

TODAY FOR TOMORROW

PROGRAMME OUTLINE - YEAR 3

Sport and games	
Welcome and songs	15 min
Lesson	20-25 min
Activities/Game	20 min
Songs/Prayer/Close	10-15 min

Lesson 1	Character counts - Character
Lesson 2	Character counts - Decisions
Lesson 3	Character counts - Pillar 1: Trustworthiness
Lesson 4	Character counts - Pillar 1: Trustworthiness
Lesson 5	Character counts - Pillar 2: Respect
Lesson 6	Character counts - Pillar 2: Respect
Lesson 7	Character counts - Pillar 3: Responsibility
Lesson 8	Character counts - Pillar 3: Responsibility
Lesson 9	Character counts - Pillar 4: Fairness
Lesson 10	Character counts - Pillar 4: Fairness
Lesson	Gospel/Growth
Lesson 11	HIV/AIDS Prevention and Questionnaire
Lesson 12	HIV and AIDS Prevention

END OF TERM

Lesson 13	Character counts - Pillar 5: Caring
Lesson 14	Character counts - Pillar 5: Caring
Lesson 15	Character counts - Pillar 6: Good Citizenship
Lesson 16	Character counts - Your wall of character
Lesson	Gospel/Growth
Lesson 17	The man or woman you want to be
Lesson 18	Communication and listening
Lesson 19	Being a family
Lesson 20	Your attitude in your family
Lesson 21	Friends – Standing together
Lesson 22	Friends – Standing together to make a difference

END OF TERM

Lesson 23	Serving our Community - Community Service Project
Lesson 24	Serving our Community - Community Service Project
Lesson 25	Our bodies are growing
Lesson 26.1	Commitment (6-9 year olds)
Lesson 26.2	Sex – God's design (10-12 year olds)
Lesson 27.1	The Lordship of Christ (6-9 year olds)
Lesson 27.2	Sex – The Lordship of Christ (10-12 year olds)
Lesson 28	Saying No
Lesson 29	Virgin Pride
Lesson	Gospel/Growth
Lesson	Gospel/Growth
Lesson 30	How HIV/AIDS affects you
Lesson 31	HIV for real
Lesson 32	AIDS in the open
Lesson 33	Making a difference

LESSON 1

CHARACTER COUNTS – CHARACTER

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children understand:

- Why character is so important
- What it means to have good character
- Good character in our everyday lives
- The six pillars of character
- That we need to choose to develop good character

Theme Verse

1 Samuel 16:7, "... Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

All the Character Counts teaching material is based on that of the Ethics and Leadership Institute, Somerset West, South Africa. See Reference list.

- Who can remember what we were learning about at the end of last year? We were learning all about character
- Which of you were at some of those lessons?

So, who can remember?

Why is character so important?

When you ask the question, they must answer:

Because character counts

Make sure the children understand what this means. *'Character counts' means that character is important and valuable.*

The next important question is:

Why does character count? (*Why is character valuable and important?*)

When you ask this question, they must answer:

Because who I am is more important than what I am

This means that who I am on the inside is more important than whether I am a boy or girl, tall or short, clever or not, a good sportsman or a bad one, etc.

Repeat these questions again and they must shout out the answers. Repeat this a few times – we are going to repeat these questions and answers in every lesson about character.

LET'S TALK

- What do you think the word character means? What does it mean to have good character?
List on the chalk board their ideas of what they think character is. Add ideas if necessary.

OBJECT LESSON:

Try to have 2 tins (beans...) – one empty and one full. Do not let them see which one is empty. Place or hold the tins where all the children can see them.

- If you look at these two tins, which one is empty?
You can't really tell. They look the same on the outside. It is just like some of us. We all look the same – we have eyes, a nose, ears, a mouth, a body, etc. But on the inside we are different.

Now ask a strong boy to come up to the front and give him the full tin.

- Will you please squash this tin and see if you can crush it?
It seems to be impossible. You can ask another child to come and see if they can do it.

Now give the first boy the empty tin

- Will you try to squash this tin now?
Easy
- What was the difference between the two tins?
They both looked the same on the outside but one actually had beans in it and the other one was empty. The moment the empty tin was exposed to pressure it was crushed, but the full tin could withstand much pressure.
- Why should we be like the full tin of beans?
If we want to be able to withstand pressures in life without being crushed, we need to be full of good choices and good character
- Who wants to be like the full tin of beans and be a person of good character?

