

Right Relationship Concept: Respect and Trust (Upper Level)

Learning Objectives:

- To reinforce the concept that God created each person special and unique.
- To emphasize that because we are made in God’s image, God wants us to treat each other with respect.
- To emphasize that right relationships are built on trust.
- To understand that there are consequences to what we say and do.

Outline:

- I. Opening Prayer
- II. God Created Human Beings in His Image
- III. Treating Everyone with Respect
- IV. Relationships are Built on Trust (Core)**
- V. Consequences (Core)**
- VI. Closing Prayer

Materials Needed:

- Whiteboard, chalkboard and chalk or flip chart and markers
- Pens, pencils for class members
- Handouts
 - Grades 6 – 12: “Respecting Others”
 - Grades 4 – 6: “Truth or Consequences”
 - Grades 7 – 12: “Truth or Consequences”
- Activities
 - “Respecting Others”: pens or pencils
 - “Truth or Consequences” Game: markers, dice or numbers from 1 to 6

I. Opening Prayer:

In the + Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Loving God, thank you for creating us and for showing your love for us in so many ways. Help us show our love for you by treating others with love and respect. Amen.

In the + Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

II. God Created Human Beings in His Image

Discussion

Briefly discuss the first story of creation (Gen 1:1-31; 2:1 – 4).

- **Say:** *"After God created the earth and the heavens, the water and the sky, the day and the night, all living beings of the sea, the land, and the sky, he created humans. God created human beings, making them in his image. And God looked at everything he had made and saw that it was very good."*
- **Say:** *"Of all of creation, human beings alone are made in God's image. Each person is unique – there has never been nor will there ever be another person exactly like you. God loves you and never wants anyone to hurt you. No one has the right to hurt you and you don't have the right to hurt anyone else. Because each person is made in God's image, we should treat everyone with respect."*

III. Treating Everyone with Respect

Discussion

- **Ask:** *"What are some ways we can show each other respect?"* There will be a variety of acceptable answers such as being kind; being helpful; telling the truth; telling others you don't like to hear gossip about someone else; etc.

IV. Relationships Are Built on Trust (Core)

Discussion

- **Say:** *"Jesus said 'I am the way, the truth, and the life.' Because Jesus is the truth, we know that we can trust what he says. God also wants us to be truthful. Telling the truth, even when we are afraid of the consequences, is one way we show respect for each other and build right relationships."*
- **Say:** *"It's not always easy to tell the truth. Let's say you broke your mother's favorite coffee mug and no one saw you. What should you do?"* (The acceptable answer is "Tell the truth") **Say:** *"Let's say you took your sister's cell phone without her permission and lost it. What should you do?"* (The acceptable answer is "Tell the truth.")

- Discuss why we may not want to tell the truth. Possible responses: being afraid they will be angry; being afraid we will be punished; being afraid of the consequences.
- Discuss why it is important to always tell the truth. **Say:** *“When we lie or tell half-truths, we are building walls between us, walls of mistrust. If we lie, others will not trust what we say, even when we are telling the truth. Even when we are afraid of what might happen, we must always tell the truth.”*
- **Say:** *“It is very important to tell our parents or another trusted adult the truth. God gave us parents and other trusted adults to care for us and protect us. They can’t protect and care for us if we aren’t honest about what we are doing, even though we may be afraid of the consequences. And especially if someone does something to us that makes us feel unsafe, threatened, disrespected or pressured to do things we know we should not do or do not want to do, we must continue telling trusted adults until they understand how we feel and do something to make us feel safe.”*
- **Say:** *“Sometimes it is hard to tell when someone is lying. Most of the time when someone is telling the truth, what they do matches what they say.”*
- **Say:** *“Tell your parent(s) or a trusted adult:*
 - *If someone asks you to lie.*
 - *If someone tells you to keep a secret from your parents.*
 - *If someone says they like you but does something or says something to you that makes you feel unsafe, threatened, disrespected or pressured to do things you know you should not do or do not want to do.”*

Activity

Grades 6 - 12: “Respecting Others” (may be modified for use with 4 – 5 grades)

- Hand out the “Respecting Others” Worksheet and, after giving the students time to answer, discuss the responses.

