Braintree, near Boston.

"Seeing your father and brother will be worth the discomfort," Abigail reassured Nabby as they organized their belongings.

That evening, the captain called to the passengers on board, "Rough waters ahead!" Abigail's stomach began to churn. "How could it get any worse?" she wondered.

After eight uncomfortable days, the sea calmed and Abigail walked around the deck. The clean, crisp breeze was a welcome relief after being confined to their cabin.

Soon Abigail heard Nabby's familiar voice calling from the stairway, "Mother, are you coming to lunch?" Abigail had not eaten since the storm began.

Abigail joined Nabby in the narrow dining room below. From her seat at the table, Abigail could smell the odor of leaking oil and sour milk. "This smell is enough to poison anyone!" she thought in disgust. Angrily, she pushed her chair back from the table and went up to the main deck.

There stood the captain in a heated discussion with another passenger. Apparently, Abigail was not the only one disgusted with the conditions on board. Abigail wanted to join in the argument, but she realized arguing was the wrong solution.

The captain saw Mrs. Adams coming toward him and paused. "Lovely day, Captain," she said and continued walking.

Abigail felt angry, but she realized that getting upset would not improve her journey, so she looked for a better solution.

Abigail rolled up her sleeves and began cleaning the ship herself. She started by washing an old milk pail which had overturned in the corner. Each day, she found a new project.

Before the voyage ended, she had scrubbed nearly every inch of the boat!

After one month at sea, the *Active* finally reached England. The weary passengers disembarked and lodged in a nearby inn. What had started out as a miserable journey ended quite happily.

After years of separation and a tiring journey across the ocean, Abigail was finally reunited with her husband and son.

However, this was not the last adventure for Abigail Adams and her family. Her country would need them again.

Bible Memory Verse

Proverbs 25:28

The I WILL's of Self-Control

Review

Tuesday Evening

Picking fights

Read

Genesis 26:17-22

Questions for discussion

1. What do other kids do when they want to pick a fight?
2. How about your brother/sister?
3. How do you feel when someone says that something you own is his/hers?
4. What happened to Isaac's servants?
5. What did they do?
6. How many wells did they have to dig before the herdsman of Gerar didn't bother them?
7. What is the best thing to do if someone picks a fight with you?

Key concepts

Isaac's servants had moved into a new territory. Part of moving into new territory involved finding water for the flocks they were caring for. As Isaac's men dug wells, the herdsman living in the new territory argued with them and kept claiming the wells as their own.

Instead of fighting back and fighting for the wells that were rightfully theirs, Isaac and his people just kept moving on and digging another well, until the herdsmen of Gerar left them alone. These men exercised self-control and didn't fight for their rights.

Isaac and his servants set a good example for all of us of what to do if someone picks a fight with you. The best thing to do is to walk away and keep the peace.

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Wednesday

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Attention Grabber Activity

Everyone loves presents: God's great gift!

Prior to beginning this discussion, wrap up an empty box in attractive gift-wrap. Attach a note that says:

An empty box wrapped with ribbon and care, This gift is not costly, but precious and rare. Please do not open it - you'll find nothing there, It's just to remind you, that with one simple prayer God gives you His Spirit, it's His gift to share.

Place the gift where it can be admired during your discussion. Use the introductory questions for discussion to introduce the concept of the Holy Spirit as a gift from God.

Questions for discussion

- Can you think of a special gift someone has given to you?
- Who gave it to you?
- Why is it so special?
- Do you want to hear about an even greater gift that God has waiting for all of us? Read Luke 11:5-13. Explain that the Holy Spirit is God's special gift to us and that His Spirit can come and live in each of us (John 16:5-16, John 14:15-21).
- Have your parents ever given you an awful gift like a snake or a rock?
- When you ask for food, what do your parents give you?
- Have you ever turned down a gift that someone gave you?
- What is the "good gift" God offers us?

Close by reading the note on the gift aloud and ask your children if they want to accept God's gift of the Holy Spirit. If they do, suggest that while you pray, they hold their hands open as though they were about to receive a gift. Pray with them, thanking God for His gift of the Holy Spirit and asking God to fill each of you with the Holy Spirit. Pray specifically for the Holy Spirit to provide self-control. Leave the gift wrapped as a reminder to ask for a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit every day.

Relevant Scripture

Luke 11:5-13
John 14:15-21
John 16:5-16

.....

Bible Connection

The funky fox

Read

Nehemiah 4

Questions for discussion

1. How do you feel when someone makes fun of something you are making?

2. How do you feel when you start a big job that will take a long time to finish?
3. Let's say you were trying to build a big Lego® house or spaceship. If someone were making fun of you, saying what a lousy builder you were, how would you feel?
4. Would you want to quit or would you keep trying?
5. What did Nehemiah do when his enemies made fun of the wall he was building and said it would break if even a fox walked on it?
6. When someone is angry with you, what is the easiest thing to do?
7. What could have happened if Nehemiah had become angry and lost self-control when Sanballat mocked them?

Key concepts

When someone gets mad at us, the easiest thing to do is get mad, too. Nehemiah was rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. His enemies were angry about this and mocked the efforts of Nehemiah and his men and also threatened them with a fight.

Nehemiah didn't get angry when they made fun of him, nor did he offer to fight. If Nehemiah had fought back, there was a chance a war could have started. Nehemiah's anger could have clouded his thinking and he may not have remembered to consult God for directions and protection. Instead, Nehemiah talked to God and asked Him to deal with the troublemakers. Talking to God helps us know what to do when we are tempted to get mad at someone. The best thing to do when we are tempted to fight or lose self-control is to pray!

Bible Memory Verse

Proverbs 25:28

Songs

Self-Control Song - Review

Poem

Self-Control Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Self-Control

Review

Wednesday Evening

Who needs to be self-controlled?

Read

Titus 2:1-12

As you read this passage, ask the kids to listen for the word "self-control." Ask them to raise their hands when they hear it.

Questions for discussion

1. Can you think of something you do that does not please God?
2. Have you ever wanted something so much that you had a tantrum when you were told you couldn't have it?
3. What is self-control?
4. Who needs to be self-controlled?
5. Why do we need to be self-controlled?
6. When are you most tempted to lose self-control?

Key concepts

Self-control is saying "no" to ungodliness (behaviour that does not please God) and worldly passions (allowing things to be so important to you that they contribute to sinful behaviour). The Bible indicates that everyone is to be self-controlled. When we choose to have the Holy Spirit live inside of us, God helps us to maintain self-control. Self-control is one of the fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). Ask God to help you remember to ask for help when you are tempted to lose self-control.

Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

Fizzy mess

This exercise in simple science is designed to help your children understand the importance of dealing with

emotions before they get to the point of “boiling over.” This project should be done outside or in an area that is easy to clean up.

You will need soda pop in a clear bottle and a suitable place to make a mess

1. Shake the bottle of pop up a lot. As you are shaking the pop, explain that life has its shakeups, too. Life’s shake-ups are times when we feel a lot of pressure. For example, perhaps teasing from a sibling shakes you up; maybe it is feeling as though you’re not getting your fair share or being treated unjustly. Use examples of things that press your children’s buttons.
2. Next, take the top off the bottle of pop and fizz from the pop will fly everywhere. Explain that when we lack self-control, we are just like the bottle of pop. Just as the pop flying everywhere makes a mess, we make messes when we lack self-control.

Questions for discussion

Read Galatians 5:13-15 and 25-26 and ask the following questions:

- What kind of messes do we get ourselves into?
- Is it a mess when we hurt someone’s feelings?
- What other messes can you think of?
- Would you rather live in a family where people encourage each other or devour each other?

Key concepts

When we do not use self-control, we end up “biting and devouring” each other, and “provoking and envying” each other. This is not God’s plan for our lives. He would rather see us encouraging and building one another up. When we feel like fizzing all over everyone, it is time to get alone with God for a talk.

Help your children make plans for what they will do when they feel like they are going to lose self-control.

Challenge your children to hold one hand in a fist and clamp the other hand over top of it, pretending that it is a bottle of pop ready to explode. In order to “keep the lid on,” he/she can come to a parent who will help them bring their frustration to God. As your children are able, have them go directly to God with their concerns.

Relevant Scripture

Galatians 5:13-15
Galatians 5:25-26
Hebrews 10:24-25

Bible Connection

Expressing anger hastily

Read

Proverbs 29:20, Ecclesiastes 7:9, Proverbs 29:11 and Proverbs 14:17.

Questions for discussion

1. Have you ever said or done anything and later you wished you hadn’t?
2. What does the Bible say about doing or saying things without thinking first?
3. What does it mean to speak in haste?
4. When are you tempted to speak without thinking first?
5. What does it mean to be provoked in your spirit?
6. What does it mean to give full vent to your anger?
7. How can you stop yourself from being foolish?

Key concepts

Most of us have said or done something foolish and later regretted it. As you read the Bible verses listed above, notice a word that is used in all of these verses; the word is fool.

Traditionally, the word fool was defined as “one without spiritual wisdom; wicked person” (*Funk and Wagnalls Standard Dictionary*). When we let the devil tempt us with losing self-control, this causes us to do things that are not righteous.

Normally we think of wickedness as something mean or bad that has been planned out ahead of time, but we can actually do wicked things when we say or do things without thinking. In fact, we can hurt people more by careless words and actions than if we planned to hurt them. Matthew 12:36 says that all of us will have to give an account to God for every careless word we speak.

The good news is that God will help us with self-control when we ask Him. Take time to pray one of the kids talk with God prayers together.

Bible Memory Verse

Proverbs 25:28

Songs

Self-Control Song - Review

Poem

Self-Control Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Self-Control

Review

Thursday Evening

Self-control scenarios

You can play the self-control game when you are driving in the car or as a family activity at home. Take turns giving examples of when self-control is needed. (See examples below). After each example, ask the questions for discussion.

- Someone has just taken your favourite toy from you.
- You have had one piece of cake and your stomach feels full. Someone offers you another piece.
- You are alone in the kitchen and see an open bag of chocolate chips on the counter where you can reach it. No one will notice if you take a few.
- Someone has just called you a mean name that hurt your feelings – now they are laughing at you.
- You just received some discipline from one of your parents, now your brother or sister is smiling.

Questions for discussion

- Would you need to use self-control in this situation?
- Would it be easy or hard to be self-controlled in this situation?
- If you would have a hard time using self-control, how could you make it easier?

Key concepts

You want your children to understand that when we are full of the Holy Spirit, it is easier to use self-control. It is one of the fruits of the Spirit. Also remind your children that they will never be tempted beyond what God will help them handle (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Close by praying and thanking God that He understands what it is like to be tempted and that He will never let us be tempted beyond that which we can handle. For further

insight, read and discuss the “Jesus fights temptation” story in the Bible stories section of this lesson.

Relevant Scripture

1 Corinthians 10:13

Friday

Bible Memory Verse

Proverbs 25:28

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Proverbs 25:28
Also Read Gal 5:24-25

Songs

Self-Control Song - Review

Poem

Self-Control Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Self-Control

Review

Friday Evening

Like a city

Visit a fort in your vicinity, if there is one. You can also take a book out of the library on forts or build a fort out of snow, blocks or cushions. Talk about how those inside the fort are protected by the walls. Explain that in Bible times, they put walls around their cities to protect themselves from enemies.

Read Proverbs 25:28 and Ephesians 6:10-18 to find out how to secure protection from Satan's attacks. Emphasize Ephesians 6:11 ("so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes") and verse 18 ("pray in the Spirit on all occasions"). The questions for discussion can be used to enhance discussion.

Key concepts

When we lose self-control, we are like a city whose walls have been broken down. It is much easier for Satan to tempt us to sin when we have lost self-control. To prevent this from happening, we need to be ready for Satan's attacks by wearing the "armour of God."

Close by praying, asking God to give you his armour to help you fight temptation to lose self-control so you can keep the walls of your city intact. Also ask that you and your children will be able to resist temptation with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Other ideas

If your children enjoy the "spiritual battle" theme, you can further the activity by making a complete set of the armour of God for themselves, an animal or a doll. Duct tape, tin foil and cardboard can be used creatively for this additional activity.

Questions for discussion

- What do you think the pilgrims were protecting themselves from when they built wooden forts?
- What are we protecting ourselves from when we build snow forts?
- In our spiritual lives whom are we trying to protect ourselves from?
- When you think of temptation to do wrong as "flaming arrows," what kinds of arrows does Satan shoot at you?

Relevant Scripture

Proverbs 25:28
Ephesians 6:10-18

Praying and preying

A careful study of the behaviour of preying animals can teach your children a memorable lesson about the value of self-control. Begin by asking your children to think of a time when an animal would need to use self-control. Use these questions if you wish:

Questions for discussion

- Do you think only people need to use self-control or do animals have to as well?
- Can you think of any animals that might need self-control?
- Would these animals ever catch anything if they just charged in on their prey?
- Are your parents more likely to give you what you ask for if you have a temper tantrum or if you ask politely?
- Will your friend play your game if you speak gently and pleasantly or if you yell and whine?

Key concepts

Animals that stalk their prey need to use self-control. Some examples include owls, cats, coyotes, and wolves. If these animals charged their prey before waiting for an opportune time, they would make a ruckus and the prey would have time to get away. In order to catch their prey, these animals must very carefully sneak up on it. Even though they are close enough to attack and they are very hungry, they must use self-control and wait until exactly the right moment to pounce or they will have no dinner. To be good hunters these animals need a combination of self-control and patience.

These animals can set a good example for us. Let your children know when they are tempted to lose self-control in order to get something they want, they need to remember the wolf/cat/coyote. Remind your children, if they expect to receive something they need, they must use self-control. Prior to playtime, tell your children that if they speak politely, it is more likely that someone will play cooperatively with them.

To extend the learning time, pretend you are animals hunting. Take turns being the hunter and the prey. Have fun sneaking up and pouncing on each other. Then have your children role play some situations in life where they also need to use self-control in order to accomplish a task.

Close your time with prayer.



Humility

Parents

Parents' prayer

Despite our best efforts to nurture humility in our children, only God can bring about lasting change in a child's heart. Before you begin leading your child through this lesson, spend time alone with God interceding for His help. Ask Him to help you grow in humility, and to release His power in your child. Use the sample prayer below to guide you in praying for your child's character development. If you prefer to personalize your prayers even further, read through the additional verses provided under "Scripture-guided prayer" for direction and inspiration.

Sample prayer

Lord Jesus, Your life here on earth was the essence of humility. You are fully God, yet humbly You chose to limit Yourself to the confines of a human body. Despite being in nature God, You did not demand equality with God, rather You were willing to be made "nothing." In taking on human dimensions to Your person, You willingly became God's servant.

Because of Your humble obedience, You endured a horrendous and painful death on the cross to ensure the whole world gained salvation (Philippians 2:8, Hebrews 9:28). God honoured Your humility through exalting You to the highest place and giving You the name that is above every name. We rejoice knowing that someday every knee will bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue will confess that You, Jesus Christ, are Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:9-11). What a privilege it is to live each day with You as our gentle and humble Saviour (Matthew 11:28-30).