UNDERSTANDING CHARACTER:

Character is all about who you really are rather than what you are or what you look like. It's who you are on the inside. It's how you act when no-one is looking. Having good character means being a person who is admirable because he/she is self-confident and behaves according to good moral standards.

Good character is not something we are born with or something we inherit. Building character is a process and we need to choose to develop good character.

“Good character is more to be praised than outstanding talent. Most talents are a gift. Character is not given to us. We have to build it piece by piece – By thoughts, choices, courage and determination.” Arthur Lenehan

Remember that it all starts with ourselves,

**“To build cities of character,
We need families of character.**

**To have families of character,
We need people of character.**

**To have people of character,
We need one good choice at a time.”**

- Who is ready to take on this challenge – the challenge of building good character, one piece at a time?
Encourage the children to respond positively and enthusiastically and be sure that the volunteers include themselves as well.

LET'S DRAW OR WRITE:

Ask the each child to draw a person she/he knows, whom she/he thinks is a person of character. If they don't want to draw they can write a short paragraph about that person or combine drawing and writing.

Give them newsprint papers and pencils or color pencils to draw/write with.

Then ask some of the children to explain their drawing to the others and why they think that person is a person of character. Others can read what they have written.

We can learn a lot from people around us who model good character.

OR

WHAT DOES GOOD CHARACTER LOOK LIKE?

Which responses show good character?

- Tina is walking towards you. You owe her some money.
 - You quickly walk away in the opposite direction
 - You think, "Let me quickly go and arrange when I can pay"
- You see Shingi on the playground. You are angry with him because he stole your lunch when he thought you weren't looking.
 1. You go up to him and tell him that you would like to talk to him about something
 2. You rush up to him and start shouting at him and hitting him because you are so angry with him.
- You are sick in bed and your friends come to visit you
 1. You moan about how sick you are feeling and about how unfair it is.
 2. You thank them for coming and make an effort to be friendly even though you are not feeling well.
- You feel frustrated because you are not doing well at your English
 1. When your mother asks you how you did in the last test you yell at her that it is all her fault that you feel so stupid.
 2. You feel discouraged but remind yourself that you can keep trying by listening, practising and getting some extra help.

If we want to be people of good character, we need to be showing this character in our everyday lives.

WHAT DOES GOD SAY ABOUT CHARACTER?

The Bible is full of passages that teach us about character, about how we should develop good character as Christians, about how we should try to imitate the character of Christ, about how the Holy Spirit will help us to be people of good and godly character.

Today we are going to look at a story in the Bible that teaches us that God is interested in our character and not in how we look, what job we have, how much money we have or how many friends we have – God looks at our hearts.

LET'S ACT:

Choose children for the following parts: Samuel, Jesse, 7 sons of Jesse (choose tall, strong looking children – give them each a number from 1 to 7 – number 1 is the 1st son of Jesse and so on) and David (choose a younger, shorter child).

Tell the children that you will read out the story and they must act as you go. Let some of the volunteers guide the children if necessary.

THE STORY:

God sent Samuel to the house of Jesse of Bethlehem and told Samuel that He had chosen one of his sons to be the next king.

Samuel went to Bethlehem and he invited Jesse and his sons to join him.

When they arrived, Samuel saw Elihab, Jesse's first son, and thought, "Surely the Lord's anointed stands here before the Lord."

But the Lord said to Samuel, **"Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."** 1 Samuel 16:7

Then Jesse called Abinadab, Jesse's second son, and had him pass in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, "The Lord has not chosen this one either."

Jesse then had Shammah, his third son, pass by, but Samuel said, "Nor has the Lord chosen this one."

Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, "The Lord has chosen none of these."

So he asked Jesse, "Are these all the sons you have?"

Jesse answered, "There is still the youngest, but he is tending the sheep."

Samuel told Jesse to send for him.

So Jesse sent for him and had him brought in. He had a fine appearance and handsome features.

Then the Lord said to Samuel, "Rise and anoint him; he is the one."

This passage teaches us so clearly that God is not interested in our age or how we look, He is interested in our hearts and in our character.

Remember the words the Lord said to Samuel, **"Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."** 1 Samuel 16:7b

Repeat this with the children a few times and encourage them to memorize it.

THE PILLARS OF CHARACTER:

We have said that building character is a process and we need to choose to develop good character, we need to build it piece by piece.

To help us to know how we can do this, we are going to learn more about the six pillars of character.

Last year we learned about these six pillars of character.

- Who can remember what they are?

