

KIDS of INTEGRITY

Consideration



Read about David's selfish treatment of Uriah, build a chain reaction of toppling dominoes, launch toy cars down a racetrack, and explore more ways to help kids learn to be considerate of others.

Dive into this lesson for fun ideas to help kids:

- consider how their words and actions will affect others
- express genuine concern for others
- adopt the same others-centred approach to life that Jesus had.

You'll also find this lesson helpful for curbing impulsive and insensitive responses, and for stamping out a habit of teasing others or purposefully making others upset.

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Scripture verses in this lesson are quoted from the English Standard Version.

Parents' prayer

Prepare for this lesson by talking to God about your own need to become more considerate.

If you prefer to personalize your prayer, read through the additional verses provided under "Scripture-guided prayer" for direction and inspiration.

Sample prayer

Gracious Father, Your Word tells us to consider the needs of others before our own (Philippians 2:3-4). Jesus modelled this "other-centred" approach to life fully. Everywhere He went, His concern was for others, not Himself. He negotiated difficult situations with tact and wisdom, He reached out to those in need with compassion, He guided those who were lost with gentleness and corrected those caught in sin without condemnation. People spoke well of Him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from His lips (Luke 4:22).

My desire is to see my life characterized by the grace and humility of Jesus. I confess that when I'm upset I can overreact and speak without thinking. At times when I'm exhausted or when I'm exasperated, I tend to be thoughtless in the way I correct others. There are times I'm impatient and insensitive as well. Lord Jesus, I do want to be more like You in my interactions with others. In order to make this a reality, I really do need Your Spirit in me.

Kids can be unintentionally inconsiderate of others. Despite their youth, please bless our children, _____ and _____, with an ability to be mindful of how their words and actions affect other people and give _____ and _____ godly insight into the feelings, hurts and cares and also the joys of others.

My prayer is that my children would honour others before themselves and display a brotherly or sisterly love for them, genuinely rejoicing with those who rejoice and mourning with those who mourn (Romans 12:10,15). Please gift _____ and _____ with Your wisdom from heaven so they grow up to be pure, peace-loving, submissive, full of mercy, impartial and sincere, and considerate of others in a way that exceeds expectations for children their age (James 3:17, 1 Timothy 4:12).

In heated or touchy situations, please help _____ and _____ to remember that, “A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger” (Proverbs 15:1). May _____ and _____ speak politely, with consideration and respect, showing others that they have Your love in their heart (Romans 12:10, 1 Corinthians 13:5). I pray that _____ and _____ would be prudent and tactful, keeping their ideas to themselves rather than blurting foolishness out inappropriately (Proverbs 12:23). As _____ and _____ interact with others, may their goal be to live at peace with everyone as far as it depends on them (Romans 12:16-18).

Lord, as a family, we want to honour You in all we do and say. Please keep us from becoming so consumed with our own comfort and our own problems that we forget to be concerned about the needs of others. Give us Your love for people and let us be sincerely interested in their well-being. We want others to know that the compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience demonstrated by those in our family comes from You (Colossians 3:12). 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 unlimited love who cares for us deeply.

Psalm 8:3-9 | Psalm 85:10-11 | Isaiah 44:21-22
| Luke 1:46-49 | Hebrews 2:6

Heart search

Acknowledge times when you are prone to be inconsiderate of others or lacking in sensitivity.
Proverbs 10:19 | Ecclesiastes 10:12 | 1 Corinthians 10:24
| Philippians 2:3-4 | 2 Timothy 2:23

Gratitude

Thank God for ways you have seen your family members be considerate.

Family requests

Ask God to help you and your children to have Christ-like love and concern for others.

Psalm 141:3 | Romans 12:9-10 | 1 Corinthians 13:4-5
| 2 Corinthians 13:11 | James 3:17

Kids talk with God

These sample prayers all begin with “Dear God,” but you may use any other names of God your children are comfortable with (i.e. Father God, Lord Jesus, Heavenly Father, Abba Father, etc.).

If your children are ready to pray original prayers, you may wish to use the Bible verses provided under “Scripture-guided prayer for children.”

Sample prayers

Dear God, before I speak, please help me to think about how the things I say will affect others. Amen.

Dear God, please keep watch over the door of my lips so that I don't say things that are unkind or hurtful to others (Psalm 141:3). Amen.

Dear God, I am _____ (*angry / hurt / frustrated / irritated*)! Please help me not to speak until my heart has been checked by You. Amen.

Dear God, I want to be kind and thoughtful. Please give me a reminder if I am going to say something rude or hurtful to someone. Amen.

Dear God, I want to love others like You do. Please help me to be polite, to be patient, and to think of others instead of myself (1 Corinthians 13:4-5). Amen.

Dear God, sometimes I feel like a silly puppy that jumps on people with muddy paws and nips at them because I don't know any better. Please teach me how to be more considerate! Amen.

Dear God, please teach me how I can honour others before myself. Amen.

Dear God, I want to have my own way. Please help me to learn to let others have what they want so there can be peace. Please send me Your wisdom from heaven so I can be considerate (James 3:17). 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 His unlimited love and care.
Psalm 8:3-9 | Psalm 85:10-11 | Luke 1:46-49

Heart search

Acknowledge times when you're tempted to think about yourself instead of others.

1 Corinthians 10:24 | 1 Corinthians 13:4-5 | James 3:17

Gratitude

Thank God for the ways you have seen your family members treat others with consideration.

Family requests

Ask God to help you, your siblings and your parents to care for others and to think about how your words and actions will affect others.

Titus 3:1-2 | 1 Peter 3:8 | 1 Timothy 4:12

Speak a blessing

Encourage your children throughout your lesson by being quick to commend them whenever you notice them being considerate. Simple statements like these mean a lot to your child.

- I noticed that you considered _____'s feelings before you _____ (name actions). You are a thoughtful boy / girl.
- _____, I like the way you said that. You were very tactful.
- I can tell that you are doing your best to keep the peace by being considerate. Thank you!
- Thank you for speaking in love – even though you are feeling _____ (name your child's emotions).
- _____, you are a boy / girl who speaks respectfully. I am proud of you.

- I'm sure Jesus is pleased with you for being tactful / considerate / respectful.
 - _____, that is a nice way to say that.
 - _____, I like the way you spoke the truth in love and I'm sure God does too.
-

Memory verses

Memorizing Scripture with your children helps God's Spirit bring about lasting change. Choose a verse that your children can learn in a pre-determined period of time and aim to review the verse at least once every day.

Proverbs 15:1 "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."