Jesus, You are Lord of All, Lord of our home and Lord of my heart. What an honour it is to be called Your child and what a privilege it is to pray. It is because of Your grace and forgiveness that I am free to be in Your presence. I know those who are arrogant cannot be close to You (Psalm 5:5). Lord Jesus, please help me to recognize any pride in my heart – whether it shows up as self-centeredness, unforgiveness, ungratefulness and even self-pity. Pride, the sin of being overly focused on "me and my needs," seems to be one of those sins that sneak up on me so easily.

I humbly acknowledge my weak and sinful human tendencies and ask for the good gift of Your Holy Spirit to replace my selfish pride with a willingness to serve and honour others instead of myself. I want our kids to grow up witnessing me readily admitting my mistakes and asking for forgiveness. Please let them see in me an attitude that says, "without God I can do nothing" (John 15:5).

Lord, those who exalt themselves will be humbled and those who humble themselves will be exalted (Matthew 23:12). If there is any pride in my child's heart, I ask that You would reveal it and give a desire to get rid of it. I pray that, even in his/her youth, would be willing to put others first. I ask that would realize how much he/she has to learn so he/she is teachable and willing to learn Your ways (Psalm 25:9). Most importantly, I pray that would recognize his/her own sinfulness and see his/her need for forgiveness. Please help to understand that, in Your kingdom, humility comes before honour (Proverbs 29:23).

In our home we honour You as King and promise to serve You and others, not ourselves. It is because of Your kindness, love and mercy that we are saved, through the washing of Your Holy Spirit (Titus 3:4-5). In humility we pray "not to us, but to Your name be the glory, because of Your love and faithfulness" (Psalm 115:1). It is our desire to honour You by having servant hearts like Yours, Lord Jesus. Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for parents

Read and pray through one or more of the selected Scriptures under each heading. Focus on listening to God and allowing His Spirit to direct you as you pray.

Character focus

Begin by thanking Jesus for His humility and acknowledge that He is worthy of praise, honour and glory.

Psalm 103:13-19 | Psalm 113:4-6 | Isaiah 2:10-21 | Isaiah 57:15 | Philippians 2:8-11

Heart search

Acknowledge the areas where you are tempted to be proud.

1 Samuel 2:3 | Psalm 36:2 | Psalm 101:5 | Proverbs 27:2 | Jeremiah 9:23-24

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have seen humility demonstrated in your family.

Family requests

Ask God to help you and your children be humble.

Psalm 25:9 | Proverbs 3:5-8 | Colossians 3:12 | Titus 3:1-2 | 1 Peter 5:5-6

Kids talk with God

These sample prayers all begin with "Dear God," however, you may use any other names for God your children are comfortable with (i.e. Jesus, Father God, Lord Jesus, Heavenly Father, Abba Father, Lord).

Sample prayers

Dear God, You are the Lord of this universe. You placed the stars in the sky and You know them all by name (Isaiah 40:26). Please help me remember to give You the honour You deserve. Amen. Dear God, thank you for loving me enough to die for my sin. Amen.

Dear God, it's so easy to be proud. Please remind me that You prefer it when people are humble. Amen.

Dear God, when someone compliments me, please help me to honour You with the compliment instead of becoming proud of myself. Amen.

Dear God, when I am tempted to try and do things on my own, please remind me that You can help me in any situation. Amen.

Dear God, please teach me to trust in You instead of myself. Amen.

Dear God, You are so wise. Please give me a humble heart that is willing listen to You. Amen.

Dear God, please help me be willing to take advice from others. Amen.

Scripture-guided prayer for children

Read through one of the selected Scriptures under each heading and help your children pray based on the verse you read. Encourage them to listen to God and allow His Spirit to guide them as they pray.

Character focus

Begin by thanking Jesus for His humility and acknowledge that He is worthy of praise, honour and glory.

Deuteronomy 7:9 | 2 Samuel 22:31-34 | Psalm 59:16

Heart search

Acknowledge when and how you are tempted to be proud.

Psalm 78:19-22 | Proverbs 28:26 | 1 Peter 5:7

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have seen humility demonstrated in your family.

Personal requests

Ask God to help you, your siblings and your parents to be humble.

Psalm 25:9 | Proverbs 16:20 | Colossians 3:12

Speak a Blessing

Your affirmation can be a tremendous motivator for your children as they strive to become more humble. Use this section as a reminder to "speak a blessing" when you see evidence of this godly characteristic.

- _____, you showed humility when you (name the circumstance).
- _____, you are showing that you trust God when you ask for His help.
- _____, I was pleased to hear you say, "I'm sorry." It shows that you are humble.
- It's hard to say sorry when we make mistakes.
- I'm glad you are humble enough to admit when you have done wrong.
- I was so pleased when you were humble about (name the circumstance).
- God is pleased when your heart is humble, just like Jesus' (Matthew 11:29).
- A wise person listens to advice (Proverbs 12:15).
- Good job listening, _____!
- When you are humble, you are being like Jesus.

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

Every knee shall bow

During your study on humility, make it a practice to kneel when you pray to physically demonstrate humility before God. You may wish to open your prayer saying, "Dear King Jesus..."

To introduce the concept of kneeling before royalty, you can read one of your child's favourite stories about princes, princesses, kings or queens. You can also read through your choice of the verses listed below that refer to the long-standing tradition of kneeling to show respect to God. In the New Testament verses it is interesting to note that people who didn't even know that Jesus was God still knelt down in front of Him.

Relevant Scripture

2 Chronicles 7:3 Matthew 2:10-11
Matthew 8:2 Matthew 9:18
Matthew 23:12 Psalm 22:27-28
Philippians 2:9-11



Introduction

Opposites:

Humility vs Pride / Humility vs Arrogance

What does it mean?

Acknowledging that achievement results from the investment of others in my life.

Translation:

Humildad vs. Orgullo
Reconocer que mis logros se deben a lo que otros han invertido en mi vida

Go to the root

The Latin root, humilis, means, "lowly, small, or common," and is based on a different word, "humus," which means "dirt." Perhaps humility is meant to keep us grounded.

How do we Sign it?

Humble



Bible Connection

A proud king takes a tumble

Read

Daniel 4

This is long story. You may need to shorten it, read it in parts, or have your children act it out with dolls or stuffed animals as you read.

Questions for discussion

1. If you need help, who do you ask?
2. Why do you think people have trouble listening to the advice of another person?
3. What do you think King Nebuchadnezzar's dream was about?
4. Would that dream have scared you?
5. What was Daniel's advice to King Nebuchadnezzar? (v. 27)
6. Did King Nebuchadnezzar listen to Daniel's advice? (v. 28-30)
7. What did King Nebuchadnezzar say to let us know that he was proud? (v. 28-30)
8. What was the result? (v. 33)
9. What did King Nebuchadnezzar finally do? (v. 34-35)
10. What did he tell others about his lesson? (v. 37)

Key concepts

King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream that scared and bothered him. God gave Daniel the wisdom to understand what the dream meant. Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar what the dream was about. He also told the king that he should quit doing wrong and start doing right. But King Nebuchadnezzar did not listen to Daniel's advice.

One day Nebuchadnezzar was on the roof of his palace bragging about his mighty power and the great house he had built for himself. God spoke from heaven and told Nebuchadnezzar that his bad dream was going to come true. God made Nebuchadnezzar act and live like a wild animal until Nebuchadnezzar decided to give God the respect and honour God deserved.

King Nebuchadnezzar learned his lesson and acknowledged God and praised Him as the Lord of heaven and earth. After this, Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom was given back to him and he told others that he now praised and glorified the King of heaven, "... because everything He does is right and all His ways are just. And those who walk in pride He is able to humble" (Daniel 4:37).

The Bible tells us that a wise son listens to the advice of his parents (Proverbs 1:8). God's plan is that parents will teach their children about Him (Deuteronomy 6:6-8, Psalm 78:4). To gain wisdom, we can ask God for it directly or read the Bible (James 1:5).

Relevant Scripture

Proverbs 1:8
Deuteronomy 6:6-8
Psalm 78:4
James 1:5



Bible Memory Verse

1 Pet 5:6

God's Way vs My Way

God's way

I am demonstrating godly character when:

- I am humble
- I give honour to God for my talents and abilities
- I accept advice

And God is pleased!

My way

When I am tempted to:

- be proud
- insist on being first or think that I'm the best
- ignore advice

I know that I need to go to God for help.

The I WILL's of Humility

To practice Humility I will:

- praise my parents, teachers, teammates and coaches
- not think more highly of myself than I ought
- take responsibility for all my actions
- try again after each defeat
- give credit to those who have made me successful

Monday Evening

A humble heart and a proud heart

Read

Luke 18:9-14

Note: In Biblical times, tax collectors were known for using their position to cheat others in order to gain wealth for themselves. On the other hand, the Pharisees were the religious leaders of the day. Jesus was not happy with the way the Pharisees were leading, because they were more concerned with making it appear that they were doing everything right, rather than having the right attitude in their hearts (Luke 11:37-54).

Questions for discussion

1. Is it easy to notice when you do something wrong?
2. Is it easier to notice when someone else does something wrong?
3. Is it hard or easy to say, "I'm sorry"?
4. How does the Bible describe the Pharisees?
5. How was the tax collector different from the Pharisee?
6. What kind of attitude did the Pharisee have?
7. What kind of attitude did the tax collector have?
8. Who did Jesus say went away forgiven and "right with God"?
9. Are there times when you are tempted to act like a Pharisee and be the judge of another person?

Key concepts

It is often easier to notice when others are doing wrong than it is to see our own faults. The Bible says that the Pharisees were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else (Luke 18:9). The Pharisee in Jesus' story was so focused on the tax collector's sin that he forgot to ask God if he had any sin in his own life.

The tax collector had a humble and repentant heart. He was willing to admit that he was sinful and asked God to forgive him. In comparison, we see that the Pharisee had a self-righteous and proud attitude. He thought the fasting and tithing he was doing made him good enough in God's eyes and he was unwilling to consider or admit that he was sinful. Jesus said that it was the tax collector who went home forgiven and in right relationship with God, rather than the Pharisee.

Jesus told this story to teach the people that when a person is willing to admit they have sinned and are sorry, God is pleased with their attitude. However, God is not pleased when a person is so busy pointing out another person's sins and bragging about themselves that they don't think about their own sinfulness. As soon as we start to judge others, we are acting self-righteous – just like the Pharisee.

Relevant Scripture

James 4:12

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Power struggle

To play the game Power Struggle, one person begins by thinking of a small and insignificant animal, like a flea or an ant. The name of this creature is then inserted into the following rhyme:

*Person one: There once was a flea who spoke right out loud,
"I'm so big! I'm so big! I'm as big as that cloud!"*

*Others respond: "Hey, little buddy," said God with a wink,
"You're really not quite as big as you think!"*

*I hate to disappoint you, but I have a strong hunch,
There are quite a few others who could eat you for lunch!"*

After everyone else replies with God's lines, the next person thinks up an animal slightly larger than the previous one. For example, the flea could be followed by a spider. The game continues until the creatures named are as large as dinosaurs.

To add complexity and fun, have each person point to a cloud as they name their animal. The speaker may also choose to speak in a voice that the animal in question might use.

When the game is finished, take a minute to point out that God is bigger and more powerful than all of the creatures named. You can supplement your discussion with any of the verses below. It's fascinating to read the things God says in the Bible!

Relevant Scripture

Introduction – Job 38:1-7 "Then the Lord spoke to Job out of the storm. He said: 'Who is this that obscures My plans with words without knowledge?'"

Brace yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me. Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? Tell Me, if you understand. Who marked off its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line across it? On what were its footings set, or who laid its cornerstone – while the morning stars sang together and all the angels shouted for joy?"

Lions – Job 38:39-40 "Do you hunt the prey for the lioness and satisfy the hunger of the lions when they crouch in their dens or lie in wait in a thicket?"

Wild donkeys – Job 39:5-8 "Who let the wild donkey go free? Who untied its ropes? I gave it the wasteland as its home, the salt flats as its habitat. It laughs at the commotion in the town; it does not hear a driver's shout. It ranges the hills for its pasture and searches for any green thing."

Ostriches – Job 39:13-18 "The wings of the ostrich flap joyfully, though they cannot compare with the wings and feathers of the stork. She lays her eggs on the ground and lets them warm in the sand, unmindful that a foot may crush them, that some wild animal may trample them. She treats her young harshly, as if they were not hers; she cares not that her labor was in vain, for God did not endow her with wisdom or give her a share of good sense. Yet when she spreads her feathers to run, she laughs at horse and rider."

Horses – Job 39:19-25 "Do you give the horse its strength or clothe its neck with a flowing mane? Do you make it leap like a locust, striking terror with its proud snorting? It paws fiercely, rejoicing in its strength, and charges into the fray. It laughs at fear, afraid of nothing; it does not shy away from the sword. The quiver rattles against its side, along with the flashing spear and lance. In frenzied excitement it eats up the ground; it cannot stand still when the trumpet sounds. At the blast of the trumpet it snorts, 'Aha!' It catches the scent of battle from afar, the shout of commanders and the battle cry."

Hawks – Job 39:26-30 "Does the hawk take flight by your wisdom and spread its wings toward the south? Does the eagle soar at your command and build its nest on high? It dwells on a cliff and stays there at night; a rocky crag is its stronghold. From there it looks for food; its eyes detect it from afar. Its young ones feast on blood, and where the slain are, there it is."

Behemoths – Job 40:15-24 "Look at the Behemoth, which I made along with you and which feeds on grass like an ox. What strength it has in its loins, what power in the muscles of its belly! Its tail sways like a cedar; the sinews of its thighs are close-knit. Its bones are tubes of bronze, its limbs like rods of iron. It ranks first among the works of God, yet its Maker can approach it with His sword. The hills bring it their produce, and all the wild animals play nearby. Under the lotus plants it lies, hidden among the reeds in the marsh. The lotuses conceal it in their shadow; the poplars by the stream surround it. A raging river does not alarm it; it is secure, though the Jordan should surge against its mouth. Can anyone capture it by the eyes, or trap it and pierce its nose?"

Leviathan – Job 41:1-11 "Can you pull in Leviathan with a fishhook or tie down its tongue with a rope? Can you put a cord through its nose or pierce its jaw with a hook? Will it keep begging you for mercy? Will it speak to you with gentle words? Will it make an agreement with you for you to take it as your slave for life? Can you make a pet of it like a bird or put it on a leash for the young women in your house? Will traders barter for it? Will they divide it up among the merchants? Can you fill its hide with harpoons or its head with fishing spears? If you lay a hand on it, you will remember the struggle and never do it again!"

Any hope of subduing it is false; the mere sight of it is overpowering. No one is fierce enough to rouse it. Who then is able to stand against Me? Who has a claim against Me that I must pay? Everything under heaven belongs to Me.” For more, read verses 12-34 as well.

Discussion

George Washington, Hero of Humility

There are many stories that demonstrate how humble the Father of our Country was. Once, when Washington was riding with a group of soldiers, they jumped their horses over a farmer’s stone fence and knocked off a few of the stones. It was Washington who went back to replace them. Another time, Washington came upon some soldiers struggling to move a log while the Corporal in charge watched. Washington dismounted and helped the soldiers himself. He did not consider himself too important to assist others.