As the children come up with the pillars, allow them to come up and hold up the visual aid of that pillar for the class to see. Remind the children of the pillars that are not mentioned.

Once all the pillars are up, arrange them in the correct order and name them for the children. As you name the pillar let that child step forward and let the children repeat after you:

PILLAR 1 – TRUSTWORTHINESS IS ... being honest and keeping your word

PILLAR 2 – RESPECT IS ... treating people the way you want to be treated

PILLAR 3 – RESPONSIBILITY IS ... being answerable for your actions and choices

PILLAR 4 – FAIRNESS IS ... treating people equally and honestly

PILLAR 5 – CARING IS ... showing others that you love them

PILLAR 6 – GOOD CITIZENSHIP IS ... showing your concern by doing your duty

Show the children how when all the pillars stand together they make a strong wall of character.

These pillars all stand together to build a solid wall of good character.

- Which of you would like to see your lives characterized by these pillars of character?
It is exciting and it is also challenging. We will learn more about these pillars of character in the next few lessons, so don't miss out!

Repeat this again with the children:

Why is character so important?

Why does character count?

Because character counts

Because who I am is more important than what I am

LET'S PRAY:

Just before you pray ask the children the following question. Let them give their answer by raising up their hands and then pray with them for the Lord to enable them to develop these characteristics in their lives.

- Who chooses to say, “**from this day on I am determined to live out the six pillars of character**”?

Pray with the children that God may help them to be children of character, so that when God looks at their hearts and their character He will be well pleased.

LESSON 2

CHARACTER COUNTS - DECISIONS

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children understand:

- That the decisions we make reflect our character
- Different types of decisions we make
- More about good and bad choices
- 3 steps to follow when making decisions
- That we should ask the Lord to help us and guide us as we make decisions

Theme Verse

Proverbs 3:6, "In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths." (New King James Version)

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

Last week we spoke about character and today we are going to talk about decisions and how our character shows in the decisions we make.

Who can remember what we learned last week:

Why is character so important?

When you ask the question, they must answer:

Because character counts

The next important question is:

Why does character count?

When you ask this question, they must answer:

Because who I am is more important than what I am

This means that who I am on the inside is more important than whether I am a boy or girl, tall or short, clever or not, a good sportsman or a bad one, etc.

Make sure that the children understand that when we say 'character counts' it means that character is important and valuable.

Repeat these questions again and they must shout out the answers.

- Who can remember our theme verse about character?

1 Samuel 16:7, "... Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

DECISIONS – HOW DO I MAKE BETTER DECISIONS?

Decisions are an important part of our character. The decisions we make will show who we are, what we believe in and whether we live out what we believe. Some decisions are easy to make and other decisions are difficult to make. Some of the decisions we make affect many people while other decisions we make affect only ourselves. But – every single day we make lots and lots of decisions.

LET'S THINK:

Get the children to come up with a few examples of each of these kinds of decisions:

- Decisions we make every day.
Ideas: getting out of bed, what clothes we put on, whether we clean our teeth, how we greet people, doing our daily chores, etc.
- Easy decisions
Ideas: what to eat, when to wash, washing your hands before eating, etc.
- Difficult decisions
Ideas: whether to do your homework or go and play with your friends, to be nice to someone you don't like, to do something you know you should do but you don't want to do it, etc.

Some of us are better at making good decisions and wise choices than others. What may be an easy decision for one person may be a more difficult decision for another person.

- Why are some decisions difficult to make?
Ideas: it may be that your decision will mean doing something that isn't easy and takes time and effort, it may be that your decision will affect people in certain ways, it may be that we are confused about what the right decision is, it might be that there is something else we would rather do, etc.

GOOD CHOICE, BAD CHOICE:

We are going to play a game called, "Good choice, Bad choice." Tell the children that you will read some sentences that require them to make a choice.

Choose 22 children and ask them to stand in two lines of eleven children each. Have two chairs positioned at the front – one chair is the "happy" chair and the other chair is the "sad" chair. You can have a smiling face at the "happy" chair and a sad face at the "sad" chair. Or you could use two volunteers, one with a thumbs up for the "happy" chair and the other with a thumbs down for the "sad" chair.

As you read the sentence, the first person in each line should race to either the "happy" chair – if it is a good decision, or the "sad" chair – if it is a bad decision.

If the decision is a good one, tell all the children to shout "Yeah" when they get to the "happy" chair/volunteer. If it is a bad decision tell all the children to shout "boo" when they get to the "sad" chair/volunteer.