Proverbs 16:24 "Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body."

Proverbs 22:11 "He who loves purity of heart, and whose speech is gracious, will have the king as his friend."

Luke 6:31 "And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them."

1 Corinthians 10:24 "Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor."

1 Corinthians 13:4-5 "Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful . . ."

Galatians 5:22-23 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law."

Ephesians 4:2 ". . . with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love . . ."

Ephesians 4:15 "Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ . . ."

Ephesians 4:29 “Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.”

Philippians 2:3-4 “Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.”

Colossians 3:12-14 “Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.”

Colossians 4:6 “Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.”

Titus 3:1-2 “Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people.”

James 1:19 “Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger . . .”

1 Peter 3:8 “Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing.”

Kick-off craft

Plan to do this **kick-off craft** early in your lesson. You will make tissue-paper flowers to teach your kids the importance of treating people with care and consideration.

Tissue-paper flowers

Directions

You will need the following supplies:

- coloured tissue paper
- green paper to make foliage (optional)
- stiff wire in lengths of 30-40 cm (12-15")
- green pipe cleaners
- scissors
- a ruler
- a spritz water bottle
- a vase for your flowers.

Plan to make one flower of your own that will be destroyed as an object lesson as you work through the discussion questions. Here’s how to make your flowers:

- 1** Cut the sheets of tissue paper into rectangles measuring approximately 20 x 25 cm (8 x 10").
- 2** Lay several sheets of tissue paper in an even stack (4-6 sheets make thinner flowers and 15-20 sheets make fuller flowers).
- 3** Fold the stacked tissue paper like an accordion, widthwise, with each fold being 1.5 cm (½") from the next. Continue until the entire length is folded.
- 4** Cut both ends of the folded tissue – round for scalloped petals or zig-zagged for jagged petals.
- 5** Tie the stack of folded paper at the middle with a green pipe cleaner. (Wrap it right around the stack, then pull it tight.)
- 6** Holding one end of the accordion stack of paper, carefully pull the tissue paper upwards at the other end, one layer at a time. Gently separate the sheets to form a flower shape.

7 Once you've formed your flower, wind the pipe cleaner on to a length of stiff wire that will serve as the flower's stem.

8 If you would like to add foliage, cut leaf shapes from your green paper. Lay the end of the leaf along the stem and secure the leaf to the stem by twisting a short length of green pipe cleaner around both the leaf and the stem. Continue adding leaves until each stem is leafy.

9 As your kids are working on their flowers, use the discussion questions to talk about how people's feelings, like flowers, are fragile.

10 Choose a Scripture verse from this lesson and memorize it as a reminder of the importance of acting and speaking with care and consideration. Add the verse to the vase of tissue-paper flowers by adding a different phrase of the verse to the stem of each flower. As you work on memorizing it, hold up the flowers in the correct order and have your kids say the corresponding phrase.

Questions for discussion

1. How easy is it to tear the tissue paper?
2. Which tears more easily: paper tissue or real flower petals?
3. What other things can you think of that are fragile?
4. How are people like flower petals?
5. What do people do to "tear into" others?
6. What do you think would happen if I sprayed my flower with water? (*Spray your flower with water and observe what happens.*)
7. If a flower gets all droopy, what do we say happened?
8. When we say a person looks "wilted", what kind of expression would we see on their face?

9. Could a person "wilt" or "tear" in a way that we don't see from the outside?

10. Why do you think people are thoughtless or inconsiderate of each other?

Read **Proverbs 18:21**.

11. The Bible says the tongue has the power of life and death. What do you think this means?

12. Has anyone ever said something unkind to you?

13. What do we call it when someone tells friends and classmates unkind things about someone else? (Gossip / spreading rumours)

14. If you hear someone say something unkind about another person, what is the best way to respond?

15. What is the best way to care for a friend who is sad?

Key concepts

Just as we needed to be very careful with the tissue paper when we were making the flowers, we need to be very careful not to hurt other people by the things we say or do. People can be like flower petals because our hearts are also very delicate – people's feelings can easily be hurt.

Simple comments, facial expressions and even the tone of voice we use when talking with someone can easily hurt their feelings and give them a sad heart. For example, someone might say something like, "That was a silly idea," or "Your pants look funny," and could end up making another person feel embarrassed.

The Bible says we can speak "life" or "death" to others. We speak "life" by saying things in a gentle, loving, considerate and respectful way. We also speak life when we encourage others or when we offer correction in an appropriate way.

We speak "death" when we say things in an abrupt, blunt, inconsiderate or disrespectful way. Being quick to criticize or correcting abruptly or aggressively is another way people speak "death" rather than "life." When a flower gets droopy, we say it is dead or

“wilted.” Likewise, if we say unkind things to another person it can be very disheartening or discouraging for them. This is kind of like when we sprayed the tissue paper with water: it got all droopy. The paper may dry over time, but the flower won’t ever be the same. In the same way, cruel words can be very damaging. Often a person can still remember what was said to them many years later.

If we hear unkind or cruel words being said, we can say, “I wouldn’t want a friend talking like that about me, so let’s not talk about them that way.”

When we speak unkindly or repeat unkind things said about another person, we are not considering that person’s feelings. If you are tempted to speak unkindly to someone, remember that people, like flowers, are fragile and easily damaged!

Relevant Scripture

Ephesians 4:29 “Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.”

Proverbs 10:11 “The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life, but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence.”

Proverbs 18:21 “Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.”

Bible stories

Choose one or more Bible stories that are appropriate for your children. If the Bible passage is too complex for your children, paraphrase the story yourself or use the summary provided under “key concepts.”

Jesus loves kids

Read **Mark 9:36-38** and **Mark 10:13-16**.

Questions for discussion

1. Can you think of a person you know who makes you feel loved and special?

2. What does that person do that makes you feel loved?
3. Do you ever meet adults who make you feel like it’s a bother to have kids around?
4. How did Jesus make sure kids knew He loved them?
5. When you are with other people, how can you make sure they know that you care for them?

Key concepts

Jesus showed that He loved children by holding them and blessing them. When we think of those who love us, often it’s our parents, grandparents and close friends and relatives who love us. These people demonstrate their love by treating us in a way that shows they care about us. We can follow their example by treating others in a way that shows we care about them.

Relevant Scripture

Mark 9:36-38 “And He took a child and put him in the midst of them, and taking him in His arms, He said to them, ‘Whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me, and whoever receives Me, receives not Me but Him who sent Me.’”

Mark 10:13-16 “And they were bringing children to Him that He might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, He was indignant and said to them, ‘Let the children come to Me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.’ And He took them in His arms and blessed them, laying His hands on them.”