After the Revolutionary War was over many people wanted Washington to become the monarch of the fledgling nation, a position he staunchly refused. He begrudgingly accepted the presidency. (Quite a contrast to our presidential campaigns of today.)

The humble example he set of voluntarily leaving a position of great power is a cornerstone of our democracy and a legacy we still hold dear today.

Washington was a rich man who willingly left his estate to serve his country. He did not see his wealth or position as an entitlement. Instead, he chose the role of servant leader to conquer the British.

Bible Connection

Solomon’s humility and God’s response

Read

2 Chronicles 1:1,7-12; 6:10-21; 7:1-3,11-15.

Questions for discussion

1. Let’s pretend that you have just been made king of one of the most powerful nations on earth. You also have more royal splendour and riches than any other king. Do you think it would be easy to get just a little bit proud?
2. When God asked Solomon what he wanted, what did Solomon ask God for? (2 Chronicles 1:7-10)

3. What was God’s answer? (2 Chronicles 1:11-12)
4. Did God come through with His promise? (2 Chronicles 1:14-17)
5. Solomon did become very rich and very wise. He used some of his wealth to build a palace for himself and a temple for God. After the temple was built, what did Solomon do to dedicate the temple? (2 Chronicles 6:13)
6. Have you ever knelt down to pray?
7. Was Solomon’s prayer a proud prayer or a humble prayer? How can we tell? (2 Chronicles 6:14-21)
8. What did Solomon refer to himself as? (2 Chronicles 6:14,19)
9. What did Solomon have to be proud of?
10. What are some things that you are tempted to be prideful about?
11. What are some things that you are not willing to ask help for?
12. What are some things that you have done that God would want you to repent of?

Key concepts

At the outset of this story, we hear that Solomon had been made king of one of the most powerful nations on earth. He had more splendour and riches than anyone else. God appeared to Solomon in a dream and asked Solomon if there was anything he wanted. Despite his greatness, Solomon was humble enough to ask for wisdom from God to govern God’s people. God was very pleased when Solomon asked for wisdom and told him that because he had asked for wisdom and not riches, honour, a long life or the death of his enemies, God would give him wisdom, *and* all these other things.

With some of the wealth that God gave him, Solomon built a temple to honour God. Solomon prayed to dedicate the temple to God, acknowledging God’s greatness and asking God to be merciful and forgiving.

When Solomon prayed, he knelt down in front of the entire assembly of people. (Kneeling demonstrates humility.) Praying shows that we know that we need God’s help and that we are willing to listen to God’s advice. Humility is acknowledging our own weakness and admitting that we need help from God, just like Solomon did. Pride is refusing to admit our sinfulness and wanting to do things on our own, without help from God or anyone else.

Relevant Scripture

Psalm 25:8-14

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

Bible Memory Verse

1 Pet 5:6

The I WILL's of Humility

Review

Tuesday Evening

A sad story of pride

Read

1 Kings 11:1-13

In the previous story we heard how pleased God was with Solomon. But as Solomon grew old, he began to disobey one of God's commands. God had specifically told the Israelites that they were not to marry foreign women (Deuteronomy 7:1-4). As odd as it may sound, in Old Testament times it was considered acceptable to have more than one wife.

Questions for discussion

1. What kind of women did Solomon marry?
2. What did Solomon's wives tempt him to do? (1 Kings 11:4-8)
3. What did God say about all of this? And what did God do? (1 Kings 11:9-13)
4. Is there anything in your life that you are tempted to honour more than you honour God?

Key concepts

Even though God had given Solomon so much, Solomon still wanted something God had warned him against. Solomon disobeyed God's command that he was not to have foreign wives. The Bible tells us that Solomon allowed these foreign women to turn his heart away from following God; instead of honouring the one true God, Solomon worshipped the foreign gods instead. God had warned the Israelites that this was exactly what would happen if they married foreigners.

God was angry and He told Solomon that He would take his kingdom away from him and give it to someone else.

When we think we have everything we need, it can be easy to become proud and forget that it is God who gives us everything. Like Solomon, we can begin to make our own decisions about what we think is best for us. Thinking that we know better than God does and choosing to disobey His instructions in order to please our own selfish desires, is

prideful. When we disobey God's commands and let other things in our lives become more important than He is, this angers God a lot.

Relevant Scripture

Deuteronomy 7:1-4

Exodus 20:2-5a

1 Corinthians 1:26-30

Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Practice repentance

To complete this science experiment, you will need these supplies:

- a white cotton cloth
- berries (fresh or frozen blueberries, blackberries or raspberries)
- lemon juice
- measuring cups
- a cookie sheet
- a spoon

Directions

1. Prior to beginning the experiment, create a stain on the cotton cloth using the berry juice.
2. Invite your children to try to wash the stain out using water. (Bath time is an ideal time for this activity!) Point out that the berry stain is like sin; no matter how hard we try, we cannot get rid of sin on our own.
3. Next, place the stained cloth on a cookie sheet. Have your children pour lemon juice on the stained area, one teaspoon at a time. As you do so, explain that the lemon juice represents God's power.
4. Read 1 John 1:9 and rinse the fabric with water. Explain that our job is to confess our sins and that God is the one who purifies us (or washes our sins away). You may need to pour hot water through the fabric if it is a tough stain.
5. Use the questions provided below to prompt discussion. Finish by taking time to pray together, asking God if there is any sin in your lives that He wants to remove. Personal confession can be done aloud or quietly.

Questions for discussion

- Could you wash the stain out using your own strength?
- How do we get the dirt off the outside of our bodies?
- Can we wash our insides?
- What did get rid of the stain?
- Who does the lemon juice represent?
- What do we need to do to get rid of our sin?
- What is the difference between a proud person and a humble person?

Key concepts

It can be hard to admit that we have sin in our hearts. It can also be difficult to accept the fact that we cannot get rid of our sin using our own strength. The berry stain is like our sin. We cannot get rid of it on our own. Jesus did not sin, so He was able to be the perfect sacrifice and take the punishment for everyone's sins.

The great news is that God will forgive the sins of anyone who asks and will purify our unrighteousness. A proud person will not admit they have sin in their lives and they will refuse to ask for God's help. A humble person will confess their sin and ask God to wash their sin away.

Relevant Scripture

Acts 3:18-20
Hebrews 9:14,27
James 5:16
1 John 1:6-8
1 John 1:9

Bible Connection

Proud Pharisees

Read

Matthew 23:1-12.

Questions for discussion

1. When you line up for an activity, do you wish you could be first in line?
2. What did Jesus say about the Pharisees? (Matthew 23:5-7)
3. What did the Pharisees love? (Matthew 23:5-7)
4. What advice did Jesus give His disciples? What advice do you think Jesus would give to a child who always pushes to get to the front of the line?
5. What advice do you think Jesus would give to a child who often talks about being the best at sports/drawing/reading etc.?

6. What advice do you think Jesus would give to a child who complains about helping out with picking up someone else's toys/dishes/clothes?
7. What advice do you think Jesus would give to you?

Key concepts

Jesus knew that the Pharisees (the church leaders) were not interested in pleasing God, only in gaining honour for themselves. This did not please Jesus. Jesus told His disciples that, in order to please God, they needed to be humble and willing to serve others.

Jesus also said, "For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted" (Matthew 23:8-12).

When children fight over the first place in a line up, they are trying to get the best position for themselves. If they tell others how good they are at sports, games, drawing, reading or something else, they are honouring themselves through trying to gain praise from others. God is pleased with us when we choose to honour Him or others instead of ourselves.

He gives us this advice in Philippians 2:3-5: He wants us to have the same attitude as Jesus did. Jesus was humble and chose to serve others instead of Himself.

Relevant Scripture

John 12:42-44
Philippians 2:3-5

Bible Memory Verse

1 Pet 5:6

The I WILL's of Humility

Review

Wednesday Evening

Punishment for the proud

Read

Ezekiel 28:1-8 and Proverbs 16:5

Questions for discussion

1. What did the ruler of Tyre think?

2. Why did he become proud?
3. Did the King of Tyre trust in his own wisdom or in God's?
4. What does God promise to do to the proud?
5. What are the results of being proud?
6. What blessings does God promise for those who are humble?

Key concepts

This prophecy is about the ruler of Tyre. This proud ruler thought he was a god and as wise as a god. The king of Tyre became proud because he had gained a lot of silver and gold through skilful trading. God's response was, "Because you think you are as wise, as wise as a god, I am going to bring foreigners against you..."

The Bible tells us that God detests pride and that those who are proud will be punished. On the other hand, God promises to bless a person who listens to instruction and trusts in Him. God disciplines people when they are prideful.

Relevant Scripture

Psalm 18:27
 Proverbs 8:13
 Proverbs 11:2
 Proverbs 16:5
 Proverbs 16:20
 1 Peter 5:5b

Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

Pride comes before a fall

Set up a room as a "pride obstacle course" by padding the floor with cushions, mattresses and blankets. To illustrate how pride causes us to be "blind" to our own sins, begin by blindfolding one child. Have each of your children try to walk from one end of the room to the other without falling over the soft obstacles in their path. If a child is not comfortable wearing a blindfold, have them simply walk through the room with their eyes closed.

After each child has tried the "pride obstacle course," discuss how pride can make us "blind" to our own sinfulness so that we see no need to repent of our sin before God. Refer to your choice of the Bible verses below before proceeding on to the second part of this activity.

Relevant Scripture

Psalm 36:1-2
 1 John 1:9-10
 Proverbs 18:12

To further illustrate humility and the importance of taking advice, have your children take turns walking through the room with your guidance. Some children will prefer to hold your hand, while others will enjoy the challenge of being guided verbally. After this experience, use the "questions for discussion" to compare the two outcomes and to review the importance of being willing to admit that we are sinful and that we need help from God and others.

Relevant Scripture

Psalm 25:9
 Proverbs 13:10
 Proverbs 16:20
 Psalm 18:27
 Proverbs 19:20

Questions for discussion

- According to Psalm 36:1-2, what is pride?
- How can you tell when someone is proud?
- What does the Bible say will happen to those who are proud?
- What does the Bible say about those who listen to advice?

Key concepts

The Bible talks about the sinfulness of the wicked, beginning with a lack of respect for God. Pride can be defined as thinking so highly of ourselves that we do not even notice our sin. We can often tell when a person is proud because they will not admit that they do anything wrong; they always think they are right and refuse to take advice from others. God tells us that He will cause those who are proud to be "brought low" (or humbled). On the other hand, He promises to teach those who are humble His ways and that those who accept instruction will grow up to be wise and prosperous.

Bible Connection

Forgiveness for the humble

Read

2 Chronicles 33:1-5,7-17.

The reading above omits verse six as it contains references to child sacrifice and the occult, which could be frightening and beyond the comprehension of young children.

Questions for discussion

1. What did Manasseh do to anger God?

2. What did God do first?
3. Did Manasseh listen to God?
4. What did God do then?
5. After Manasseh was captured, who did he go to for help?
6. How did God respond when Manasseh humbled himself?
7. The Bible says, "Then Manasseh knew that the Lord is God" (2 Chronicles 33:13). What did Manasseh do to honour God?

Key concepts

Manasseh became king of Judah when he was twelve years old. He did many evil things to anger God. Manasseh worshipped foreign gods and built altars in God's temple for these other gods. God spoke to Manasseh and the people about their sin, but no one listened. In order to get their attention, God brought the King of Assyria and his army to fight against them. The Assyrians captured King Manasseh and took him away.

The Bible tells us that after he was captured, Manasseh humbled himself before God and prayed. Because Manasseh humbled himself, God helped Manasseh by rescuing him and bringing him back to Jerusalem and restoring his kingdom.

To honour God, Manasseh got rid of all the foreign gods and removed their altars from the temple. He rebuilt the altar of God, sacrificed praise and thank offerings to Him, and told the people to serve the Lord, the God of Israel only. Manasseh did wrong, but when he humbled himself, God forgave him and gave him another chance as king. God will forgive us too when we humbly tell Him we are sorry for sinning.

Relevant Scripture

Proverbs 3:34
1 John 1:9

Bible Memory Verse

1 Pet 5:6

The I WILL's of Humility

Review

Thursday Evening

A wise choice

Read

2 Kings 5:1-19

Questions for discussion

1. What was wrong with Naaman?
2. Who advised him to go to Israel?
3. Why didn't Naaman want to wash in the Jordan? (v. 12)
4. Who advised him to do as Elisha asked? (v. 13)
5. What might have happened to Naaman if he chose to ignore the advice of his servants or Elisha?
6. How do we know that Naaman knew God was the only God who deserved to be worshipped?

Key concepts

Naaman was a rich and famous man. He was the commander of the army of the king of Aram. But Naaman had a problem; he had an incurable disease called leprosy. Through the servant of his wife, Naaman heard that there was a prophet in Israel (Elisha) who could cure him. Naaman went to Israel, but when Elisha instructed him to wash in the Jordan River seven times in order to be made well, he was not pleased.

Naaman pointed out that all the rivers in his homeland were cleaner. One of Naaman's servants encouraged him to be humble and follow the prophet's advice. When he did wash in the Jordan seven times, as Elisha told him to do, he was healed of his leprosy. If Naaman had been too proud to listen to the advice of his servants, Naaman would not have been healed. Naaman gave God honour for healing him. He knew that God was the only god who should be worshipped, so he asked Elisha to forgive him whenever he had to go with his master to the temple of Rimmon (a false god).

Relevant Scripture

Proverbs 12:15

Friday

Bible Memory Verse

1 Pet 5:6

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

1 Pet 5:6

envy, Miriam and Aaron began to say bad things about Moses. This made God mad. He disciplined Miriam by allowing her to get leprosy (a dreaded skin disease).

When we see other people receiving honour from God, we can be tempted to want the same honour for ourselves. For example, if we had a proud attitude, we might think, I'm just as good as that other person.

Why isn't God honouring me too?

If we find ourselves desiring the honour that God has chosen to give others, we can remember Proverbs 18:12 (see below). Instead of asking God to honour you in the same way the other person has been honoured, you can pray and ask God to teach you to be humble and to teach you His ways (Psalm 25:9).

The I WILL's of Humility

Review

Relevant Scripture

Psalm 25:9

Psalm 101:5

Proverbs 18:12

Romans 12:3

Friday Evening

Sibling rivalry

Read

Numbers 12

Questions for discussion

1. Are your brothers and sisters good at something that you would like to be good at too?
2. What is it?
3. Why were Aaron and Miriam jealous of Moses?
4. Why was God not happy with them?
5. What does the Bible say about Moses in Numbers 12:3?
6. Why do you think God had chosen Moses, and not his brother or sister, to lead Israel?
7. What was the result of Aaron and Miriam's jealousy?
8. How are jealousy and pride connected?
9. What should you do when you are tempted to want the honour or attention someone else is getting?

Key concepts

Moses was chosen by God to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. God talked with Moses directly and gave Moses directions as to how to lead His people to the Promised Land (a new home that God had chosen for them). Even though Moses had the honour of being chosen by God as a leader, he was still very humble.