*Say to the children: **You make a choice to:***

- Take your classmate's pencil without asking
- Tell your teacher if you see someone stealing from her purse
- Walk away when someone tries to start a fight with you
- Go and play with your friends even though your mom wants you to do the house chores
- Watch TV instead of doing your homework
- Stand up for yourself.
- Become sexually involved with someone because they promise to pay your school fees and buy you clothes
- Call your friend ugly and stupid
- Stay up late after your parents have told you to go to bed
- Tell your parents you love them.

- Kick the dog

3 STEPS TO MAKING A GOOD DECISION:

We are learning about the importance of making good decisions but we know that it is not always easy. There are 3 easy steps that we can remember to follow when making decisions.

Have 3 places marked on the ground or 3 chairs that represent the 3 steps. Have one child or volunteer come up to help you teach these 3 steps.

Whenever you are faced with a decision, **STOP** and go through these 3 steps.

STEP 1: ASK QUESTIONS

Tell your helper to stand on the first step and give him/her a piece of paper to hold up that says, "STEP 1: ASK QUESTIONS"

Tell all the children to draw a question mark on their foreheads with their finger, to help them remember this point. They must ask themselves:

- Can I trust the person who is offering me this choice?
- Do I have all the facts?
- What do I want, feel, believe is right?
- Will I get hurt or will someone else be harmed if I do this?
- Who will be affected by my decision?
- What would Jesus do?

Now stick up the piece of paper they are holding where everyone can see it, or get one the volunteers to hold it up.

STEP 2: THINK

Tell your helper to stand on the second step and give him/her a piece of paper to hold up that says, "STEP 2: THINK"

Tell all the children to put their index finger against their heads to remind them to think.

- Think about the answers to the questions you have asked yourself in Step 1
- Think about the different options you have
- Think about the consequences of your choice

Now stick up the piece of paper they are holding where everyone can see it, or get one the volunteers to hold it up.

STEP 3: CHOOSE

Tell your helper to stand on the third step and give him/ her a piece of paper to hold up that says, "STEP 3: CHOOSE"

Tell the children to put their thumbs up for YES and then their thumbs down for NO.

- Make a choice or decision once you have asked questions and thought it through carefully.

LET'S ACT:

Help the children to apply these principles to some real life decisions they have to make.

Come up with some everyday scenarios for the children in which they have to make a decision. The children must make their decision by following the 3 steps.

Divide the children into groups and let each group act out one decision-making scenario.

- A friend suggests that you steal sweets from the shop
- Your friend asks you to come and play soccer but you know that you have a test tomorrow
- You haven't prepared well for a test. You are battling through the test and it would be very easy to copy from your classmate
- A new girl has recently joined your class. Most of your friends think she is strange and instead of being friendly to her, they have been unkind and unfriendly. What do you do?
- Your friend has bribed the coach to get into the team. He says you should do the same (make sure the children understand what it means to bribe someone)

- Your friend has been sick for some time. You have a lot of work to do but you know you should try and find time to visit her.
- Your friends invite you to go out with them one evening. Your parents have gone to a meeting and they have told you to stay at home.
- Think of other relevant scenarios.

LOOKING INTO THE WORD:

Because we face decisions every day it is very important to know what the Word of God teaches us about making decisions.

A key verse to remember and learn is **Proverbs 3:6, "In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths." (New King James Version)**

This verse reminds us that whenever we have a decision to make, we must ask God to help us to make a good decision and know that He will help us and guide us.

1 Corinthians 10:31, "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."

In all that we do and in all the decisions we make, we should always desire to do what is pleasing to the Lord.

James 1:5, "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him."

The Bible says that we can ask God to give us wisdom to help us to make good and right decisions.

Remember that even when we have to make decisions that are difficult, God will give us the courage we need and the strength to act on our decision.

LET'S PRAY:

Close in prayer, asking the Lord to help the children to make good decisions that are pleasing to Him. Ask the Lord to help the children to remember to STOP when they have a decision to make and follow the 3 steps. Thank the Lord that He is always there to help us.

LESSON 3
**CHARACTER COUNTS –
PILLAR 1: TRUSTWORTHINESS**

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children understand:

- The importance of trustworthiness
- What trustworthiness is
- The characteristics of a trustworthy person
- That God's Word challenges us to be trustworthy

Theme Verse

Luke 16:10-11 which says, "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much..."

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

We have been learning about character and how our decisions reflect our character. Today we are going to start learning about the first of the 6 pillars of character.