Caring hearts, caring actions

Read **Luke 7:36-50**.

Questions for discussion

1. How did the woman show she cared about Jesus?
2. What did the Pharisees say about the woman who was caring for Jesus?

3. How did Jesus answer the Pharisee?
4. What kind of things could the Pharisee have done to show that Jesus was welcome in his home?
5. Did the Pharisee do these things?
6. What did Jesus say about the woman?
7. Did Jesus look at the woman and consider her past, or did he look at her heart?

Key concepts

When Jesus was visiting at the Pharisee's house, a woman wet Jesus' feet with her tears, wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them. This might seem odd, but it was all part of the way they showed honour to someone in Bible times.

The Pharisee said that if Jesus really was a prophet he would not have let the woman do this because she had been known to have led a sinful life. So Jesus told the Pharisee a little story to teach him a lesson about love.

Through the story Jesus pointed out how much the woman loved him. Then Jesus politely told the Pharisee how he could have been more considerate of Jesus as a guest in his home. Jesus pointed out that the Pharisee had not greeted him with a kiss, given him any water to wash his feet, or put oil on his head – all of which were common customs in Jesus' day when you welcomed a guest into your home.

Jesus was telling the Pharisee that the things we do for people demonstrate how much we love them. Jesus did not reject the woman because of her sinful past. Instead He looked at how sorry she was for her sins and offered her forgiveness.

Relevant Scripture

Matthew 25:40 *“And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these My brothers, you did it to Me.’”*

First or last?

Read Matthew 19:16-30.

Questions for discussion

1. What did the rich young man ask Jesus?
2. What did Jesus ask the rich young man to do?
3. Why do you think Jesus asked him to do this?
4. What do you think Jesus might ask us to give up if He visited our home?
5. What did the rich young man do?
6. Peter was surprised that Jesus told the young man this and asked Jesus, “What about those of us who have already done as You have asked?” How did Jesus reply to Peter?
7. What should you remember when you are tempted to ask, “What about me?”

Key concepts

The rich young man knew he had enough money to take care of his needs for his whole life on earth, but he was wondering what he could do to get ready for eternity. So the rich young man asked Jesus what he needed to do to make sure he would go to heaven.

Jesus knew how much this man cared about his money. Jesus asked the rich young man to go and sell everything he owned and give the money to the poor.

If we imagine Jesus visiting with us in our home, we can guess that He might ask us to give some of our money and food away too. He also might ask us to share our toys and the other things we use for entertainment.

The rich young man went away sad, because he didn't want to give away his money. Peter was very surprised that Jesus had asked the rich young man to do this and asked Jesus, “What about us who have left everything and followed you?”

Jesus assured Peter that he would be rewarded in heaven, and then Jesus told Peter that those who are “first” – or always looking out for themselves – will end up last, and that those who are last will end up first in heaven.

When we are tempted to worry about our own needs instead of the needs of others, we can remember the story of the rich young man and do the things that God asks us to do willingly, even when it means putting the needs of others ahead of our own.

Relevant Scripture

Proverbs 19:17 “Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and He will repay him for his deed.”

Proverbs 22:9 “Whoever has a bountiful eye will be blessed, for he shares his bread with the poor.”

1 Corinthians 10:24 “Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor.”

A love test

Read Luke 11:37-43.

Questions for discussion

1. What did the Pharisees care about?
2. What did Jesus want the Pharisees to care about?
3. If someone were to watch our family all day long, what would they say we care about?
4. When do you find yourself tempted to want the best for yourself?
5. What advice do you think Jesus would give us?
6. What can we do to care for others and not just ourselves?

Key concepts

Jesus could see what was inside the Pharisees' hearts. He knew that they were greedy, wanting to have more and to have the best for themselves. When the Pharisee criticized Jesus for not doing the ceremonial washing required by the Jewish law before eating a meal, Jesus pointed out that having a clean heart is more important than having ceremonially clean hands. He told the Pharisees that they should:

a) be generous to the poor

b) be concerned about being fair and

c) love others instead of worrying about following the rules in order to look good.

Jesus also criticized them for wanting the most important seats in the synagogues.

Jesus wanted the Pharisees to be sincerely concerned about the well-being of the people, not just about themselves.

We can be sure that Jesus would give us the same advice. He might say something like, “Care about truly sharing the love of God with others and about living righteously. Don't just worry about giving your offering each Sunday. If you really love God, you will take care of the poor and delight in giving money to those who need help. I want you to have an attitude that says, ‘What can I give to others?’ not ‘What can I get for myself?’ And don't take advantage of others. Instead, look for ways you can put others' needs ahead of your own.”

Relevant Scripture

1 John 3:17 “But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?”

James 2:14-17 “What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and filled,’ without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.”

Pride makes us self-centred

Read 2 Kings 20:12-21.

Questions for discussion

1. If you get a new toy and a friend comes over, what do you do with your toy?
2. What do adults do when they get a new vehicle?
3. Who came to visit Hezekiah?

4. Why wasn't Hezekiah upset about Isaiah's prophecy?
5. Who was Hezekiah not considering?

Key concepts

When people have something they are proud of, they like to show it off. If a child has a new toy, he or she is usually excited about showing it to his or her friends. Adults love to drive around town and take their friends for a drive when they purchase a new car.

In our Bible story today, Hezekiah had been sick and some people from a far-away place called Babylon came to visit him and to bring him get-well wishes. Hezekiah showed his visitors all the treasures he had stored up, and we can guess that Hezekiah did this to show off how rich his country was.

Later, Isaiah came and told Hezekiah that he had done a foolish thing and that someday all the treasures and some of his descendants would be stolen and carried off to Babylon.

Hezekiah wasn't overly concerned about this because he figured it wouldn't happen in his lifetime. That was pretty selfish thinking: Hezekiah wasn't worried about what might happen to his children, grandchildren and their children.

In Hezekiah's case, we can guess that he was proud of all his riches and wanted to show them off. Pride has a way of making a person self-centred and less concerned about others.

Relevant Scripture

Jeremiah 9:23-24 "Thus says the Lord: 'Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the Lord.'"

Philippians 2:3-4 "Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not

only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others."

Selfishness causes sin

Note: This Bible story discusses murder and death and could be disturbing for some children. If you wish, you could tell Nathan's story of the pet lamb instead, as a story on selfishness.

Read 2 Samuel 11:26-27 and 2 Samuel 12:1-10.