Miriam and Aaron were Moses' sister and brother. They were jealous of Moses' position of honour and leadership. They envied the fact that God spoke through Moses. Due to their

Meekness

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

Steaming Mad

Prepare 3 funnels made of a clear plastic sheet taped to itself. The diameter of the small opening should be about the size of a pencil. The large opening should be no bigger than a coffee can. Overhead acetates (transparency film) work well for this. You will need 3 students to demonstrate this principle. Give each one of them a funnel. Place a ping pong ball in the first student's funnel. Keeping the funnel upright, direct the student to blow into the short end of the funnel and try to blow the ping pong ball out. Let each of the students try to blow it out with their funnels. The ball will move but fall back down. This demonstrates that getting mad and yelling or blowing off steam at someone that has made you angry doesn't solve the problem. An alternate activity would be to have each student make their own paper funnel and a paper ball that is large enough to not fit through the bottom of the funnel. Pair up the students and have them observe their partner trying to blow the paper wad up and out.

Depending on the size of the paper wad and funnel, the paper wad will not move much at all.

This exercise demonstrates that blowing off steam produces no results. Controlling anger and finding alternate means for blowing off steam rather than yelling is a better alternative.

Introduction

Opposites:

Meekness vs Anger

What does it mean?

Yielding my personal rights and expectations with a desire to serve.

Translation:

謙讓、美德

Kenjo No Bitoku (With true strength comes humility)

The characters mean the virtue of humility. Humility is an essential characteristic of the samurai and of the karate student. For the samurai is strong yet weak, confident yet never overconfident, and always carries a proper perspective of himself in relation to the world around him. The karate student strives for this same perspective.

Go to the root

The Greek word for meek means strength under control. Perhaps the Greeks knew Clark Kent Aka Superman???

Bible Connection

Pride is sneaky

For this hands-on option, you will need a piece of paper measuring 7 cm x 7 cm (2¾" X 2¾"), a flat surface such as a tabletop, and a plastic water bottle or a glass pop bottle with a mouth measuring less than 2.5 cm (1") in diameter.

1. Begin by asking your children to list the things they are tempted to be proud of. Write their ideas down on a small sheet of paper.
2. Take that list and crumple it into a tight ball. Have your children practice blowing the paper ball around on a flat surface, such as your kitchen table. For extra fun and practice, have them try to blow the paper ball through a "goal" area. You can make a goal by placing two coins 15-20 cm (6") apart.
3. Once your children have mastered the technique of blowing the ball around, hold the bottle at the edge of the table so its mouth is level with the surface. Ask your children to take turns trying to blow the paper ball into the mouth of the bottle. (Since the bottle is full of air, the ball will not go in). After your children have had plenty of opportunity to try blowing the ball into the bottle, stand the bottle up and allow them to drop the paper ball into the bottle using their hands.
4. Explain that the paper ball represents pride. The bottle represents us. When we acknowledge that we need God's help in life, we are humble. Humility is often demonstrated by a person bowing down. The bottle on its side is in a bowed position. If we stay humble, honouring God instead of ourselves, pride has a hard time getting into our hearts. On the other hand, when we become self-confident

and forget to honour and trust in our own ability to resist sin, the sin of pride can easily sneak up on us.

Relevant Scriptures

Psalm 119:133
Proverbs 28:13
1 Chronicles 29:20
Nehemiah 8:6
Psalm 22:27
Acts 3:19-20

Bible Memory Verse

Psalm 62:5

The I WILL's of Meekness

To practice Meekness I will:

- be slow to get angry
- not boast
- not grumble or complain
- look for ways to help those in need
- be willing to go last

Monday Evening

Proud and humble stuffies

This is a fun role-play activity. Your children will demonstrate "pride comes before a fall" using their dolls or stuffed animals.

Begin by explaining that being proud is thinking that you are more important or more valuable than others. Proudful people are also known for walking around with their "noses in the air." They think so much of themselves that they look down on others. The Bible tells us that flattering ourselves, which means focusing on how wonderful we think we are, leaves us unable to detect or hate our sin (Psalm 36:1-2).

Set up something for the stuffed animals or dolls to trip over. This can be done by tying a string between two chairs at about knee height of the stuffed animals you will be using. Take turns having the stuffed animals walk along and brag about how attractive they are or how good they are at some activity. As the stuffed animal approaches the string, make it trip and fall down. Say "Oops! Poor Stuffie! Pride comes before a fall."

Relevant Scripture

Psalm 36:1-2
Proverbs 16:18

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Aim High

You will need 3 empty soft drink or vegetable cans and a small bean bag, hacky-sack or any other small soft item. Stack the 3 cans in a pyramid (2 on the bottom, one on the top). The object of the game is to knock off the top can without knocking down the 2 bottom cans. To speed up the game you can divide the class into 3 - 5 teams and provide a set of items to each team. This demonstrates the principle of anger management. When you get angry, it is okay to attack the problem (the can on top) but not the person (the cans on the bottom).

Discussion

"When the space shuttle Challenger blew up seventy-three seconds into its flight, the world was shocked. Most of us have seen the videotape of that terrible moment many times. Most of us also know that the investigations into the cause of the tragedy pointed out some serious shortfalls in human judgment and materials management. The New York Times put it frankly: the ultimate cause of the space shuttle disaster was pride. A group of top managers failed to listen carefully to the warnings of those down the line who were concerned about the operational reliability of certain parts of the booster rocket under conditions of abnormal stress. The people in charge were confident that they knew best and that they should not change the launch schedules. They were wrong. (Gordon MacDonald, *Rebuilding Your Broken World*.)

* View Videoclips

The Challenge:

Learn from the Disaster

Do this exercise after reading or discussing the Challenger Story. Use a picture of a rocket - a simple line drawing such as one to the left or one from a young child's coloring book.

Make sure there is space to write on it. You can also cut a shape of a rocket (or the actual space shuttle) out of colored construction paper and let them write on that. Have the students think about what it means to be humble to them. They can write about a time when they felt they should have been more humble or a time when they were humble or witnessed someone else being humble. They could choose one of the I wills to write or make their own. You could, as a class, compose a pledge about being humble and let them each write that on the rocket, etc. For younger students, you may want to have them write or draw pictures of people they value. Once completed, these can be displayed in the classroom.



Bible Memory Verse

Psalm 62:5



The I WILL's of Meekness

Review



Tuesday Evening

Abraham and Lot - Genesis 13: Abraham was willing to yield his rights in order to have peace.



Wednesday



Attention Grabber Activity

The Un-Race

Most races involve being the first to cross the finish line. In an Un-Race, the goal is to be the last to cross the finish line. Racers must walk in a straight line and they must keep moving. The idea here is to walk as slow as you can without standing still or veering off. The exercise will demonstrate the strength required to control your reactions.



Bible Connection

Complimenting God

The goal of this “complimenting God” exercise is to help your children practice honouring God when they are given a compliment. Here are some example responses you can practice over dinner or while travelling in a vehicle. Also take time to read your choice of the Bible verses listed below and review the discussion questions.

- “Susie, you are a great soccer player.” “Thank you. God gave me a talent for playing the game.”
- “Jeff, you sure are a bright boy.” “Thanks. I give God the honour. He is the one who made me.”
- “What a great runner you are, Jen!” “Thank you. God gave me quick feet.”
- “You swim so well, Tyler!” “Thank you. God made me kind of like a fish.”
- “Andrew, what an amazing drawing you have done!” “Thank you. God gave me the gift of being creative. I’m glad He made me this way.”
- “You are such a pretty girl, Isabelle!” “Thank you. God is the one who made me this way.” Or, “Thank you. I like to think of myself as one of God’s many neat creations.”
- “You play the piano so well, James!” “I practice a lot, but it is God who gave me a natural talent for music.”

Questions for discussion

- What gifts and talents do you have that others compliment you on?
- Who made you and gives you talents and abilities?
- Who placed you in the position of honour over the animals on the earth?
- If you are going to boast, what should you boast about? (Jeremiah 9:23-24)

Key concepts

When we forget who God is and who we are, it is easy to become proud. God made us and deserves thanks and praise for all that we are and all that we have (Isaiah 66:2). He is the Creator of the whole earth, and all that is in it, including us. God is the one who placed people in the position of honour over the animals on the earth (Psalm 8:6).

Any honour we receive from others should be reflected back to God. He made us! When someone compliments us, pride will tempt us to say or think, “Yeah, I’m great!” A humble person, however, will remember that God deserves the honour for making him/her as He did.

Relevant Scripture

Deuteronomy 8:17-18

Psalm 8:3-9

Isaiah 66:1-2

Jeremiah 9:23-24

Bible Memory Verse

Psalm 62:5

The I WILL's of Meekness

Review

Wednesday Evening

The Lord Jesus Christ Who was willing to yield His rights to provide salvation. See Philippians chapter 2.

Thursday

Bible Connection

Communication capers and bodyblunders

To illustrate how important each part of the body is and how the whole body works together, complete your choice of these fun and potentially messy exercises. After each exercise, ask your child what body parts they used to complete the challenge and what parts they missed using!

- Blindfold one child, then have a second child clasp their hands behind his or her back. Then instruct the blindfolded child to feed the other some yogurt, or some equally messy food. The first time you do this exercise, allow the person being fed to speak out loud to direct the person feeding them. The second time, don't allow the person being fed to give any instructions at all.

Note: You may prefer to use two adults for this exercise, or allow a child to feed an adult.

- Play a very basic game of Charades. Beforehand, you'll need to prepare notecards featuring pictures of household appliances. Examples that work well include a kettle, microwave, toaster, stove, fridge, washing machine, dryer, blowdryer, curling iron, blender, radio, television or computer. Have each child draw a card and act as if they are the appliance, while the remaining children try to guess which appliance is being mimicked. Begin with a "no noise" rule. If guessing the correct appliance proves too difficult, allow the actor to make noise.
- Blindfold a child and ask them to draw a picture of something simple. Guide their hands to the paper, but leave the rest to the child. Next, have the child draw the same item with their eyes open. Compare the results.
- Play Tape the Tail on the Bunny. Print or draw a picture of a rabbit on some poster paper (minus the fluffy tail). Put tape on some cotton balls and have your children take turns trying to accurately tape a tail on the rabbit while wearing a blindfold.
- Stand outside a glass window or glass door and take turns trying to communicate with those inside. A vehicle works well because it somewhat soundproof.
- After completing your choice of the activities, read Romans 12:3-10 and use the discussion questions to talk about how the different parts of the body working together can be like a family working together.

Questions for discussion

- How hard does life become when you don't have the use of your eyes?
- What happens to our ability to communicate when we don't have the use of our mouths?
- Which is more valuable: the use of our eyes, the use of our ears or the use of our mouths?
- Imagine that our hands, mouth and ears could talk to each other. What might they say to each other if they were becoming overly proud of their role in the body?
- Can you think of a special talent or ability that God that has given you?
- How could you use your ability to serve others?
- Why do you think God gave people different gifts?
Note: When we consider "gifts" young children can use, examples include a cheerful disposition and a smile that can be offered to anyone at any time.

"Helpful hands" can be used to open doors, carry packages and to clean up messes. A helpful pair of arms can offer a hug to someone who is feeling sad. A kind voice can place a phone call to a friend who is sick or to a grandparent, who will be blessed because someone called to say, "I love you!"

Friday

Key concepts

All of these fun exercises help illustrate that we need all the parts of our body to function well. Basic life tasks become very difficult when we don't have the use of our eyes to guide our hands. If we cannot use our voice, it is challenging to communicate. God gives everyone gifts and abilities so we can use them to serve others. If we begin to think our gifts are more valuable than the gifts God has given to others, our pride can get in the way of the "body of Christ" functioning as it should.

When we compare ourselves to one another, we can be tempted to question each person's value. As a result, our pride can get in the way of things being accomplished in a way that honours God. If we are tempted to be proud of a gift God has given us, we can remember the instructions written in Romans 12:9-11 that tell us to use our gifts to serve God and to show our love for each other by honouring one another above ourselves.

Relevant Scripture

Romans 12:3-6a

Bible Memory Verse

Psalm 62:5

The I WILL's of Meekness

Review

Thursday Evening

Read about David & Saul - 1 Samuel 24:6

Bible Memory Verse

Psalm 62:5

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Psalm 62:5

The I WILL's of Meekness

Review

Friday Evening

Numbers 12:3 - Moses was very meek, above all men on face of the earth.

Matthew 5:5 - Blessed are the meek (gentle - NKJV), for they shall inherit the earth. Jesus declares a "blessing" (happiness) on those who are meek.

Punctuality

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

The Punctuality Hunt

When you are on time, you are the one in charge of your schedule. When you are habitually late, it shows a distinct lack of control. In order to get more control or *power* look at the reasons for being late.

Have the students identify reasons people are late. Prepare a few ahead of time that are age appropriate in case you need to get the discussion going. Ask them to think about being late for school, church, sporting events, practices, etc. Trace being late back to the beginning - not putting a book bag where it belongs the night before, not writing down assignments.

Identify that being late doesn't start the minute the clock ticks past a deadline. It starts when they fail to plan. Tell the students they are punctuality detectives and have them search for when the tardiness actually begins for each reason that they list on the board.

Once the reasons are identified, have them come up with suggestions of what they can do to prevent that from happening again. Try to have them come up with more than one solution.

Introduction

Opposites:

Punctuality vs Tardiness

What does it mean?

Showing esteem for others by doing the right thing at the right time.

Translation:

Punctualidad vs. Lentitud

Go to the root

The word **punctual** is derived from the Latin word *punctum* which means "a point". Originally, the English word expressed "scrupulous exactness" in all measurements. Can you see how **punctuality** is precision in timing?

Idioms

On the dot - to be punctual

Right on time - arrival as expected

Day late and a dollar short - late and ill-prepared

Too little, too late - arrived too late to save the situation

How do we Sign it?

Tardy

Discussion

Defining the Quality:

Demonstrating **PUNCTUALITY**— defined as being "ON TIME"—is a very important character quality. It shows others that you respect their time and their expectations of you. Soon after meeting you, people can tell if this is part of YOUR character or not. If you regularly display the opposite quality, **TARDINESS**, it means you have a low regard for other people's feelings or their schedules. This quality is a way of showing esteem for others by doing the right thing at the right time.

- Describe when you are very, very careful about being punctual.
- Explain a time when you, or someone you know, was tardy and it was a problem.

Bible Memory Verse

Ecc1 3:1

The I WILL's of Punctuality

To practice Punctuality I will:

- Be at the right place at the right time.
- Prepare for unexpected delays.

- Do my work ahead of time.
- Plan a daily schedule and keep it.
- Not fall into the trap of “just one more”

Monday Evening

Abraham when asked to offer Isaac (Gen. 22:1-18) (Key Verse:3)

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Ace of Spades

This exercise requires that you set up two decks of cards ahead of time. One deck should be in order of suits and values and the other deck should be completely shuffled with some cards even being turned around.

Recruit two volunteers and provide each one with one of the two decks without explaining that the decks are different.

Have the volunteers face each other and race to see who can find the Ace of Spades first.

Typically, the volunteer with the organized deck of cards will find it first.

Use this demonstration to explain that when things are organized it is easier to find what you need and not be late because you couldn't find something.