- Who can remember the answers to the character questions?

Why is character so important?

When you ask the question, they must answer:

Because character counts

The next important question is:

Why does character count?

When you ask this question, they must answer:

Because who I am is more important than what I am

This means that who I am on the inside is more important than whether I am a boy or girl, tall or short, clever or not, a good sportsman or a bad one, etc.

Make sure that the children understand that when we say 'character counts' it means that character is important and valuable.

Repeat these questions again and the children must shout out the answers. Repeat this a few times – we are going to repeat these questions and answers in every lesson about character.

- Who can remember our theme verse about character?

Samuel 16:7, "... Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

PILLAR 1 – TRUSTWORTHINESS

Last year we learned a bit about the 6 pillars of character and this year we are going to learn more about each of those pillars.

- Can anyone remember what the first pillar is?
Trustworthiness

LET'S TRUST:

Today we are going to learn about trustworthiness and we are going to start with a bit of fun.

Choose one child who is willing to trust some of the other children in the class – choose one of the younger children.

Then choose 5 or 6 of the older children who are willing to prove that they are trustworthy.

For this part of the lesson you will need a chair or stool and something you can use as a blindfold (i.e. to tie around the head, covering the eyes so that the child cannot see.)

Tell the younger child that you are going to blindfold him/her and then you are going to help him/her to climb up and stand on the chair or stool. Tell the child that the other group of children is going to stand around the one side of the chair or stool. You are going to position the younger child with his/her back to the group and then on the count of three, he/she must fall backwards into the arms of the group of children – trusting that they will catch him/her. Explain to the other group that this young person is trusting them to catch him/her and they must be ready, and work together to catch him/her. Once they are all ready, go ahead and play this game.

Then ask the following questions:

To the younger child:

- How did you feel when you were blindfolded?
- Was it easy to fall back and trust the others?
- Did you think that you could trust them to catch you?
- What if I had chosen only 2 or 3 of the younger children to catch you – how would you have felt then?

To the group of children:

- How important do you think it was for you to be trustworthy?
- What did it mean for you to be trustworthy? Ideas: we had to be ready to catch him, we had to work together.....
- What would have happened if you had not been trustworthy?

Ask all the children:

- Is it always easy to trust people?
- Why/why not? Ideas: sometimes we are afraid that people will let us down or embarrass us, it is easy to trust people who have shown that they can be trusted; once we have been let down once it can be hard to trust again, etc.
- Is it always easy to be trustworthy?
- Is it important to be trustworthy?

We can all agree that it is important to be trustworthy.

LET'S IMAGINE:

Close your eyes and imagine this scene:

You are hanging onto a strand of rope over a high cliff. Something happened and you urgently need some help. Someone you can trust.

What would you like the person to be like - the person on whom your life is depending?

What specific characteristics would you like that person to have?

Why?

List these characteristics on the board.

There are times in our lives, maybe not as dramatic as this, when we need someone we can trust.

LET'S LEARN:

- So, who can remember from last year what Trustworthiness is? **TRUSTWORTHINESS IS...** being honest and keeping your word.

For each pillar we will have a short phrase to describe the pillar and help children to remember what that pillar stands for. The more you repeat and emphasise these phrases the better the children will remember them. Get the children to repeat it a few times out loud.

There are four main characteristics of a trustworthy person. Write these four points on the board as you teach them.

A trustworthy person:

- **Is honest.**

- What does it mean to be honest?

Ideas: telling the truth at all times, being sincere, meaning what you say, doing what you say you will do, not telling lies, not cheating or stealing.

The Bible talks about the importance of honesty in the book of Proverbs.

Proverbs 12:22 says that, "The Lord detests lying lips, but he delights in men who are truthful."

- **Keeps his/her word**

- What does it mean to keep your word?

Ideas: do what you say you will do, don't break promises, return what you borrow, only make promises that you can and will keep.

The Bible encourages us to be people who keep our word and mean what we say.

Matthew 5:37 says, "Simply let your 'Yes' be 'Yes.' and your 'No,' 'No'..."

This means that when we say something, we should mean what we say and keep to our word.

- **Stands up for what he/she believes and does what is right**

- What does this mean?

Ideas: it means living out what you believe, even when it is difficult, doing what you say you will do, not giving into peer pressure, doing what is right even when it is difficult

The Bible makes it clear that we should do what is right and stand firmly for what we believe.

Isaiah 64:5 says, "You come to the help of those who gladly do right, who remember your ways."