Questions for discussion

1. Who did David care more about, himself or Uriah?
2. How did God feel about what David had done?
3. What story did God have Nathan tell David, to show David his sin?
4. What did David say about the man in the story who had stolen the lamb?
5. How did David respond when he was accused of doing wrong?
6. Can you think of a time when you wanted something someone else had?

Key concepts

When David had Uriah killed so he could have Uriah's wife, David was thinking solely about himself and getting what he wanted rather than caring about Uriah or obeying God.

The Bible tells us that what David did displeased the Lord. God sent the prophet Nathan to talk with David about his sin. To help David understand how wrong his actions had been, Nathan told David a story of a man who took one lamb from a poor family, even though he had many lambs of his own already.

After hearing the story, the Bible says David burned with anger against the man who took the lamb and said that the man deserved to die! When David realized the story was actually about his own sin, David confessed, "I have sinned against the Lord" (2 Samuel 12:13).

The lesson we can learn from this story about David is important; we need to remember that selfishness can cause us to be very inconsiderate of others. When we want something really badly for ourselves, we can be tempted to ignore the feelings of others and hurt them in order to get what we want.

Creative discipline

For problems with saying hurtful or unkind things

See the “creative discipline” section of the lesson on **courtesy / courteous communication**.

For problems with a general lack of concern for others

Biblical basis

Galatians 5:13-16 “For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.”

Suggested disciplinary action

Selfishness leads children to treat others with a lack of consideration. Galatians 5:13-16, however, states that we should “through love serve one another” and “love your neighbor as yourself.”

To give your child ample opportunity to consider the needs and feelings of another person, have them spend time serving the person they have shown a lack of consideration for.

For example, if they have barged through a door ahead of another person, have them come back and hold the door open for that person and for others. If they have been thoughtless toward a sibling, have them think of something kind they can do for their sibling, such as straightening up their bookshelf, doing their chores or reading them a story.

Affirmation

Read Philippians 2:1-4 in *The Message* paraphrase: “If you’ve gotten anything at all out of following Christ, if His love has made any difference in your

life, if being in a community of the Spirit means anything to you, if you have a heart, if you care – then do me a favor: Agree with each other, love each other, be deep-spirited friends. Don’t push your way to the front; don’t sweet-talk your way to the top. Put yourself aside, and help others get ahead. Don’t be obsessed with getting your own advantage. Forget yourselves long enough to lend a helping hand.”

Assure your child that you believe they want to love others as they love themselves. Pray with your child and ask God to help him or her to be thoughtful of the wants and needs of other people.

Relevant Scripture

Philippians 2:3-4 “Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.”

Hands-on options

These fun ideas require very little preparation, making it easy for you to share some simple but memorable lessons with your kids. Choose just one or two ideas that will appeal to your children.

Balls of butter

fun with food

Beat some cream into whipped cream and butter to draw your kids’ attention to Proverbs 30:33 and teach them that teasing and irritating others isn’t cool.

You will need some whipping cream, a bowl, an electric hand mixer and some bread or crackers. Pour the cream into a bowl and whip it with the electric hand mixer. If they are capable, have your kids take turns beating the cream. Stop once the cream is whipped and let your kids sample it.

Set aside half the whipped cream. Continue beating the remaining cream until it has turned to butter.

Spread the butter on some bread or crackers for your kids to snack on while you begin your teaching time with the discussion questions. (You might also want to reward the peacemakers in your home later by serving the whipping cream on a treat, such as butter-milk biscuits with strawberries.)

Questions for discussion

- Did the whipped cream turn into butter slowly or quickly?
- Could you tell it was about to happen?
- How can you tell if your joking around is starting to bother someone?

Read **Proverbs 30:33**: “For pressing milk produces curds, pressing the nose produces blood, and pressing anger produces strife.”

- What do you think Proverbs 30:33 is saying to us?
- Let’s read **Proverbs 6:16-19** and **Matthew 5:9**. Does it make God happy when someone is causing someone else to get annoyed?

Key concepts

Just as we didn’t know the exact minute when the whipped cream was going to turn into butter, we can’t always tell when our teasing or joking is starting to bother someone. The best way to prevent making someone angry is to stop fooling around before others get irritated.

The Bible tells us that God hates it when someone causes other people to become angry with each other (Proverbs 6:16-19). The opposite of being a troublemaker is being a peacemaker. God would rather we be peacemakers and He promises a blessing for those who choose to work toward creating peace in situations (Matthew 5:9).

When we consider how our words and actions will impact others **before** saying or doing things, we can avoid causing difficulties.

To follow up, discuss some different scenarios, sharing ideas about how to keep the peace in each situation rather than cause discord. Here are some example scenarios to get you started:

- Your brother has forgotten to take out the garbage. You could tease him saying, “You’ll get no dessert, since you forgot to do your chores.” But what would be a good way to be

a considerate peacemaker instead? (Answer: Quietly go to your brother and remind him to do his chores.)

- Someone spills flour all over the kitchen counter. You could say, “Wow! You can’t even sift flour properly.” But what would a considerate peacemaker say instead? (Answer with something like this: “Don’t worry, we can wipe it up quick. I know you tried your best.”)
- You are excitedly telling your friend about the great weekend you just had, but you notice your friend looks a little bored. You might feel like walking off in a huff saying, “Well, if you’re not interested in what I have to say, just forget it!” But what would be a good way to be a considerate peacemaker instead? (Possible answer: Apologize to your friend saying, “I’m sorry for rudely going on and on about myself. How was your weekend?”)

Relevant Scripture

Proverbs 30:33 “For pressing milk produces curds, pressing the nose produces blood, and pressing anger produces strife.”

Psalms 133:1 “Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!”

Galatians 5:25-26 “If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.”

Matthew 5:9 “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.”

Romans 12:18 “If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.”

Dominoes train

drama / role play

In this exercise, you’ll watch a chain reaction of toppling dominoes to show your kids how upsetting someone else can have a much worse outcome than we ever expected.

To begin, set up some dominoes standing up on their ends, close enough to each other to start a train of toppling dominoes.

Have one of your children start the chain reaction by pushing the first dominoes tile down. (Be prepared to rebuild the dominoes train so each child can have a chance to start it.)

Explain to your kids that when people's feelings get hurt, they can act like dominoes: one little word or deed can trigger a whole chain reaction of unhappy events.

For example, an older sister might tell her younger brother that he is acting like a baby. The brother then calls his sister a bossy bully and a fight begins. By the end of the fight, feelings are hurt, their parents are not happy, and the kids' have their toys and other privileges taken away. When we say things *before* we take time to consider the feelings of others, we can start a chain reaction that can have far larger consequences than we ever expected.