V. Consequences (Core)

Discussion

- **Say:** *“Honesty really is the best policy.”*

Ask: *“Do you believe it? It can be really hard to tell the truth especially if we think we may have done something wrong or what we say may hurt someone. But whether we tell the truth or tell a lie, there are*

- *consequences.*” **Ask:** “What does ‘consequences’ mean?” Acceptable answers include the result or outcome of what we say or do.
- **Say:** “Although telling lies may keep us out of trouble for a short time, they almost always cause bigger problems later on, especially when our lies are uncovered.”
- **Say:** “In a right relationship telling a lie to cover up a mistake does not make the situation better. What makes the situation better is being truthful. Being so fearful of rejection or retaliation that we have to lie or hide something, especially from our parents or other adults that we trust, is usually a sign that the relationship is not a ‘right’ relationship.”
- **Say:** “‘What you do not know will not hurt you’ rarely holds true. For starters, very few “secrets” are never found out. Think about how you would feel if you found out someone you trust is being dishonest with you. Would it challenge your trust in that person? Would not finding out change the fact that the person has been dishonest? Would it be ok as long as you didn’t know? Would the relationship be a “right” one?”
- **Say:** “We might think that we are sparing others’ feelings by not telling them the truth. Think about it: if someone is doing something that bothers us and we do not tell them, we deny them the opportunity to stop doing it. And if we do not tell them how we feel, what happens to our feelings? Unexpressed feelings have a way of growing. Often what happens if we do not share our feelings is: a) the person does not stop doing the thing we do not like; b) our feelings grow more intense; and c) we resent the person more and more or we start trying to avoid them. We may even begin to believe that we “deserve” the way we are being treated.”
 - **Say:** “We need to tell them the truth and if they do not stop, we need to tell our parents or another trusted adult about the hurtful relationship so they can help us. We need to continue to tell trusted adults until they understand how we feel and help us feel comfortable.”
- **Say:** “Sometimes others “bend” the truth to get what they want. If someone always tells us what we want to hear or says whatever it takes to get what they want, especially if it is a lie or a un-truth, they are being manipulative. Manipulative behavior is indicative of a relationship that is not a ‘right’ relationship.”
- **Say:** “Think about your significant relationships:
 - Do you always tell the truth? If not, why not? Why should you change?
 - Do you give others the chance to change their behavior by telling them how you feel about it? If not, why not? How can you change?
 - Do the significant others in your life offer you the same courtesy?

- *Are you honest about your behavior?*
- *Do you allow significant others in your life the opportunity to be honest with you?"*
- **Say:** *"If we are in a relationship that is not based on honesty, it is not a "right" relationship. We may need help to get out of the relationship. We need to tell a trusted adult about our concerns and keep telling them until they understand and help us."*

Activity

Grades 4 – 6: "Truth or Consequences"

Grades 7 – 12: "Truth or Consequences"

- Use markers (e.g. game markers, various coins, different colors of M & Ms) to indicate each player. Play the game by rolling a dice or drawing a number and moving the number of spaces indicated. Read the scenario on the space. If the number rolled or drawn is "even", the player must state how they would tell their parents, friends or a trusted adult the "truth" about the situation. If they draw or roll an "odd" number, they state a potential consequences of not telling the truth in that situation (for example, by not telling someone that you are getting e-mails that contain sexually explicit themes, you might continue to receive them even if you ignore them or the sender might begin sending them to someone else who does not ignore them and, as a consequence, gets hurt, etc. If you do tell, the sender might be arrested; the messages are more likely to stop; it's less likely that someone else will be hurt, etc.).
- The game can be used as a larger group activity without the game board by reading a scenario to each student and using a coin to determine their required response ("heads" = "truth", "tails" = "consequences").

VI. Closing Prayer

In the + Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Jesus, you said "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Help us to put our trust in you and give us the courage to always tell the truth, even when we may be afraid of the consequences. Amen.

In the + Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.