Discussion

Model of Punctuality

Alexandrina Victoria, May 24, 1819 - January 22, 1901, was the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland from June 20, 1837 until her death. The time of her reign is known as the Victorian era, a period of industrial, political, scientific and military progress within the United Kingdom. Queen Victoria's day was strictly orchestrated and her day's schedule was timed to the minute. Each year, she

made visits to the outlying areas and these visits were the same time each year. Queen Victoria valued punctuality and considered tardiness a “heinous crime”. One never kept the Queen waiting! The quest for punctuality became a key trait of the Victorian era.

An important development during the Victorian era was the improvement of communication links. Stage coaches, canals, steam ships and most notably the railways all allowed goods, raw materials and people to be moved about, rapidly facilitating trade and industry.

Trains became another important factor ordering society, with "railway time" being the standard by which clocks were set throughout Britain. As the industrial revolution proceeded, clocks regulated the day of the employer and employee alike.

Bible Connection

Esther in responding to Mordicai's plea and he in carrying out her request (Esther 4)

The tragic events of September 11, 2001 brought out many stories of people who seemed to have been at the "right" place, which was actually the wrong place, at a time which kept them from being in the WTC when they normally would have been. These stories are a good case for not being punctual, but they are also anomalous. Do not allow the child to use exceptions to prevent them from being punctual. We show respect for others by being where they expect us to be when they expect us to be there.

Scripture

Psalm 56:3

Esther 2:5-10; 3:1-6; 3:7-11; 4:11-17; 9:1-5

God arranged for Esther to be in a high position in the palace at Susa so that she could save her people. This is much the same as Joseph, whom God placed in Egypt so that he could save the family of Israel. God is not mentioned in the book of Esther, but it is very evident that He is at work.

Parents:

Encourage the child to see that circumstances which we so often refer to as coincidences are actually God at work.

God's timing is perfect, even when it does not go along with our timing. Encourage the child to remember events that may have been called coincidence. Help him or her see how God may have been working in that situation.

Help the child examine his or her activities throughout this week to see how close to schedule they run. Are they always on time? How many times were they late? If the child is chronically late, challenge them to make a special effort to be on time for one event this week. Next week, expand this to a second event. Do not allow the child to revert to tardiness on the first week's project, but encourage promptness on a new endeavor each week.

Encourage the child to imagine or recount some things that could result from tardiness at different functions, such as school, church, soccer practice, etc. Then help the child recognize some of the benefits of promptness.

Bible Memory Verse

Ecc 3:1

The I WILL's of Punctuality

Review

Tuesday Evening

Prepare for unexpected delays not fall into the trap of "just one more"

Memory:

Psalm 70:5 or Psalm 119:60

Scripture:

1 Kings 18:42-46: The prophet Elijah had told King Ahab that it would not rain until he (Elijah) said so (vs.17:1). Elijah had just won a great victory for God by defeating the prophets and idols of Baal worship (18:20-40). He could now further show the power of God by allowing rain to begin. Elijah gave warning to Ahab that he should not delay in going down from the mountain. Ahab had time to avoid the delay that could be caused by the downpour of rain.

Genesis 24:54-59: Abraham's servant had found the woman that he thought was perfect for a wife for Isaac, Abraham's son. He did not want to give the woman the opportunity to change her mind, or allow for unexpected events. He wanted to get Rebekah home to his master as soon as possible.

Genesis 45:9

It had been many years since Joseph had seen his father. He knew that his father was getting old, and if he delayed much longer, he believed his father might not live to make the trip. By having his family brought immediately, Joseph was preparing to see his father as soon as possible.

Acts 25:14-19

The people who hated Paul because of the message he taught about Jesus wanted Paul to be found guilty and punished as quickly as possible. There was a fear, well-founded, based on Festus' speech, that delay in prosecution could mean that Paul would go free. If Paul had not been determined to take his cause to Rome, he would have gone free.

Genesis 19:15-26:

We see the importance of not wanting "one more" in this passage.

Apparently Lot's wife did not want to leave Sodom. As they left, in disregard to the angel's warning not to look back (vs. 17), she looked back and was turned to a pillar of salt. She had to have one more look at her beloved city. And of course Lot's delay in this situation could have caused he and his family their lives.

Parents:

What kind of "time cushion" do you encourage your child to build into his or her schedule? Help the child understand some problems that could arise due to doing things at the last minute.

Help the child see that time is an important factor in many circumstances. In our verses for this week, we see the urgency of time in physical protection, relationship building, family reunions and pursuit of self-interest. Time is a factor in obedience, activity preparation and many other things.

Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

\$86,400

For this exercise, divide the class into small groups and tell each group to pretend that they have \$86,400.00 to spend however they want. Let them know that they must spend it all -no saving!

If they do not spend all of it, they will lose it. It isn't important that they know actual prices of things. They can just budget so much of the money to purchase a group of items.

For example, they may budget \$200 on pizza, \$500 on CDs, \$2000 on new shoes for the group.

Ask each group if they would be able to buy all of the items in a single day. If you have younger students, then do this as a class exercise where you record the purchases on the board and keep a tally of what is left to spend.

When you are finished, then tell them that there are 86400 seconds in a day. Just as we planned on what we would spend money, we should also plan on what we should spend time.

Bible Connection

Do my work ahead of time

Memory:
Proverbs 20:18

Scripture:
1 Chronicles 22:5

David had really wanted to build the Temple for God, but God had made it clear that this would not be his responsibility. So David made as much preparation for the building of the Temple as he could. He laid the groundwork so that Solomon could begin this project as quickly as possible.

Luke 10:39-42

I guess we could assume that Mary had done all the necessary work so that she could sit at Jesus' feet and hear his teaching. We want to avoid negative examples, but Martha, with a little bit of planning, could have had more time to learn from the Master. It is important not to be too critical of Martha. Jesus was there because these people were his friends, but he was probably also there for a meal.

Proverbs 6:6-8

Ants do not put off their work for a more convenient time. They instinctually know what needs to be done and do it. They are great examples for children of industry and diligence.

Exodus 12:33-39

This is an example of a tradition arising out of unpreparedness, so we might see this as planned unpreparedness, on God's part. The unleavened bread is an integral part of the Passover celebration.

Parents:

The key word for this week's activities is planning. Help the child organize a way to get the important things done first, so he or she has more time for the things that might not be quite as important, but more enjoyable.

Bible Memory Verse

Ecc1 3:1

The I WILL's of Punctuality

Review

Wednesday Evening

Plan a daily schedule and keep it

Scripture:
Exodus 16:13-31

The people of Israel had daily responsibilities that were part of their worship and daily life. One of these activities was the collection of the manna that God provided for their nourishment. While the schedule described in this text is more weekly than daily, it is still important to show the child the importance of doing what you are supposed to be doing in a regular routine. On Sunday through Friday, the people were to go out and gather the manna in the morning. On Saturday, the Sabbath, they were not to gather. They always had just enough, and God did not honor those who violated His schedule.

Parents:

Have the child chart his or her activities for a week. Then, write out a weekly schedule with the child, based on what the child has charted. Try to keep the activities as close to the necessary time as possible, but be sure to build in cushions. Then try to get the child to schedule one day's activities, even if only in his or her head. Writing out the schedule should help it become more concrete for the child. It also provides opportunity to check off things that are completed.

Thursday

Bible Connection

Gal 6:9
Eccl 5:15-16

Bible Memory Verse

Eccl 3:1

The I WILL's of Punctuality

Review

Thursday Evening

James 4:13-15
James 1:4

Friday

Bible Memory Verse

Eccl 3:1

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?
How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

Eccl 3:1

The I WILL's of Punctuality

Review

Friday Evening

Remember Eccl 3:1
Read Prov 12:27; 20:4

Wisdom

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

I Forget!

Arrange students in groups of 2 or 3 for this story-telling exercise. Make up a negative story title that is age appropriate for the group.

One person in each group starts by making up the first part of the story. After a few sentences, or when they become “stuck”, they turn to the next person in their group and say “I forget the rest - your turn.” The next person picks up the story line and continues the story until they want to pass it off like the first person did.

Allow time for all groups to complete their story. Now give them a positive story title and ask them to do the same thing. When they have finished both stories, ask them if they enjoyed creating the stories. Ask them which one was easier to create, the positive or the negative.

Introduction

Opposites:

Wisdom vs Natural inclination / Wisdom vs foolishness

What does it mean?

Making practical application of truth in daily decisions.

Translation:

Sabiduría vs. Necedad

Go to the root

Wisdom is derived from the Anglo- Saxon root word *wis* meaning “wise, understanding truth” and the suffix *-dom*, meaning judgment. Can you see how Wisdom is applying truths to your decision-making?

Discussion

Making wise decisions requires acquiring information on which to base choices. Use the Wise Ol’ Owl to teach the gathering of information.

Did you know...

- that the positions of an owl’s ears (one high, one low) let’s it hear everything in three dimensions - up/down, left/right and near/far?
- that the eyes of an owl gather enough light to function well when no one else can see?
- that owls hunt alone since they can fly silently and the noise of another bird could spoil their flight?
- owls don’t chew their food but swallow it whole so they must make wise choices on what to put in their mouths?

Katherine Magnoli, Model of Wisdom

Katherine Magnoli remembers the exact moment she decided to write a book. Magnoli, who is confined to a wheelchair, was sitting by the pool at her condominium in the summer of 2009, when she noticed a little girl staring at her. “I started to think about little kids’ curiosity. Sometime when they see me they get scared, sometimes they want to ask questions but are afraid,” Magnoli said. What began as a passing moment turned into a book that has sold over 1,000 copies to people, including President Bill Clinton.

Magnoli made a practical application of truth in deciding to write a book that helps kids understand the truths about people with disabilities. She wanted to do it in a way that entertains the children and not make it so serious and heavy.

Katherine Magnoli sees uncertainty fade away when reading her book to elementary school students. “Kids who may have hesitated in the past to approach me in my wheelchair, run right up and talk with me after reading the book.”

Nature Story

Wisdom Nature Story (VID) (6:21)

Poem

Wisdom Poem (VID) (4:56)

Song

The wise man built his house on the rock

Bible Memory Verse

James 1:5

The I WILL's of Wisdom

To practice Wisdom I will:

- Listen to my parents and teachers
- Learn from correction
- Choose my friends carefully
- Remember there are consequences to all my actions
- Ask, "What is the right thing to do?"

Monday Evening

The story of Rehoboam in 1 Kings 12:1-24

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Explain to your students that someday they will be coming into adulthood like Solomon. If they ask God for wisdom, the book of James says, "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him."

Crowns of Wisdom

Tell your students that they are going to make crowns of wisdom, so they can remember to pray for the wisdom of God as they grow.

- Give each child a piece of card stock cut in half lengthwise.

- Have them create a jagged edge on one of the longer sides with scissors.
- Have them line up their pieces of card stock side by side with the straight edge closest to them. Staple the two sheets together in the center with about an inch of overlay.
- Depending on their ages, they or you, can write on the crown, KING SOLOMON'S WISDOM CROWN.
- Have them decorate their crown with whatever you have: Crayons, markers, craft store jewels, buttons, glitter, glitter glue, various colored hole punches, paper scraps.
- When they are finished decorating, fit the crown to each child's head and staple the ends together so it makes the circle of a crown.

Songs

Wisdom Song (VID) (7:44)

The wise man built his house on the rock

Poem

Wisdom Poem - Review

Bible Connection

Wisdom of Solomon

As Solomon begins his reign of all the things he could have asked for he asks God for wisdom. Students will learn that God's wisdom is available to all who ask and by living a life using Godly wisdom they will experience great blessing.

Bible Story:

Solomon Begins His Reign with Wisdom

Scripture:

1 Kings 3:3-28; 2 Chronicles 1:2-13

Supply List:

Bibles, construction paper, scissors, markers, tape or glue sticks (if making crowns for Memory verse activity),

Learning Goal:

Students will learn that God's wisdom is available to all who ask for it and if they live a life using Godly wisdom they will experience great blessing.

Learning Indicator:

Students will demonstrate their comprehension of the lesson by answering review questions and participating in the discussion as the Scripture passage is taught. Students who participate in the take-home survey will be able to identify areas of their lives where they need to ask God for wisdom so their activities help others to see Jesus.

Learning Activity

Have a sword drill using different passages of Scripture that deal with Godly wisdom. (Job 28:28, Psalm 37:30, Proverbs 3:13, Ecclesiastes 2:26, Proverbs 9:12, James 1:5, Daniel 2:21, Luke 2:40, 1 Corinthians 1:25, Ephesians 1:17 and 2 Timothy 3:15 etc.) Have students hold their Bibles with the binding in the palm of their hand. When you say 'Swords up' they hold their Bible in their hand above their head. (If your students are unfamiliar with why we are calling the Bible a sword read Ephesians 4:17 and explain that knowing God's word helps us to fight the battles we face in this life.) When all the students have their Bibles in the air you say the reference but they are not to start looking until you say "Charge". For visual students after you say the reference it helps to write the reference on a dry erase board or have the Scripture on construction paper.

After you have said the reference and written it then say "Charge!" The students begin looking for the passage and the first one to find it stands to his/her feet. Since the main reason I use this game is to help students to become familiar with their own Bibles and to be able to find passages of Scripture, I take note of who stood first and when the rest of the students have located the passage the one who stood first can read the verse. (For students who are struggling to find the passage those near can offer to help.) After the verse is read have students sit back down and say, "Swords Up!" and say a new reference.

* Students can write the memory verse on their crown.

Bible Lesson: Solomon Begins Reign with Wisdom

What is wisdom? There are two kinds of wisdom, man's wisdom and God's wisdom. Men would think that wisdom is being smart and getting a good education and having a successful life. God's wisdom is knowing God and what His Word tells us how to live a life that pleases Him. Having God's wisdom brings true peace and satisfaction.

King David knew that his son Solomon would be Israel's next king. Before he died David instructed Solomon what he should do as he reigned as king. 1 Chronicles 28:9 "And you my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever."

Let's turn in our Bibles to 1 Kings 3. After King David died his son Solomon became king over Israel. "Solomon showed his love for the LORD by walking according to the statutes of his father David..." (1Kings 3:3a)

It is a gift to have family members who teach us to love and obey God. Just as Solomon heard what his father taught him, more importantly he showed his love for God by obeying what his Dad taught him about God. John 14:21 Let's read 1 Kings 3:4 to find out how many burnt offerings Solomon offered to God. (1000) That night while Solomon was sleeping, God spoke to him in a dream. Read 1 Kings 3:5 to see what God said.

Choose volunteers to read 1 Kings 3:6-9. Solomon recognized that the job to be king over God's people would require God's wisdom.

Solomon's response to the question pleased God (1Kings 3:10). Why do you think this request pleased God? (Solomon's focus was on being the kind of king that could lead God's people and not focused on being famous or important. His focus was God-centered and not self-centered.) What would Solomon's answer have been if he was focused on himself? (Allow responses. To be a powerful king conquering all the lands, lots of money etc.)

Can you give an example of a God-centered prayer for a kid your age? Allow students to respond. If they are quiet you can share an example to give them an idea. (Lord, help me to love the student in our class who is always mean. Help me to show kindness to him/her even though I don't feel like it.) What is an example of a self-centered prayer? (Lord, would you cause the mean student's family to move away so we don't have to see him/her again.)

God was pleased because Solomon knew that in order to be the kind of king that could lead God's people he could only do it with God's wisdom.