Now work with your kids to build one final dominoes train, but after every 8 to 10 dominoes tiles, leave a safety space so the whole train does not come down if one section falls. Show your children how these gaps prevent "runaway trains."

Use the following discussion questions to explain how the dominoes train helps remind us to be considerate.

Questions for discussion

- What happened when the first dominoes tile was pushed over?
- How much effort did it take to knock down a long line of dominoes?
- Could you stop the dominoes train once it started?
- How are people like dominoes?
- What kinds of things happen to you to make you feel like your emotions are tumbling down out of control, like the dominoes did?

- What kind of things can you do to create "safety gaps" when you're upset – the things that help you regain control of your emotions instead of letting them be like a runaway train?

Next, have fun talking through or role playing through the following scenarios:

Scenario 1: Jennifer's mom told her that she couldn't have ice cream until her little brother went down for his nap. Just as her mom was taking her brother to his room, Jennifer called out to her brother, "Have fun napping. I'll be eating ice cream!"

How did Jennifer start a dominoes train?

Proverbs 12:23 "A prudent man conceals knowledge, but the heart of fools proclaims folly."

Scenario 2: Todd's cousin Jeff was over at Todd's house and they were playing with building blocks. Jeff decided to have a pretend hurricane blow down the building Todd had just worked very hard to build. Instead of yelling at Jeff, Todd excused himself to go to the bathroom where he prayed and got himself under control before coming back to rebuild his building.

How did Todd stop the dominoes train?

Proverbs 29:11 "A fool gives full vent to his spirit, but a wise man quietly holds it back."

Scenario 3: At breakfast Stephanie is so excited about her up-coming preschool field trip that she keeps kicking Bryce under the table. She's talking non-stop about how much fun it's going to be to go to the petting zoo. Bryce thinks it's babyish to be that excited about it and he is tired of being kicked. He decides not to say anything at all and moves his chair out of the way of Steph's flailing legs.

How did Bryce stop the dominoes train?

Colossians 3:13 "... bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive."

Scenario 4: Amanda is at her friend Jessica's house. Jessica starts saying unkind things about one of their other friends, complaining, "Megan always brings her baby toys when she comes to play over here." Amanda is quiet. Her friend Jessica then says, "Do you like the way Megan laughs all the time? I don't." After a moment Amanda says, "Megan is my friend too. I wouldn't like it if you said that about me when you and Megan played together. Let's try and think of nice things to say about her instead."

How did Amanda stop the dominoes train?

Ephesians 4:29 "Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear."

Scenario 5: Reece is waiting in a lineup to use the washroom at school. A younger boy comes and pushes into line ahead of him. Reece gets mad and tells the other kid to get to the back of the line. The boy starts to cry and says he has to go really bad.

How could Reece have stopped the train?

1 Corinthians 13:4-5 "Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful . . ."

Scenario 6: Janna notices that her mom looks like she's feeling sad. Janna gives her a hug and says, "Mom, I love having you for my mom." Right away Janna's mom seems to feel better.

How did Janna stop the dominoes train?

Proverbs 16:24 "Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body."

Scenario 7: Connor walks into the playroom and notices that the train track he set up has been messed up. Connor yells at his younger brother, "You brat! What did you do to my train track?"

What did Connor do to start a dominoes train?

Proverbs 3:30 "Do not contend with a man for no reason, when he has done you no harm."

Scenario 8: Jack and Jordan are playing hockey on their driveway. They get into an argument about whether Jordan's shot is a goal. Jack yells, "You always make it so that you win!" Instead of yelling back at his brother, Jordan says, "You're right, I often decide the close calls. I'll take the goal back."

How did Jordan stop a dominoes train?

Proverbs 15:1 "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."

Scenario 9: Missy is David's younger sister. Their grandma is visiting and they are about to play a game that their grandma hasn't played before. Missy is explaining the rules, but David grows impatient and says, "Quiet Missy! I can tell Grandma the rules better than you." Missy starts to cry and doesn't want to play the game anymore.

How could David have stopped the dominoes train before it started? What could Missy have done to stop the dominoes train?

James 1:19-20 "Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God."

Cause and effect

science with a twist

In this activity you'll run some toy cars down a ramp to introduce kids to some simple laws of physics, then compare them to God's "laws of consideration."

Your goal is to help your children understand that both their physical actions and the words they say have an impact on others. You can spread this activity over three sessions if you wish.

Part one: Peace in motion

Newton's First Law of Motion states that an object will remain at rest . . . unless acted upon by an external force. You'll use toy cars to compare this with God's first law of consideration which is Aim to live at peace with everyone.

Begin your teaching time by placing a toy car at the top of a ramp. Ensure the track begins with a flat section before heading downhill.

If you don't have a Hot Wheels track or something like it, you can make a ramp by taping sections of cardboard boxes onto a staircase or other structure.

See how many different ways your children can send a car down the ramp without touching the car. For example, they could blow air through a straw, or use another car to push the first car.

Use the questions and key concepts below to discuss what you observed. After your discussion, pick a Bible verse and pray through it, asking God to help you choose peace instead of discord.

Questions for discussion

- Did the cars ever move on their own?
- Who made them move?
- Have you ever caused someone to get upset without ever touching them?
- What kinds of actions can get a brother, sister or friend upset without touching them?
- In those situations, who is responsible for causing the upset emotions?
- In the future, when you see someone playing happily, what can you do to make sure that person stays "at rest"?

Key concepts

The cars never moved on their own! Similarly, a child will rarely get angry with a sibling if they are not provoked.

God's first law of consideration is *Aim to live at peace with everyone*. This means we should not stir up trouble on purpose. Just as it's important to stop and consider what might happen before we jump into a pool, throw a ball, or pull a lever, it's equally important to be considerate of the feelings of others before speaking or acting.

Relevant Scripture

Proverbs 20:3 "It is an honor for a man to keep aloof from strife, but every fool will be quarreling."

Romans 12:16-18 "Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all."

Romans 14:19 "So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding."

2 Corinthians 13:11 "Finally, brothers, rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you."

Part two: You have the power

Newton's Second Law of Motion explains that if a force acts on an object, it will cause that object to pick up speed in the direction the force was applied. This time, you'll compare this law with God's second law of consideration: Do your best to calm a situation that is headed in a bad direction.

To demonstrate these "laws" in action, let each child take a turn at placing a car on the launching end of your track. At first, ask your children to send their cars down the ramp as slowly as possible.

