

# KIDS of INTEGRITY

*Generosity*



**“I cut. You choose.” “I choose to give mine to you.” Imagine hearing that in your home! It is possible!**

Explore a bundle of ideas that help kids be more:

- generous
- willing to share
- willing to put others’ interests ahead of their own.

In addition, this lesson helps address greed, selfishness and a lack of compassion.

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## 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.

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## 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

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## 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.
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## Memory verses

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

Psalm 37:21 “The wicked borrow and do not repay, but the righteous give generously.”

Psalm 112:5 “Good will come to him who is generous and lends freely, who conducts his affairs with justice.”

Psalm 140:12 “I know that the Lord secures justice for the poor and upholds the cause for the needy.”

Proverbs 11:24 “One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty.”

Proverbs 11:25 “A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.”

Proverbs 11:26 “People curse the man who hoards grain, but blessing crowns him who is willing to sell.”

Proverbs 14:21 “He who despises his neighbor sins, but blessed is he who is kind to the needy.”

Proverbs 18:1 “An unfriendly man pursues selfish ends; he defies all sound judgment.”

Proverbs 19:17 “He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and He will reward him for what he has done.”

Proverbs 22:9 “A generous man himself will be blessed, for he shares his food with the poor.”

Proverbs 28:25 “A greedy man stirs up dissension, but he who trusts in the Lord will prosper.”

Proverbs 28:27 “He who gives to the poor will lack nothing, but he who closes his eyes to them receives many curses.”

Matthew 25:40 “The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’”

Acts 20:35 “. . . Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

1 Corinthians 10:24 “Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others.”

2 Corinthians 9:6 “Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.”

1 John 3:17 “If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has not pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?”

Philippians 2:3 “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.”

Philippians 2:4 “Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.”

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## Kick-off craft

*The purpose of this activity is to help your children understand how much they really have in comparison to the rest of the world. You will be making a treasure chest or treasure chest poster with your children to help them focus on storing up treasure in heaven.*

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## 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?

## Bible stories

*This section provides Bible stories with the theme of generosity, along with questions that can be used as a guide for family discussions. Choose one that is most appropriate for your child. Before reading aloud, take a few minutes to review the story. If the Bible passage is too complex for your child, paraphrase the story yourself or use the summary provided under “key concepts.”*

### 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.

### 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.

### 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.

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## **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).

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### **But it's not fair!**

Read Matthew 20:1-16. Then 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.

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## **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.

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### **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.

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### **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."

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### **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.

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## Creative discipline

*Few parents enjoy their God-given responsibility of disciplining their children, and even fewer children enjoy being on the receiving end. The Bible tells us to expect discipline to be uncomfortable, but also promises positive results. This section will provide you with innovative suggestions to use when correcting your children, to help them learn to practice generosity.*

### **For a child who does not share** **Biblical basis**

Proverbs 11:24 “One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty.”

### **Suggested disciplinary action**

If a child is unwilling to share, create poverty for them – in food, drink, toys, clothing or possessions. That is, take away from them what they won't share.

### **Affirmation**

Remind your child of Proverbs 11:25: “A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed,” and Proverbs 28:25: “A greedy man stirs up dissension, but he who trusts in the Lord will prosper.” Pray together, asking God to help your child trust Him to provide for them and that they would be willing to share what they have.

### **For a child who has much, but does not share**

#### **Biblical basis**

Ecclesiastes 5:10–11 “Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless. As goods increase so do those who consume them. And what benefit are they to the owner except to feast his eyes on them?”

### **Suggested disciplinary action**

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 more stuffed animals and still refuse to share even one. In this case, you could take away the privilege of playing with any stuffed animals or have the child choose just one to play with each day.

## **Affirmation**

Encourage your child to consider what it means to have plenty and what it means to be “in want.” Refer to Philippians 4:11: “. . . I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances” and Philippians 4:12: “. . . I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.” Pray with your child, asking God to teach him/her the secret of being content and to give him/her a generous heart.