You and I will most likely never be a king as Solomon was. However, as a believer the work Jesus has called us to do is just as important. We need wisdom to live a life that pleases God so we can lead others to Jesus. Jesus says that believers can only do God's work with His power. (John 15:5) Picture what Jesus is saying as we think about a tree. The source of life for the branches of a tree is the sap that runs through the tree. A branch is only able to live if it is connected to the tree. When the branch is connected to the tree, leaves sprout and later fruit will grow from the branches.

This is a picture of what a believer needs to do in order for God's power to work in and through our lives. We have to stay close to Jesus because He is our life source. We need to pray daily and stay in His Word so we can hear His voice and obey His instructions.

Can a branch continue to live if it is broken off from the tree? (No) A believer who tries to live the Christian life in his/her own power is like a branch that breaks off a tree and tries to produce leaves and fruit. This happens when believers try to live their lives without praying and obeying God's voice. The result is that he/she won't see God's power and won't see others coming to Jesus to be saved.

God not only gave Solomon what he asked for but let's find out what else God gave him. Read 1 Kings 3:13-14. Solomon asked God for wisdom and he received it and other blessings as well.

1 Kings 3:16-28 In the next verses we get to see an example that shows us how God answered Solomon's prayer to have wisdom.

Two women came to Solomon with a very big problem. They both lived in the same house and both had infant sons. In the night one of the women rolled over on her baby while she slept and the baby died. She got out of bed and carried her son into the room of the other woman with a baby son. As the other woman slept, the woman with the dead son took the living son and replaced him with her dead son. When the woman woke up and looked at the dead baby she knew this was not her son. The other woman would not give her son back and said it was her baby.

As Solomon looked at the two women he needed wisdom to solve this problem. Let's read how he decided to fix their problem in 1 Kings 3:24-25. Solomon knew the love that mother's have for their children and a normal mother would do anything they could to protect their child.

Read verse 26 to see how the mothers respond to this very strange command about this living baby. Solomon knew that the mother who wanted to spare her son's life was the true mother and commanded that the child be returned to her.

1 Kings 3:28 "When all Israel heard the verdict the king had given, they held the king in awe, because they saw that he had wisdom from God to administer justice."

The same wisdom that God gave Solomon is available to anyone who asks. If we ask God for wisdom and we look for His answers in the Bible we can make wise decisions and help others to see Jesus in our lives.

Close in prayer.

Review Questions:

1. How did Solomon show that he loved God? (Obeyed His commands)
2. Who spoke to Solomon in a dream? (God)
3. What did God ask Solomon? (Ask for whatever you want me to give you)

4. How did Solomon respond to God's request? (He asked for wisdom to lead God's people)
5. What extra things did God give Solomon along with wisdom? (Riches/honor)
6. How did Solomon solve the problem with the two women? (He said he would cut the baby in two knowing the true mother would want to protect her son)
7. True or False The people of Israel were amazed by Solomon's natural intelligence? (False they saw that he had wisdom from God)

Bible Memory Verse

James 1:5

The I WILL's of Wisdom

Review

Tuesday Evening

Introduction:

The Bible is our source for Wisdom. As you discovered a little while ago, the Proverbs are full of wise sayings. King Solomon asked for wisdom instead of riches or a long life, so God gave him wisdom unlike anyone else. Daniel was also very wise, because he walked in the ways of our Lord. The Bible is full of wise men, but they all had one thing in common. They knew the Will of God, and followed His Word. Let's see what the Bible says about wisdom.

Read

2 Timothy 3:14-17

Discussion Questions:

1. In verse 15, what are the holy Scriptures able to do? (*Make you wise for salvation through faith.*)
2. What does all scripture is "God-breathed" mean? (*Because God Himself inspired the writers of the Bible, everything in it is exactly what God wants us to have.*)
3. All of Scripture is useful for what? (*Teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training.*)
4. Will knowing the Word of God help you do good works? Why? (*Allow for answers.*)

Read
James 3:13-17

Explain that this scripture talks about two kinds of wisdom. The person with wisdom that comes from Heaven is peace-loving, considerate, submissive, merciful, produces good fruit and so on. But the person with the other kind of wisdom—worldly wisdom from the devil—is selfish, ambitious, envious, disordered, and every other evil practice. The Bible is our source for heavenly wisdom. Hearing, reading, studying, memorizing and meditating on the Word of God will help us to live a good life. And when we ask God for wisdom, He will gladly give it to us.

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Wednesday

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Attention Grabber Activity

Green Thumb Wisdom

For this activity, you will need to have a single potted plant to use for the demonstration. On index cards write the following instructions or something similar, one instruction per card. You will need to have one index card per student.

- Keep me in a closet.
- Place me where I will get adequate sunlight.
- Place me directly under a powerful grow light 24 hours a day.
- Water me faithfully.
- Water me whenever you remember.
- Water me once then never again.
- Water me with fertilizer according to package directions.
- Water me with soda pop.
- Put me in the refrigerator.
- Put me in the bathroom.
- Put me right above the stove.

Place the plant where everyone can see it. Go to each student (or they can come to you) and let them choose a card, without seeing the instructions. Have them read the card (or read it for younger students). Ask them if it is a wise thing to do for the plant and what they think will happen to the plant if they do what the card says. In some cases the plant will flourish and in others it will die.

When everyone has had a turn, ask how they determined if something was wise or not. Ask if some of the treatments were hard to tell if they would be good for the plant or not.

End by comparing the treatment of the plant to making wise choices for our body. Compare choices about nutritious food and getting enough sleep to the care of the plant and how our bodies react to the care decisions we make. Ask if our bodies react as quickly as a plant does.

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Discussion & Bible Connection

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An even wiser man

Review for Older Students:

- What did God say to Solomon in a dream?
- Why did Solomon ask for wisdom?
- What else might he have asked for instead of wisdom?
- How did God feel about Solomon's request?
- How did God show Solomon He was pleased?
- How do we know Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived?
- How can we get wisdom today?

For Younger Students:

- Who was the wisest man who ever lived?
- How did he get to be wise?
- Who is the only One who can make us wise?

Beginning the Lesson:

Now here is something strange. The Bible says Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived (1 Kings 3:12). Yet it also says that one person was even wiser than Solomon! How could that be? The Bible says, "a greater than Solomon is here" (Luke 11:31). Who could it be talking about? If Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived, someone wiser than him would have to be more than a man. He would have to be—well, he'd have to be a lot more than just a man. Who was this one that the Bible says is greater than Solomon? It is Jesus. Let's see today how wise He was.

Jesus shows that he has the wisdom of God in the way he asks and answers questions.

Read
Luke 2:40-51

Main Ideas to Emphasize:

- Even when Jesus was 12 years old, He was very wise.
- He was asking questions that made the teachers really think.
- He was answering their questions.
- Jesus was wise because He was God's unique Son.
- God is the source of all wisdom. He is the One we should seek to make us wise.

Acting:

We will provide several pictures of places people look for wisdom. You will show the cards. At each card, the children will shake their heads "No", and reach both hands up to heaven, then down to themselves, saying, "Wisdom comes ONLY from God."

Bible Memory Verse

James 1:5

Songs

Wisdom Song - Review
The wise man built his house on the rock

Poem

Wisdom Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Wisdom

Review

Wednesday Evening

Read and Discuss some Scriptures about Wisdom

Prov 9:10
Prov 18:15
Prov 10:23

Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

Stop - Think - Go Do

The stoplight is a simplified approach to decision-making that gives kids a chance to think wisely before they act. You can teach the Stop-Think-Go Do Model by comparing it to a stop light.

When they need to make a decision the first step is to stop. Next, consider your options, their chance of success and their consequences in the Think stage.

The Green Light is executing the wisest choice. What happens if you make a decision and it turns out to be the wrong one? Then start at the beginning by stopping and looking at the choices again. How does the experience of the first decision affect this decision? How do other similar past experiences affect this decision?

Bible Connection

Hidden Treasure: Wisdom Lesson from Proverbs

This free Bible lesson for children teaches the importance of Wisdom based on Proverbs 2:1-15. It was first prepared for a Children's Church setting but would work well as Sunday School lesson about wisdom. The children will discover that wisdom is a hidden treasure given by God. This lesson plan also includes several case studies and other learning activities to connect the message with real life.

Bible Passage:

Proverbs 2: 1-15

Bible Story Title: "Finding the Hidden Treasure: Wisdom according to Proverbs 2"

Supply List: paper, pencils, Bible, chalkboard/whiteboard, Bible verses hidden around your space, shoeboxes or tissue boxes (1 for each child), art materials, list of Bible verse references (optional)

Learning Goal:

Following the lesson, children will identify the benefits of wisdom and also distinguish between wisdom and the lack thereof.

Learning Indicator:

By identifying wisdom and folly in case scenarios. By listing the benefits of wisdom on an art project.

Learning Activity #1:

Distribute paper and pencils to students to jot down notes as they are listening. Divide them into two groups. One group will listen for "If/Then" statements. The second group will listen for "Benefits of Wisdom." Read Proverbs 2:1-15 slowly, emphasizing the conditional elements and benefits

of searching for wisdom. Have the students share their findings and write them out as a visual. Here is a paraphrased reference for your convenience:

IF/THEN

If... we accept God's word and obey

If... we listen for wisdom and search for it

If... we understand that wisdom is like a great treasure

Then...we will respect God and know Him well.

BENEFITS OF WISDOM:

- Victory
- Safety/Protection
- Understanding
- Knowledge
- Discretion: Understanding of right/wrong
- Guidance/Direction

Learning Activity #2:

Reiterate Proverbs 2:6: "For the Lord gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding." In small groups of 3-4, have the students brainstorm ways that we can grow in wisdom. Ask for volunteers to share their findings. Here are some examples:

1. Trust Jesus as our Savior and honor God.
2. Read His word, since the Bible teaches us how to find wisdom.
3. Make right choices.
4. Stay away from wrong choices (sin).
5. If we do sin, ask for forgiveness and learn from our mistakes.

Read the following statements. Have the students make a W (by slanting both arms in the air) if the statement shows someone exercising wisdom. Have them cross their arms and shake their heads if the statement shows someone lacking wisdom (LW).

1. Even though Damien had been coming to church for a while, he realized that he had never invited Jesus to be his Lord and Savior. He decided to make a decision to follow God. (W)
2. Cara could never understand her Bible, so she quit trying to read it. (LW)
3. Ivette knew she was wrong when she stole her friend's money, so she returned it and asked for forgiveness. She never stole anything after that. (W)
4. Trent didn't understand his Bible either, but he kept trying. He read it in small parts and he asked questions when he didn't get it. He couldn't believe some of the stories that were in there! (W)
5. Derek wasn't prepared for the test, so he cheated. He knew it was wrong, but it got him good grades without having to work hard, so he kept doing it. (LW)

6. While Ji Yeong was at a friend's house, the friend started playing a video game that Ji Yeong's mom would not have liked. Since he knew it was wrong, he ended up leaving right away. (W)
7. Samantha loved being popular, wearing name brand clothes, and getting everyone's attention. The Bible, in her opinion, was old and didn't have anything good to say. Besides, her favorite TV shows told her how to act anyway. (LW)
8. Tracy had a lot of friends. Sometimes they didn't always do what was right. When she was around them, she made bad decisions too. She decided to hang out more with the friends that helped her follow God. (W)
9. Micah hated getting up for church in the mornings. His parents always made him get dressed up and go anyway. Whenever his teacher started talking about God's word, he always tuned her out and thought about playing hockey instead. (LW)
10. After a Vacation Bible School talk, Melody felt like she should pray to accept Jesus into her heart. But she was afraid about what other people would think, so she decided against it. She still doesn't know Jesus today. (LW)

Learning Activity #3:

To emphasize the importance of God's word for growing in wisdom, have the students go on a Treasure Hunt for Bible verses that you have hidden around the room.

Learning Activity #4/Test:

Have the students create a Treasure Chest for Bible verses. Every student will need one shoebox or tissue box to transform. They can paint it, attach stickers/ foam pieces, or decorate with glitter glue or tissue paper. (Use whatever you have available.) As a test, have them write the benefits of wisdom (discussed earlier) on the outside of the box. Inside, they can place the Bible verses that they found in the Treasure Hunt. Encourage the children to find one Bible verse a day to think about and place in their Treasure Chest. (You may even want to give them a list of pertinent Bible verse references, based on passages that you have been or will be studying in class.)

Bible Memory Verse

James 1:5

Songs

Wisdom Song - Review
The wise man built his house on the rock

Poem

Wisdom Poem - Review

The I WILL's of Wisdom

Review

Thursday Evening

Read and Discuss some Scriptures about Wisdom
Eccl 8:1

.....
Friday

Bible Memory Verse

James 1:5

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

James 1:5
Prov 9:10

Songs

Wisdom Song - Review
The wise man built his house on the rock

Poem

Wisdom Poem - Review

Vids

The wise and foolish builders.mov
The Wise Man Built His House (Low)

Craft

Little Choices

Use this activity to remember that little choices add up to make a big difference.

Give each student two squares of waxed paper. Use a food grater to spread shavings of old crayons on the first square of paper, and place the second square on top.



Cover both sides of the waxed paper with a smooth dish towel before ironing the two pieces together. Trim and tape edges, then hang the "stained glass" with floral wire. Cut out the following message by Samuel Smiles and tape it to the stained glass.

Supplies:

waxed paper, crayons, grater, dish towel, clothes iron, floral wire, clear tape, scissors

The I WILL's of Wisdom

Review

Friday Evening

Being wise is different than being smart. A smart person knows a lot of facts, but a wise person is able to apply those facts to the situation at hand.

Instead of just telling children what to do, help them think through their decisions by asking, "What would be the wise thing to do?" You can break it down even further by asking, "Is that being responsible?" or "Is that being respectful?" or "Is that really true?" This kind of thinking leads to better decisions.

The owl has been a symbol of wisdom for centuries. It has two large eyes and excellent hearing, allowing it to receive large amounts of information.

Character Quiz:

1. Who are some wise people you know?
2. A wise person:
 - a. gets upset easily
 - b. thinks before speaking
 - c. does whatever he or she wants
3. Being wise is the same as being smart: TRUE? or FALSE?
4. Why do you think owls are a symbol of wisdom?
5. Who are some friends that encourage you in the right direction?

The Making of a Leader

"Pull it tight!" "That's it. Now don't move!" George Washington lowered his head and squinted through the small eyepiece. "Okay, I think we got it!" he shouted to the men holding a long surveying rod in the distance.

At 16 years old, George Washington started his first great adventure. Lord Thomas Fairfax, one of the wealthiest landowners in Virginia, hired George and a group of men to measure parts of his land—over 5 million acres of dense forests, clear rivers, and lush valleys with wild animals in abundance.

The leader of the expedition turned to his young assistant. "You're becoming a fine surveyor, George. You'll make an excellent leader of your own team someday!"

George became good friends with the men on his expedition. They liked George and taught him how to become a better surveyor. George was glad to have good friends who would help him grow.

One night, after cooking their meal on an open fire, the men spread blankets on the ground to sleep. Someone gathered a pile of leaves for extra cushion, and another man wadded up an old shirt for a pillow.