Next, show them how they can launch the car more quickly if they quickly lift the ramp up at a steep angle. Leave each car at the bottom of the track, so that each new car sent down the track ends up crashing into them.

Questions for discussion

- How did you make your car move down the ramp faster?
- What happened when you sent the car down faster?
- Can you think of some ways you can bother a sibling or a friend who is already upset?

- What usually happens when you do something to aggravate someone who is already upset?
- When a sibling is upset, what can you do to make the situation better?

Key concepts

Often when a child is upset, other kids love to upset that child even more! They might imitate the upset child or laugh at them or tease them.

The end result is a lot like sending a car down a ramp at an uncontrolled speed – there is inevitably a big crash at the end.

On the other hand, if someone is upset, there are many things you can do to help them calm down. The Bible provides instructions on dealing with emotionally charged situations. Let's read these Bible verses and discuss what each one says about keeping the peace.

Relevant Scripture

Proverbs 15:18 "A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger quiets contention."

Proverbs 26:17 "Whoever meddles in a quarrel not his own is like one who takes a passing dog by the ears."

Proverbs 26:20 "For lack of wood the fire goes out, and where there is no whisperer, quarreling ceases."

Ephesians 4:29 "Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear."

Galatians 5:25-26 "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another."

Part three: Equal and opposite reactions

Newton's Third Law of Motion explains that for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. In other words, if one object exerts a force on a second object, the second object exerts an equal force back at the first object.

This law is like God's third law of consideration: Treat others the way you want to be treated! For example, if we speak to someone harshly, we can expect a harsh reply. When we speak softly, others will usually respond with gentleness in return.

To allow your children to experience this idea "hands on," use some sturdy tape to hang a soft foam ball on a string in a doorway. Ask your kids to tap the ball lightly and observe what happens. Allow them to gradually increase the force of their tap. Eventually, let them hit the ball with enough force that it comes back at them quite quickly.

Questions for discussion

- What happened when you tapped the ball gently?
- What happened when you hit it harder?
- How is hitting the ball like having a conversation with another person?
- How do you like to be corrected?
- Before saying or doing something, how can you remember to think about the impact your words or actions will have on others?

Key concepts

Objects move based on how hard we apply force to them or how hard we push them.

The words we use when speaking to someone are similar. When others feel attacked by our words, they are more likely to be defensive and fight back. On the other hand, when we correct or approach someone with gentleness, they will probably respond politely. The Bible says exactly that too, saying "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger" (Proverbs 15:1).

Even if someone does something wrong or bothers you on purpose, it's important to correct them with kindness. This means approaching them with a gentle "tap" rather than an aggressive "shove."

Speaking respectfully and using a soft tone helps solve problems and bring peace to heated

situations, while speaking rudely or loudly escalates disagreements and difficult emotions.

Relevant Scripture

Proverbs 15:1 “A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.”

Proverbs 15:18 “A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger quiets contention.”

Galatians 6:1 “Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.”

Colossians 3:12-14 “Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.”

1 Thessalonians 5:15 “See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone.”

Considerate drivers and considerate kids:

Considerate drivers

Considerate drivers share the right of way, allowing other cars to merge or change lanes.

Considerate drivers move to the right-hand lane on a highway if they are travelling slowly.

Considerate drivers give others comfortable space. They don’t tailgate or drive closely behind another car.

Considerate drivers

drive time / any time

While you’re out and about on errands, observe the driving habits of others to teach your kids about consideration.

- Begin by looking at the head-on view of cars and trucks. The lights and front bumpers often make a vehicle look like it has a face. As you drive, take turns suggesting what expression each car is wearing.
- As you continue driving, talk about how each driver behind the wheel also has a “personality” too. Some are aggressive and inconsiderate, while others are polite and thoughtful. Explain to your kids that there are rules of the road that all drivers must follow in order to keep travellers safe and to keep the traffic flowing – but add that a driver can technically follow the rules of the road and still be an inconsiderate driver.
- Ask your kids to watch for drivers’ actions that show thoughtfulness and those that are inconsiderate. Then see if your kids can come up with similar or equivalent interactions that take place between people when they’re face to face. The table shows some examples to help you get started.

Considerate kids

Considerate kids let other kids take the first turn or let other people go ahead when they arrive at a doorway at the same time.

Considerate kids are careful that they don’t inconvenience others by being in the way.

Considerate kids give others space to stand comfortably in a lineup. They don’t push, barge or shove to get ahead.

Considerate drivers

Considerate drivers wave to say thanks when another driver has been helpful.

In traffic jams, considerate drivers will notice drivers stuck waiting to get on the main road and will direct them to go ahead of them on the road (providing it is safe to do so).

Considerate drivers do not honk their horns, unless it is to prevent an accident or emergency.

Considerate drivers do not make rude gestures at other drivers.

If you'd like to extend this activity, ask your kids to think about other situations – such as at the grocery store, at the shopping mall, or at a swimming pool – where kids can show consideration by going above and beyond the basic rules for appropriate behaviour. As part of your discussion, ask your kids to share real life circumstances they can recall where the considerate kids rules were followed – or not followed.

In closing, read your choice of the relevant Scripture verses. Pray and ask God to help you to be considerate of others.

Relevant Scripture

Romans 12:10 “Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.”

1 Corinthians 10:24 “Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor.”

1 Thessalonians 5:15 “See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone.”

Considerate kids

Considerate kids say “Thank you,” “Please,” “Excuse me” and “I’m sorry.”

Considerate kids will notice if someone is waiting to use a toy they are playing with and will offer them a turn before they are ready to be done with it.

Considerate kids are patient with others and don't use loud voices to let others know they are unhappy.

Considerate kids are gentle. They do not use aggressive actions and body language to get their own way or to threaten others.

Titus 3:1-2 “Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people.”

Heart check

science with a twist

In this object lesson you'll stain a cloth or paper towel with coloured water to dramatically illustrate how a person's attitude affects how they speak and can lead them to hurt others.

You will need six clear glasses or cups, a plastic tablecloth to protect your work surface, a white cloth or paper towel, food colouring in red, yellow, blue, green, and brown or black, a tablespoon and some bleach.

- Prepare by putting one tablespoon of water in five of the glasses.

- Add enough food colouring to each glass to create an intense colour – a different colour in each glass.
- Add water to the sixth glass until it's about one-third full.