## **Hands-on options**

*Often, we are consumed by the busyness of day-to-day living and we forget to look for opportunities to teach our children God-honouring character traits. These ideas require very little preparation, making it easy for you to share some simple but memorable lessons with your child. Read over the suggestions at the beginning of your week and choose one or two that will fit your schedule.*

### **Caring for others**

#### *servicing others*

Have your children make something for someone else. Pray about the project together: “God, is there someone who needs to be encouraged by a gift or a visit from us?” Maybe it will be creating a card for a relative, baking cookies for the homeless, making a care package for someone in need, or spending time with a widow who struggles with loneliness. This hands-on option fits well with the stories, “Intentional generosity” and “An unexpected blessing” found in the **Bible stories** section of this lesson.

### **Generosity party time**

#### *fun with food*

Practice being generous with each other. For instance, have an ice cream sundae night. Each family member makes a sundae for someone else in the family. Put out ice cream and a variety of toppings, and allow your children to be generous in making sundaes for other family members. You can also do this with “monster cookies,” which are oatmeal cookies filled with numerous additions like nuts, chocolate chips, sprinkles, etc. Family members can make monster cookies for designated family members, decorating each other's cookies generously.

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## Refreshing others

### *servicing 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 "A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed."

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## Sharing as a habit

### *any time*

During meals and while you are visiting with others, model how to share treats and be specific about encouraging your children to share.

Some fun ideas include:

- Sharing your dessert with your spouse or children and say something like, "This \_\_\_\_\_ is so much sweeter because I shared it with you."

- A family tradition you could start is that when treats, desserts, etc. are given out, whoever divides the treat allows the other to choose which part of the treat they would like. For example, one child breaks the chocolate bar in half, then lets the other choose which half they would like.
- Demonstrate sharing without being asked. Provide extra treats for your children to take when going on outings with friends so they can practice sharing and being generous.

### Questions for discussion

While driving, use these questions for conversation starters:

- How do you feel when someone else has a treat and you don't?
- How do you feel when someone is playing with a neat toy and does not share it?
- How does it make you feel when someone shares a special treat with you?
- How about when someone gives you first choice of which toy to play with?

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## "What do we have extra?" game

### *servicing others*

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.

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.

## The tale of two families

*drive time or any time*

While driving or waiting in a line up, tell this story while making modifications to draw maximal interest from your children:

### 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 *“Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in humility that comes from wisdom. But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such ‘wisdom’ does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and every evil practice.”*

## Family ties

*drama / role play*

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 "But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. For this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person – such a man is an idolater – has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."

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### Feed a greedy fire

#### physical activity

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 "Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless. As goods increase, so do those who consume them. And what benefit are they to the owner except to feast his eyes on them?"



## **Recommended resources**

### **Books**

*Faith Begins at Home*, by Mark Holmen. Gospel Light, 2005.

*FaithLaunch*, by John Trent, PhD, and Jane Vogel. Tyndale, 2008.

*The Berenstain Bears Learn to Share*, by Stan, Jan and Michael Berenstain. Zonderkidz, 2010. Ages 4-7.

### **DVDs / CDs**

*Adventures in Odyssey: A Game of Compassion/The Marriage Feast* (CD). Tyndale. Ages 8 and up.

*Adventures in Odyssey: Life Lessons #3: Compassion* (CD). Tyndale, 2005. Ages 8 and up.

*Adventures in Odyssey: Life Lessons #8: Friendship* (CD). Tyndale, 2005. Ages 8-12.

*Adventures in Odyssey #30: Through Thick and Thin* (CD). Tyndale, 1998. Ages 8 and up.

*Auto B Good: Faith Training* (DVD). Rising Star Studios, 2011. Ages 2-6.

*Auto B Good: Fruits of the Spirit* (DVD). Rising Star Studios, 2011. Ages 2-6.

*Essentials of Parenting: Raising Kids With a Faith That Lasts* (DVD). Focus on the Family, Tyndale, 2009.

*VeggieTales: Saint Nicholas: A Story of Joyful Giving* (DVD). Big Idea, 2009. Ages 4 and up.