George cut some hay from a nearby field and dropped it on the ground for his outdoor bed. After everyone had fallen asleep, George awoke to a crackling noise and the smell of

smoke. At first he thought he was dreaming, then he heard someone yell, "Fire!"

George opened his eyes to see the hay around him ablaze.

"Get up!" his friend shouted, "The hay is burning!" No one was hurt, but the leader of the expedition asked who put the hay so close to the fire.

"I did it," George confessed. "I realize now that I was careless. I am very sorry."

"May this be a lesson to all of you," said the leader sternly.

"One more mistake like this and we could all be dead."

George took the correction to heart and became more alert to danger. The next morning, George and his team went out to measure the next section of land. Suddenly, two Indian warriors stepped into the open. George looked around, and more warriors appeared from behind bushes, trees, and rocks until they surrounded George and his team.

One man reached for his musket. "Wait a minute!" George said. The leader of George's expedition stepped down from his horse and approached the first two Indians. After talking for a minute, he turned to his men with a big smile. "Don't worry," he said, "they mean us no harm."

George shared food with the Indian warriors and learned some of their language and customs. George was glad that he and his team were friendly to the Indians instead of assuming the worst.

It took months to complete the land surveying project, but George learned how to survive in rugged conditions, lead diverse groups of people, and map out projects so that each piece fits together.

Years later, George used these skills as Commander in Chief of the Continental Army, President of the Constitutional Convention, and President of the United States of America. His wisdom and experience made him one of the world's great leaders.



Virtue

Monday

Attention Grabber Activity

Learn from Mistakes

Coaches are great teachers when they assist players in learning from their mistakes and when they encourage players to extend themselves, take risks and achieve more than they thought they could.

In order to *consistently do what is right* on the playing field, coaches emphasize practice. Being virtuous off of the field requires the same type of practice. It requires getting back up whenever we get knocked off course. You can demonstrate this concept for the students by dividing the class into two groups. Have each group play Simon Says. You will have to appoint a student to be Simon in each group.

The rules of Simon Says applies except that when you make a mistake and get out, you drop out of the group you are in and drop into the other group. You automatically get a "do-over" - a chance to learn from your mistake and keep on going. Allow students to change as many times as they need to. When the time allotted is complete, ask how it felt to be able to keep on playing after a mistake.

Introduction

Opposites:

Virtue vs Impurity

What does it mean?

The moral excellence evident in my life as I consistently do what is right.

Translation:

Virtud vs. Maldad

Go to the root

The Latin root of the word *vir* is the term for an adult man. The related word *virtus* means strength. Can you see how virtue could mean mature, moral strength?

Bible Connection & Memory Verse

2 Pet 1:5-8

The I WILL's of Virtue

To practice Virtue I will:

- do what is right and encourage others to do the same.
- guard my eyes, ears, words and thoughts.
- learn to stand alone.
- abstain from anything which might damage or pollute my mind or body
- treat others as I would want them to treat me

Monday Evening

Christians Meditate on Virtuous Things

A Christian's life is a life of virtue (2 Pet. 1:5). Therefore, Paul commands us to think on things that are virtuous (Phil. 4:8). We cannot allow our minds to dwell upon evil and expect to live virtuously before God. "Evil company corrupts good habits" (1 Cor. 15:33). If our mind is in the gutter, we cannot live a virtuous life.

Christians can never escape all of the negative influences of sin (1 Cor. 5:9f). But, we must work very hard to keep from dwelling on the sin that surrounds us as we interact with people of the world. We can never allow ourselves to gleefully entertain the pleasures of unrighteousness in our minds (2 Th. 2:11-12; 2 Tim. 3:1-4). To do so is sin (cf. Matt. 5:27-30).

Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Global Community

To prepare for this activity, you will need to find pictures of global issues such as damage from a storm, an oil spill, deforestation, a drought, pollution, hunger. Show each picture and ask the students what the picture is about. After it is described, ask them if they know where it is. Tell them if they do not know and then use a map or globe to show where that is in relation to where you are. When all the pictures have been reviewed, ask them who is affected most by that situation. Draw an imaginary circle directly around the affected area. Ask about the area just outside of that circle. Who in that area might be affected by it or who might be called upon to help out. Keep drawing the circle wider and wider until your location is included in the circle affected by that issue. Discuss what can be done in your local community to assist a clean-up, or prevent future similar issues. What does it mean to be a global citizen? Have they ever heard the phrase "Think Globally, Act Locally"?

Discussion

Hannah Taylor, Model of Virtue

Born in Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1996, Hannah is by all accounts a regular young teen. Her zest for life extends to her love of people, nature, writing and drawing. She is the published author of *Ruby's Hope*, a beautifully written and illustrated children's story that inspires hope and caring, and empowers its readers to get involved and "makeChange" at any age.

When Hannah was 5, she saw a man eating out of a garbage can on a frozen winter day. Hannah was immediately filled with sadness and questions. "Why, why, why?" she asked. "If everyone shared what they had, could that cure homelessness?" Since that defining moment, Hannah has learned about hunger and homelessness.

Where society sees a problem, Hannah sees a person. By 8, Hannah had founded The Ladybug Foundation Inc., a registered charity, and had become the innocent face of the homeless, seeing their plight with the clarity of a child and speaking out for them across Canada, and elsewhere in the world, to one person at a time and to groups as large as 16,000. Hannah has spoken to more than 175 schools, organizations and events. Hannah believes that everyone deserves a roof over their head and enough food to eat, as basic human rights.

Through Hannah's efforts, well over 2 million dollars has been raised directly and indirectly for projects across Canada providing shelter, food

and safety for homeless people. Hannah has visited many of the shelters she supports. At a teenage shelter in Toronto, Hannah experienced a moment that she will never forget. As she was leaving the shelter, hugging each child, one of the quietest children stepped from the back and said, "Until today I thought no one loved me. Now I know you love me."

Bible Connection

Virtue is More Valuable than Worldly Wealth

Solomon said, "Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies" (Pr. 31:10).

Solomon's rhetorical question implies that a virtuous woman is extremely difficult to find. This is not just applicable to women, but virtuous people in general are difficult to find. In the time of Noah, there were only eight virtuous people on the earth (1 Pet. 3:20). And Jesus tells us that few people will be saved (Matt. 7:13-14) denoting that only a few virtuous people will ever live on earth.

A virtuous wife is worth much more than rubies. We have an abundance of rubies compared with the number of virtuous women on the earth. Therefore, a virtuous woman far outweighs the value of rubies. Generally speaking, virtue is more valuable than worldly wealth. A virtuous life results in eternal life, but worldly wealth is temporal (cf. Matt. 6:19-21; Jas. 5:1-6).

Bible Memory Verse

2 Pet 1:5-8

The I WILL's of Virtue

Review

Tuesday Evening

God's Word Sets the Standard for Morality, Virtue

Virtue is moral excellence. God is absolute virtue (excellence, 2 Pet. 1:3). Therefore, God sets the standard for

virtue. Since God has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3), He has given us the standard for moral excellence in His word (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

Society dictates neither morality nor virtue. We cannot live by the world's standard of morality and expect to go to heaven (Is. 55:8-9; 1 Cor. 1:18f). A virtuous life is the result of hearing God's word, believing God's word, and obeying God's word (Rom. 10:17; Heb. 5:9). When we live according to the law and doctrine of Christ, we are virtuous (Gal. 6:2; Col. 3:17; 2 Jn. 1:9).

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Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

On Trial

Ask the students to think of someone in their life that think of as virtuous. It might be a best friend, a teacher, a grandparent or neighbor. After they have this person in mind, ask the following question: If this person were to be arrested for being virtuous, what kind of evidence would you present at their trial to prove to a jury that this person is virtuous? Ask for some of the students to give examples. Now turn the tables on them. If they got arrested for being virtuous, what kind of evidence would there be to convict them? No need to ask for examples on this one - just use it as food for thought.

Discussion & Bible Connection

Galatians 5:22-23

These are gifts of the Spirit working in and through us and not our own doing. They are considered by-products of living a virtuous life. They are the result of living a life close to God. They are the evidence of the power of God's goodness in each of us.

Bible Memory Verse

2 Pet 1:5-8

The I WILL's of Virtue

Review

Wednesday Evening

Big Issue

What does it mean to be "good?" What does it mean to live a good life? Are we created good? Why do we want to be good? Why do we avoid being good?

For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do Paul (Romans 7:18-19 NRSV)

Maybe our struggle is not new. Saint Paul struggled. We struggle. We are both attracted to and repelled by goodness. It is just too hard to be good we think. Or we sabotage our own efforts to "be all we can be" through sloppy living and bad habits. We don't completely like being "bad" but sometimes we don't mind it TOO much. Vice can look very attractive, yet as we learned studying the 7 Deadly Sins, it never satisfies.

Being able to recognize the conflict within us is the first step. God does not call us to linger in guilt and shame. God helps us move beyond our feelings of powerlessness. We must remember we belong to God, the same God who created each one of us, as a good and whole self. While Sin has kept us from fully reflecting the image of God in which we were created, God does not leave us on our own. God gives us freedom of choice and the power to live a virtuous life (the Good life).

We are always free to choose to be the good self God created us to be....or to become captivated by the evil that surrounds us all.

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Thursday

Attention Grabber Activity

Old Warwick

This story originally appeared in the play *Some Folks Feel the Rain*.

A man was lost while driving through the country. As he tried to reach for the map, he accidentally drove off the road into a ditch. Though he wasn't injured, his car was stuck deep in the mud. So the man walked to a nearby farm to ask for help.

"Warwick can get you out of that ditch," said the farmer, pointing to an old mule standing in a field. The man looked at the decrepit old mule and looked at the farmer who just stood there repeating, "Yep, old Warwick can do the job." The man figured he had nothing to lose. The two men and the mule made their way back to the ditch. The farmer hitched the mule to the car. With a snap of the reins he shouted:

"Pull, Fred! Pull, Jack! Pull, Ted! Pull, Warwick!"

And the mule pulled that car right out of the ditch.

The man was amazed. He thanked the farmer, patted the mule, and asked, "Why did you call out all of those names before you called Warwick?"

The farmer grinned and said, "Old Warwick is just about blind. As long as he believes he's part of a team, he doesn't mind pulling."

We must understand that we are part of a team, a community, a family. We need to do our share by consistently striving to do the right thing.

Bible Connection

Grace Sets Us free

Read

Romans 5:6-10

- Is this Scripture passage familiar to you?
- Any particular phrase that jumps out at you right away?
- It is important to remember that God gives us hope as we seek to deal with the struggle to be good. The foundation of our hope is the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Why? Because in it God overcame Sin and Death, conquering the power of Evil in the world.
- The message of Scripture is clear: Evil is a conquered foe! Our hope is based not just on hearing the Good News, but in actually experiencing the Good News and living it in our own lives.

- Do you believe that in any situation God's Grace is more powerful than any temptation? Why? or Why not?
- Have you experienced God's Grace in your life? Give an example.
- As Wesleyans, Grace is a foundational lens through which we view (and live) the Christian life. Sin is powerful, but we focus on Grace which is more powerful. Grace comes from God. We have 3 ways of thinking about Grace:
 - Prevenient Grace- the Grace that comes before we even realize that God is loving us
 - Justifying Grace- the Grace that allows us to "turn around" and face God (often the starting point of a conversion experience)
 - Sanctifying Grace- the Grace that helps us grow more perfect in love
- Can you think of a time (looking back) when God was at work in your life and you didn't realize it? Will you share it?
- Has there been a time when you have accepted God's love into your life?
- How do you experience God's power to grow in your faith?
- How easy is it to claim the power of God's Grace in your daily life?

Bible Memory Verse

2 Pet 1:5-8

The I WILL's of Virtue

Review

Thursday Evening

Pick a virtue

For this activity, start by asking the family members to name virtues that they look for in friends. After there are about 5 or so listed, ask them which is the most important. There may be consensus, or not - it doesn't matter. The discussion may actually surface a few more. Each person may pick the one that they feel is important. In reality, a well-rounded friend will have several good qualities so narrowing it to a single one is difficult. The purpose of the discussion is to focus on what we expect in a friend. After

there is consensus or each person has selected a favorite, turn the tables and ask how they each measure up to the qualities that have been listed. Would they be selected as a friend against those qualifications? Urge the family members to focus this month on behaving according to the traits that have been listed. Encourage family members to catch each other being “good” or consistent with the virtue list. Caution against challenging each other when they aren’t consistent if it will disintegrate into tattling.

Virtues are Gifts

Read

2 Corinthians 9:8-10

- How easy is it to be in “right-relationship” (i.e. righteousness) with God?
- How easy is it to be in “right-relationship” with others?
- The virtues (prudence, fortitude, justice, temperance, faith, hope, love) are also expressions of sanctifying grace. They are indications of God’s goodness in our lives. They are God’s Power to help and guide us. By giving us this power, God has given us a way in which we can deal with the conflict between good and bad.
- The virtues are NOT just moral skills to master; they are a source of power in developing our character. As we seek to grow in grace, we DO NOT have to rely on ourselves. We DO rely on God’s grace to guide and strengthen us.
- Thinking about this Scripture in relationship to the Virtues, what connections do you see?
- What would it mean to “always have enough of everything” in your life with God?
- What would it mean to abundantly share everything you have?

Virtues Are Not Just for the Saints

Read

Romans 2:13-16

- What do you think this Scripture is saying?
- Today in our context, who would the “Gentiles” of the world be?
- **HINT:** Those outside the Church.
- One of the delusions of Sin is thinking that we alone stand on high moral ground. Our Sin makes us unwilling to believe that there may be a possibility that we are wrong morally. Our Sin keeps us from admitting that people who disagree with us may have come to their conclusions through thoughtful, prayerful deliberations. Our Sin does not let us ask “What if we are wrong?”

- What does the scripture say makes someone in right-relationship (righteous) with God?
- Do you agree? Why? or Why not?
- True moral character is not a matter of belonging to a particular group or holding a particular viewpoint. God provides ALL people with the gracious power of the virtues. God offers Grace to all.
- How comfortable are you with the idea that God offers grace to all?
- To take the virtues seriously in our own lives, we MUST take them seriously in the lives of others. Even in the lives of people with whom we disagree or who appear different from us but who are also seeking moral seriousness in their lives.
- What do you do when you encounter someone who thinks differently than you do?