Begin the teaching component of your object lesson as follows:

- Lift up the cup of **red** water and explain to your kids that the red water represents anger. Add, “When we speak in **anger**, it often hurts others.”
- Now use the tablespoon to spoon a little of the red water onto the towel. (Leave the rest of the red water in the cup for later.)
- Explain that the coloured stain left on the towel represents the pain that speaking angrily can cause.
- Continue adding dye stains to the cloth with the following explanations:

the **yellow** dye represents teasing – it leaves a stain that represents **sadness**

the **blue** dye represents being quick to point out someone else's faults or mistakes, or correcting someone harshly – the blue stain represents a **bruised heart**

the **brown** or **black** dye represents prejudice – the stain represents hurt feelings over **unfairness** and being unfairly judged

the **green** dye represents envy – the stain represents the hurt of feeling the **anger** and **resentment** of others.

- Next, have your children observe all the stains from the coloured water. Remind your children, “When we have intense emotions boiling around inside us, it's easy to say hurtful things without considering the feelings of others.”

- Take the cup of clear water and pour some on the white cloth, then point out that the pure water left no stain.
- Explain that the clear water represents someone who has a pure heart. Before this person spoke, they asked God to check their attitude to make sure it was right before they said anything.
- Agree together to adopt “Make no stain, cause no pain” as your family motto for the next little while.
- Now read Acts 15:8-9. Continue your lesson by saying, “If we are feeling angry, critical, sad, troubled, jealous or upset and we are tempted to speak unkindly, we can ask God to send His Holy Spirit to clean our hearts. God will take the bad attitude right out of us, if we ask Him to. Just like human doctors love to help people get better when they are sick, God loves to take sin out of our hearts.”
- To illustrate your point, add a tablespoon of bleach to each cup of coloured water and watch as it makes all the dyed water look pure and clear. It's fascinating! (Do impress on your children, however, that the water is not safe to drink.)
- In closing, assure your children that praying about a bad attitude makes God happy! He loves it when His children come to him for help! Explain that God already knows what is in our hearts and He even knows what we are going to say before we say it! You can end with a simple prayer as follows:

Dear God, please help us remember to pray to You when we have bad thoughts and sinful attitudes, so You can take them out of our hearts and put good attitudes there instead. We want good things to overflow from our hearts so that kind words come out of our mouths. Amen.

Relevant Scripture

Acts 15:8-9 “And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by giving them the Holy Spirit just as He did to us, and He made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith.”

Psalms 139:4 “Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know it altogether.”

Psalms 141:3 “Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips!”

Proverbs 22:11 “He who loves purity of heart, and whose speech is gracious, will have the king as his friend.”

Matthew 12:34-37 “You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

Home sweet home

drive time / any time

Set up a heart-to-heart family meeting – a chance for each family member to talk about times when they feel others are not showing them love, respect or consideration.

Note that you will need a copy of the memory verse section from this lesson to complete this activity.

Immediately after a person shares, use the memory verses from this lesson to pinpoint biblical answers to the issues brought up.

Example scenario 1: Morgan says she feels she is not being respected when someone answers her before she has had a chance to finish her question.

One relevant Bible verse for this situation is James 1:19, “Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger . . .” To follow up, you could pray and ask God to help your family to be slow to speak and quick to listen when you are talking with each other.

Example scenario 2: Tyler says he feels bad when someone helps themselves to food off his plate while he is still eating. “Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude”

from 1 Corinthians 13:4-5a could be the reminder you choose to help family members remember to be polite and to ask before helping themselves to Tyler’s food.

You could pray together and ask that family members would remember that Tyler prefers people to ask before taking his food.

Make it your family goal to have a truly “sweet” home where everyone feels they are loved, respected and treated with consideration. And now that you’ve completed this activity, try to make it a habit to use Scripture and prayer to deal with family problems in the future.

Solving problems Jesus’ way

creative crafts

Typically when people disagree or argue they also speak and act thoughtlessly. This treasure hunt for a kit full of craft supplies will give kids biblical answers to the question, *What should I do if someone sins against me or wrongs me?*

You will need:

a shoebox

tape

cotton balls

paper hearts or stickers

teddy bear pictures or stickers

wooden skewers

green felt-tip markers or paint

plastic wrap

a glue gun

sand – or something else to bury your treasure chest in.

In the summer, you might choose to bury your treasure outdoors in dirt or sand. In the winter,

burying it in the snow would be a good option – or you might prefer to hide the box indoors in a load of laundry.

Prepare in advance by filling the treasure chest with the cotton balls, paper hearts, teddy bear stickers, wooden skewers and green markers or paint. Tape the box up well so it will be hard to open. Paste or draw a heart on the box, then wrap it in plastic wrap. Bury the box when your kids are not watching.

Part one: Clean your own heart first

- Begin by explaining to your children that they will be hunting for buried treasure. As you send them off on the hunt, ask them to practice being thoughtful and considerate of each other as they search.
- Once your kids have found the treasure chest, remind them again to be considerate of each other as they clean off the box. When the box is relatively clean, halt their activity at this point for a brief discussion.
- Read **Matthew 7:1-5**.
- Ask your kids, *What do you think these verses mean when they say “a speck” and “a log” in someone’s eye?*

Key concepts

Before we tell someone else what they’re doing wrong, we need to make sure that we are not doing that exact same sin! It’s easy to see what the other person is doing wrong, but if we stop and think about it, very often what bothers us most about others is something we often do ourselves.

For example, if you are complaining that your brother always gets to have things his way, stop and think for a few minutes – maybe it bothers you because it is actually *you* who always wants things your way.

Part two: In private, one-on-one

- Send your kids into another room to open the treasure chest without you present. Remind them to

cooperate nicely as they work to open it. Once it’s open, they can return to show you the contents.

- Read **Matthew 18:15-17**.

Key concepts

In Matthew 18, we read we are to correct someone who has sinned against us by first talking with them one-on-one, before asking anyone else to become involved. Your first choice should always be to try and settle the problem between the two of you in private.

Part three: Gently, patiently and lovingly

- Now you’ll start creating your “solving problems Jesus’ way craft.”
- Begin by gluing cotton balls to one third of your skewers. The cotton balls represent gentleness, and you’ll want to glue them at one end of each skewer, like flowers on a stem.
- As your kids work, read **Galatians 6:1**.

Questions for discussion

- What do you think the Bible means when it says to “restore someone with a spirit of gentleness”?
- What might the opposite of correcting someone with kindness and gentleness look like?
- Can you think of a time when someone correctly you harshly?
- How did being corrected harshly make you feel?
- Can you think of a time when someone correctly you gently?
- How did being corrected gently make you feel?

Key concepts

To restore someone gently means to offer correction in a kind and gentle way rather than in a harsh, aggressive or accusing way. When we are patient and considerate of each other, it makes

it much easier to live at peace than when we are impatient and thoughtless.

- Now begin gluing teddy bears to one third of the skewers to represent patience. Glue them at the end of each skewer.
- As your kids work, read **Ephesians 4:1-3**.

Questions for discussion

- The Bible says we are to “bear with others in love.” Does this mean we are to give out bear hugs when someone bugs us?
- What do you think “bearing with one another in love” means?
- What do you think “the bond of peace” means?

Key concepts

“Bearing with one another in love” means we are to be lovingly patient instead of being easily bothered. Getting along well with others means the same thing as the “bond of peace.” It means we are living peacefully with each other.

- Now begin gluing hearts to the remaining skewers to represent love. Glue them at the end of each skewer. Once you’ve finished all your skewers with cotton balls, teddy bears and hearts, you can add them to the tissue paper flower bouquet you created in the kick-off craft.
- As your kids work, read **Ephesians 4:15**.

Questions for discussion

- What does it mean to “speak the truth in love”?
- How can we grow to be more like Jesus, like Ephesians 4:15 says?

Key concepts

“Speaking the truth in love” means we speak kindly and with mercy, just like Jesus did. Jesus was quick to forgive, even if people didn’t ask Him for forgiveness (Luke 23:34). We “grow to be like Jesus” when we ask Him to send His Holy Spirit to teach us how to be loving, patient and kind.

- Over the next little while, when problems come up in your home, have your children visit the bouquet as a reminder that they are to solve problems Jesus’ way – being patient with each other, speaking gently and lovingly.
- Encourage your kids to do a personal “heart check” before they accuse someone else of wrong, and to practice solving problems on their own before involving a parent. If that doesn’t work, then they can invite a parent or another adult to join in the discussion. Make it a family practice to ask God to help you solve each problem with His wisdom, love and gentleness.

Tactfulness trivia

drive time / any time

Run these scenarios by your kids and have them come up with both an inappropriate response, and a response that shows consideration for others.

To have more fun, encourage your kids to come up with both likely scenarios and a few wild and zany scenarios for the inappropriate response. To avoid confusion, however, it’s best to keep the considerate response simple and to the point.

Scenario 1: When someone passes gas while you are driving in the car, what should they say?

Inconsiderate response: (Invite your kids to suggest serious or silly responses, as you prefer.)

Considerate response: (Invite your kids to suggest a considerate response.)

Scenario 2: Someone is very hungry and their favourite food is being served.

Inconsiderate response: (Possible answer: The person takes a large helping, leaving very little for others.)

Considerate response: (Invite your kids to suggest a more considerate scenario.)

Scenario 3: One family member is playing on the computer, but others want to use it too.

Inconsiderate response: (Invite your kids to suggest inconsiderate scenarios.)

Considerate response: (Invite your kids to suggest a more considerate scenario.)

Scenario 4: Your mom has a big piece of spinach left between her teeth after a meal.

Inconsiderate response: (Invite your kids to suggest inconsiderate scenarios.)

Considerate response: (Invite your kids to suggest a more considerate response.)

Scenario 5: Your little brother is excited because you saw an ambulance on your way home from swimming lessons. At suppertime he is telling the rest of the family about it. He is so excited he keeps saying “ambliance” instead of ambulance.

Inconsiderate response: (Invite your kids to suggest inconsiderate scenarios.)

Considerate response: (Invite your kids to suggest a more considerate scenario.)

Scenario 6: Your friend's mom told your mom that their family pet died. The next day you see your friend at Sunday School. What do you do?

Inconsiderate response: (Invite your kids to suggest inconsiderate scenarios. These might include announcing to the whole class why your friend is sad.)

Considerate response: (Invite your kids to suggest a more considerate scenario. Ideally they will recognize the need to keep such a sensitive matter private and perhaps not talk about it until their friend brings it up.)

Scenario 7: Your friend is wearing his or her shirt inside out. What do you do?

Inconsiderate response: (Invite your kids to suggest inconsiderate scenarios.)

Considerate response: (Invite your kids to suggest a more considerate scenario.)

Walking in your shoes

drama / role play

For this activity, you'll take turns guessing what emotions your kids are acting out, assisted by unusual props – just the right pair of shoes!

- Prepare ahead of time by making a set of cards that show a different emotion on each card. To quickly find images from the Internet, use the search term “emotion faces for children.” Draw or print the faces and paste them on your notecards.
- Next, invite your children to help you gather as many pairs of footwear as you can find. (If you are doing this activity indoors, screen the pairs of shoes for appropriateness for indoor use as the kids will be putting them on and walking in them.)
- Begin the game by explaining to your children that empathy is thinking about another person and imagining what that person is feeling or thinking. Add that another phrase we often use to mean empathy is “putting ourselves in another person’s shoes.”
- Now give each child one of your emotion cards and invite them to choose a pair of shoes that will help them act out their emotion appropriately. For example, pink flip flops might help them convey “happy,” big black boots might help for “mad,” and high heels for “excited,” running shoes for “energetic,” slippers for “tired” etc.
- Have each child act out their emotion using facial expressions and body language as other members of the group try to guess which emotion is being expressed.
- After each “drama,” take a minute to discuss the emotion. Ask if someone wants to share a time when they felt the same emotion that was just acted out.
- When you’ve worked through all the cards, take another few minutes to talk about how you can come alongside and encourage others who are experiencing “heavy” emotions. Use the discussion questions to guide your conversation.

- In closing, share the phrase, “Jesus in me means I care for you.” Pray and ask Jesus to fill each of your family members with His love so you have lots of love and kindness to share with others.

Questions for discussion

- Other than the footwear, what clues did you look for to help you decide which emotion was being acted out?
- Let’s say you see someone walking along with their shoulders slumped and their head hung low. What do you think they are feeling?
- If you see someone who is acting super sad or down, how can you come alongside them and offer encouragement?
- When you see someone who is wildly excited about something, how can you celebrate their joyful exuberance with them?

Read **1 John 2:5-6**.

- How did Jesus live?

- How can we care for others as Jesus did?

Key concepts

Jesus showed by how He lived that He was always looking out for the needs of others. Jesus offers us His Holy Spirit to live in us so that we can live and love like He does.

Relevant Scripture

1 John 2:5-6 “. . . but whoever keeps His word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in Him: whoever says he abides in Him ought to walk in the same way in which He walked.”

John 17:20-21 “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word, that they may all be one, just as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You have sent Me.”

Recommended resources

For a list of children’s stories that reinforce the theme of this lesson, consult the home page for the **consideration** lesson at KidsOfIntegrity.com.