Bible Memory Verse

2 Pet 1:5-8



Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?
How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

2 Pet 1:5-8



The I WILL’s of Virtue

Review



Friday Evening

Life Application

Read

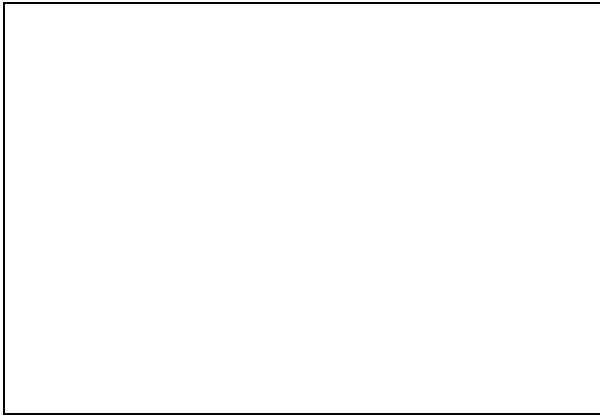
Deuteronomy 6:4-9

- Are you familiar with this passage?
- This is an important passage in Hebrew Scripture known as the “Shema.” Many actually wear these words or have them on the doors of their homes.
- The moral life is worth pursuing because it moves us closer to our created purpose: love of God and love of neighbor- “goodness.”
- How could living the moral life through the virtues be like wearing these words everyday?
- Where does one begin to live the life of Christian Virtue?
- **HINT:** One must WANT to be good.
- **HINT:** We must also start wherever we are.
- Can you receive God’s forgiveness in your life?
- Do you believe God accepts you wherever you are in your journey?
- The transformation of our moral lives does not happen alone. This passage emphasizes the power of community to teach, the power of community to strengthen and unite. The power to share a virtuous life with others. Virtue can and should be taught to all.
- Because we are social beings, virtue can only be a lived reality in the community of faith. We are shaped by our communities of faith. We are nurtured by communities of faith. Our communities of faith give us reinforcement and guidance.
- How can your community of faith help you to “wear” God’s gift of the virtues?



Monday

Attention Grabber Activity



Introduction

Opposites:

Love vs Selfishness

What does it mean?

Not a mere, mushy feeling. Godly love is unconditional, patient, kind, and forgiving

How do we Sign it?

1cor13signs.m4v (Low)

Bible Connection

1 Corinthians 13

Bible Memory Verse

1 Cor 13:3

Songs

Jesus Loves Me
Jesus loves the little children
Love one another

Monday Evening

The Power of Love

Read

John 3:16 , Romans 5:6-8

Story

No matter how mean Jimmy was to Carlos it just didn't seem to affect him. Jimmy always picked on Carlos at school. He would say mean things, call him names and even try to get Carlos to fight with him. Carlos never really knew why Jimmy was so mean except that he learned from the Bible that like Jesus, he was supposed to love those who were mean to him.

So every time Jimmy was mean Carlos just continued to do something nice in return. He was never mean back and never said mean things about Jimmy. What was the result? It drove Jimmy absolutely crazy!

Jimmy kept trying to find new ways to be mean to Carlos. One day Jimmy threw a paper airplane in class and the teacher turned around and it hit the teacher. The teacher immediately asked who did it. Jimmy pointed to Carlos and said that he was the one who did it. Carlos knew he had a choice to make. He decided to take the blame for Jimmy. Jimmy was amazed at what Carlos did for him so after class he went to Carlos and asked, "Why did you take the blame for the paper airplane?" Then Carlos looked at Jimmy and said, "Because it is the same thing that Jesus did for me. When He died on the cross He forgave us of all of our sins. And He did this because He loves us."

Jimmy didn't know what to say, but he knew there was something different about Carlos. He decided that he wouldn't pick on Carlos anymore. In fact, he thought it was pretty cool what Carlos did for him. When Carlos invited Jimmy to church with him next Sunday, Jimmy decided to go to learn about Jesus and why Carlos was so different.

- Tell about a time when someone was mean to you? Were you mean back or were you kind and loving?
- How did Jimmy know that Carlos was a disciple of Jesus?
- How can you demonstrate the love of Jesus to others?

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Tuesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Love Run

All the children can be in a designated area and when the teacher says... GO FIND GOD'S LOVE, the children will run and hunt for all the words of GOD'S LOVE that they can find taped all around the room and run back to quickly tape their words on a poster board and continue to hunt for words until the time is up!

Bible Connection

A Clanging Cymbal

Read

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

It was finally half time at the football game and the band was entering onto the field to begin the show. As the band began to play their first song everyone sounded great except for one person, the cymbal player. The cymbal player was banging the cymbals together as loud as she could. She was offbeat and just made the whole song sound bad. The audience felt bad for the cymbal player because they knew she was trying but was unfortunately making the whole band sound terrible. The same is true for us as Christians if we aren't showing love. We start sounding like that cymbal player, offbeat and clanging.

Paul wrote to the church in Corinth and explained to them that without love he was nothing.

He could do a lot of great things like teaching, prophesying, understanding great mysteries, knowing everything about the Bible, have incredible faith, give away everything he had to the poor or even give his life for the Lord. But if he didn't have love, none of these things would matter. Of all of the

gifts God can give us, or the great things that He may allow us to do, there is nothing greater in this life than God's love. We, as Christians are kind of like that band. When we are all working together and loving one another we can put on a great concert and glorify the Lord. But if we do not show love towards others we start to make our own sound, which doesn't go with the rest of the band, and that sound that we make when we do not show love is not a very good one.

Let's remember the importance of love in our service to the Lord. It doesn't matter how much we know or do for the Lord if we don't have love! Does the love of Jesus come out of your life, or do you sound like a clanging cymbal?

- Have you ever heard a "clanging" cymbal? What was that like?
 - What if you know everything there is to know about the Bible and do not show love towards others, how do you suppose God sees that?
 - Why is it so important to be loving?
-

Bible Memory Verse

1 Cor 13:3

Tuesday Evening

What Does Love Look Like?

Read

1 Peter 4:8
Corinthians 13:4-7

Wow! Was Katie having a bad day! Everything seemed to go wrong. She had just lost her soccer game, she fell down and skinned her knee during the game and on the way walking home someone passed by on their bike and splashed mud all over her clothes. Things just couldn't seem to get any worse. Then she got home and found out that her little brother got into her room while she was gone and made a huge mess. All of her things were scattered everywhere.

When she saw her brother she was so upset that she began to yell at him. Mom was sitting in the next room and overheard what was going on so she asked Katie to come and explain what was going on.

Mom already knew that Katie was having a pretty rough day. She also knew that even though her brother was wrong in destroying her room it still wasn't a reason for her to yell at him. After Katie described how terrible her day was, mom

pulled out her Bible and turned to 1 Corinthians 13 and began to read. But she read it differently. At least Katie had never heard it this way. Mom read, "Love is impatient and is mean; love wants what everyone else has and likes to parade itself, it is arrogant; it is rude, seeks its own way, is easily provoked and thinks bad things about others; rejoices in sin, but never the truth; can't bear anything, doesn't believe much and endures nothing."

Katie was wondering if mom felt O.K. because that certainly didn't sound right. Then mom explained that Katie's reaction to her brother and yelling at him was kind of like how she read that list. It was, of course, the opposite of what it should be. She then read it the right way and explained that when we love others we will be patient and kind. Even when our little brother is bugging us, we should always react in love.

- Can you think of a time that you had a "bad day?" How did you react?
- How do you think that Jesus would have reacted in Katie's situation?
- Can you name at least 5 qualities of love out of the 15 mentioned in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7?

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Wednesday

Attention Grabber Activity

Love Prayer Bags

Each child can be given a lunch bag to decorate with markers and stickers. The child will then have cut out hearts to write a name of someone they know on each heart and place all of their name hearts INSIDE the lunch bag. Encourage children during the week to take one heart out of the LOVE BAG and say a prayer for that person to know GOD'S LOVE that day. If children would like to, they could take more than one heart of the bag each day and pray for those children or adults. Make sure that everyone in the class writes their Sunday School classmates names as well as the teacher/leaders!

Bible Connection

Show Me Your Identification

Read

John 13:35 , John 13:34,35/John 15:12,13

How can we tell if someone is a policeman or a fireman? We can always tell by the uniform they are wearing. If we see someone wearing a lab coat with a stethoscope we know that person is probably a doctor. Whenever people who don't know Jesus look at us, how can they tell that we are Christians? Is it by the Christian T-shirt we wear or the bumper stickers on our cars? Maybe that gives them an idea, but Jesus said the best way for people to know that we are really His disciples is through our love for one another. Whenever we love others, especially our brothers and sisters in Jesus, we are showing our love for Jesus. Imagine someone who doesn't know Jesus getting invited to a Sunday School class and when they arrive on Sunday they see all the children are disobeying their teacher, being rude to one another and fighting. What do you suppose that person will think about Christians and Jesus? They can see people being mean to one another everywhere. But if they come to church and see the same thing it is hard for them to see Jesus. But imagine them coming and seeing the other children being nice to one another, listening to their teacher and being loving and kind. They will then know that there is something different about church and Jesus.

When we are loving and kind towards one another it shows the world what Jesus is like.

How can the world know that we are Jesus' disciples? We show it through our love for one another. Think about ways that you can love others this week in order to show them that you believe in Jesus!

- How do you think that being loving towards others shows that you believe in Jesus?
- How did Jesus show his love towards us?
- What ways can you think of to be loving towards others?

Bible Memory Verse

1 Cor 13:3

Wednesday Evening

Becoming an Artist

Read

Ephesians 5:2
Galatians 5:22-26

There is a story of a boy who one day saw an artist painting a beautiful picture. The artist was sitting outdoors near the ocean painting a wonderful picture of the ocean and the cliffs. The boy became so excited about what he saw the artist do that he wanted to do the same thing. He immediately went and bought a canvas, paints, brushes and even one of those little hats that painters like to wear. He figured he would do everything he could to become just like that artist he saw.

The next day he went to the same spot and there was the artist continuing to paint his beautiful picture. The boy asked the artist if he could sit next to him and begin to paint the same picture. The artist said sure! So the boy began to paint. He tried as hard as he could.

He watched every move that the artist made and tried to do the same thing. After a couple of hours he looked at his picture and then the artist's picture and he noticed that his picture just wasn't as good as the artist's. He then realized that he could never duplicate the artist's work by himself. The only way he could be as good would be if the artist came inside him and painted through him. Only then could his painting be just as good.

When we talk about loving one another like Jesus loves us we find that it isn't always that easy to do. We look at Jesus and see how perfect He is and then look at our own lives and see how we fall so short. Jesus knew that living a life of love would be difficult for us.

That is why He gave us the Holy Spirit to help us to become like Him. Love is the fruit of the Spirit. When we become Christians, the Holy Spirit lives inside of us. Because the Holy Spirit is inside us, He helps us to love, just like Jesus.

The next time that you find it hard to be loving towards someone ask the Lord to help you, and He will!

- Do you find it hard to be loving sometimes?
- How is Jesus the perfect example of love?
- How can we become more like Jesus?

Thursday

Bible Connection

Followers of Christ Show Love

Read

John 13:34, 35

Jesus is talking with his disciples at the Last Supper. He had already dismissed Judas and told the disciples that He would be betrayed. This is the last lesson Jesus taught the disciples before He was arrested and taken to trial. A new commandment, wow! This must be important. However, it was not much different than what He had said about all the other commandments in the past. Jesus' conclusion about the other commandments was summarized in this statement, "Love God. Love others." (Mark 12:29-31)

Bible Memory Verse

1 Cor 13:3

Thursday Evening

God Loves Me

Before teaching the lesson, review the following verses: Psalm 139:13, John 3:16, 1 John 4:8, and Hebrews 13:8.

Luke 12:7 "...the very hairs of your head are all numbered"

1 John 4:8b ... God is love.

God knows who I am

- How many of you have a brother or sister?
- Did you know them before they were born?
- God knew you before you were born, and He knows you now!

God knows all about me

- How many of you know me? (We may not know each other very well yet, but I hope we will soon.)
- God knows me/you very well. In fact He knows us better than we know ourselves!
- Show a hairbrush. I don't know how many hairs I have on my own head. I suppose that I could try and count them. But even if I managed to count them, every day I lose some hairs and every day some new hairs grow! You can see from my hairbrush that today I have already lost some. (Pull out one hair from hairbrush.)
- But God knows the number of hairs on my head, and on yours too! (And He knows everything else about us too!)
- Luke 12:7 Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

- God loves me just like I am right now
- Who loves their mommy?
- Does she have to do something else before you can love her?
- God loves us already and has proven it by sending Jesus to tell us how much He loves us!
- John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son... God is Love/ God's Love doesn't ever change
- Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.
- Since God doesn't change and God is love, His love can't change either.
- You and I may change, but God doesn't change.
- God loves you know and He will never stop loving you. He only wants what is best for you. Isn't that a wonderful thing?

Prayer

Let's pray and thank God for His love.

Dear God,
 Thank you that you love me.
 Thank you for knowing me.
 Thank you for never changing.
 I love you back. Amen.



Bible Memory Verse

1 Cor 13:3

Journal Entry

Read Scripture verse by yourself, listen to the Lord, what does He say to you today?

How can I apply this characteristic/Scripture in my life today?

1 Cor 13:3

Friday Evening

The Greatest Commandment

To Remember: Total devotion to God is our purpose in life

Vocabulary

- **Love:** putting others first
- **Sacrifice:** giving up something, or doing without
- **Devotion:** commitment

Lesson

The Jews were not finished questioning Jesus. A lawyer asked Jesus: "Which commandment is the greatest of all?" Jesus answered from the Old Testament: Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.

Jesus added a second command, that we must love our neighbor as ourself. Then he explained that every other law of God was based on these two laws. What did he mean by that? If you love God, would you ignore him or speak badly about him? If you love your neighbor, will you steal from him or hurt him? No. the other laws (don't steal, don't take the Lord's name in vain) all are based on loving God or loving man.

Note that true love is 1) total, and 2) sacrificial. You can't love God and something else. You must only love him. And you can't love God but do nothing for him. Loving someone means doing things for them, caring about them and their feelings. giving up your time and money and things for them.

Discussion Point:

What does God mean when he says we are to love god with all our heart, soul, mind and strength? Our heart is our affection. Our soul is our spirit, our conscience - it's what makes us alive. Our mind is our brain, the part that thinks things through. Our strength is our will, our desire and commitment. All these things must be devoted to God. It's not enough for our heart to love god but our will to be too lazy to do anything. Nor can our spirit believe in God but our mind have doubts.

Discussion Point: Total Commitment.

There are few people in life who are totally committed to something. What does it mean to be totally committed? Olympic athletes are totally committed to their sport. Everything decision they make hinges on whether it will help or hurt them reach their goal of being a good athlete. What they eat, how often they practice, where they go, and who they spend time with is all determined by whether it helps them meet their goal. Even the apostle Paul used Olympic

athletes as examples of how we should live our life. "1 Cor 9:24-25 Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever." How does this affect how we live? Every decision about what we do, where we go, and who we spend time with should be determined by whether or not it will help us reach our goal of pleasing God and reaching heaven

SING:

Be careful little eyes

True or False - True love versus false love

1. Having a crush on someone - true love or false love?
2. Sacrificing for another - true love or false love?
3. Using guilt to get what you want - true love or false love?
4. Caring about people, even if they don't like you - true love or false love?

Read

Mark 12:30-31

Discussion Questions

1. What's a soul?
2. Define love.
3. Who recited the Greatest Commandment?
4. Do an act of love for someone.
5. Act out Jesus listing the two greatest commandments.
6. Draw a heart.
7. If we love God, how will we feel about him?
8. Will God be happy sharing our affection?
9. How would you feel if someone said they love you, but served others?
10. Are some of God's laws greater than others?
11. Does this command leave room for other gods?
12. How should we treat other people?
13. What four things must we love God with?
14. Who asked Jesus about the law?
15. What two things should we focus our love on?
16. What are all other laws based upon?
17. How do we decide whether to participate in an activity?
18. What does it mean to be totally committed?