God is always willing to help us to do what is right and live in a way that is pleasing to Him.

Isaiah 7:9, "If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all."

In Ephesians 6:10 and 14 we are told to, "be strong in the Lord" and to, "stand firm."

It is not always easy to stand firm and do what is right but it is the Lord who gives us the strength and courage we need.

- **Is a good friend**

- What does it mean to be a good, trustworthy friend?

Ideas: stand up for your friends, stand by your friend no matter what, keep promises, look out for your friends and don't let them hurt themselves, show that you care, show concern, don't gossip about your friends

There are some lovely verses in the bible about being a true and trustworthy friend:

Proverbs 17:17 says that, "A friend loves at all times."

A friend loves at ALL times – not only when it is easy and when everything is going well. We should love our friends through the happy times and through the sad and difficult times in their lives.

Proverbs 27:10, "Do not forsake your friend..."

This verse teaches us that we should never let our friends down – we should always be there for them and stand up for them.

Proverbs 11:13, "A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy man keeps a secret."

A true friend is someone we can trust with our secrets, because a true friend keeps a secret and will not go around talking about us behind our backs.

LET'S ACT:

Divide the children into small groups and tell them that they are going to make up some short dramas about these characteristics.

Give each group one of these topics:

- Being honest
- Not being honest
- Keeping your word
- Not keeping your word
- Standing up for what you believe and doing what is right
- Not standing up for your beliefs and giving in to pressure
- Being a good friend
- Being a bad friend

Before they come and present their dramas to the group, tell the children that these dramas will help them to see how trustworthiness comes into our everyday lives. Some of the dramas will teach us about people who are trustworthy and others will teach us about people who are untrustworthy. Tell the children to announce the topic they have been given before they start.

START SMALL:

Our theme verse for trustworthiness is **Luke 16:10** which says, **“Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much...”**

This is a lovely verse that teaches us about trustworthiness.

When we show people that they can trust us with small things or in small ways, they will start to see that they can trust us with more.

If we want the Lord to use us in his Kingdom or in spiritual ways, we first need to be trustworthy with the material things we have. If we show the Lord that He can trust us with small things, He will be able to use us in bigger ways.

So remember, **TRUSTWORTHINESS IS ...** being honest and keeping your word.

Repeat this a few times with the children.

AM I TRUSTWORTHY?

Today we have thought a lot about trustworthiness and we have seen how important it is to be trustworthy. But it doesn't help to learn all about it if we are not going to apply it to our own lives. Some of us here are more trustworthy than others, but the Lord Jesus would love each one of us to be trustworthy and He would love to help us to build this into our character.

I am going to ask you four questions. If the answer to any of those questions is no or you are not sure, then this can help you to see how you need to work on building trustworthiness into your life.

All close your eyes and answer the questions quietly to yourself.

Are you trustworthy?

- Are you honest in your words and actions?
- Do you keep your word and your promises?
- Do you stand up for your beliefs and do what is right?
- Are you a good friend?

LET'S PRAY:

Give the children some time to pray quietly, asking the Lord to help them in the areas where they battle to be trustworthy.

Then close in prayer, thanking the Lord for what we have learned today. Thank the Lord that He is always willing to help us to become more like Him. Ask the Lord to help us all to work on building trustworthiness into our lives. Thank the Lord that we know that we can always trust Him and we know that He will never let us down.

LET'S REMEMBER:

Revise the pillars of character with the children:

Let them all say together with you:

PILLAR 1

TRUSTWORTHINESS IS ... being honest and keeping your word

Luke 16:10, "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much ..."

TRUSTWORTHINESS IS...
...being honest and keeping your word



TRUSTWORTHINESS

"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much..."

Luke 16:10

LESSON 4

CHARACTER COUNTS – PILLAR 1: TRUSTWORTHINESS (continued)

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children understand:

- More about trustworthiness
- What it means to be trustworthy
- How we can build trustworthiness into our daily lives
- The importance of being trustworthy in the small things that God has given us to do

Theme Verses

Luke 16:10-11 says, “Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much...”

1 Corinthians 4:2 which says, “Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.”

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

We have been learning about character and last week we discussed the first pillar of character.

- Who can remember the answers to the character questions?

Why is character so important?

When you ask the question, they must answer:

Because character counts

The next important question is:

Why does character count?

When you ask this question, they must answer:

Because who I am is more important than what I am

This means that who I am on the inside is more important than whether I am a boy or girl, tall or short, clever or not, a good sportsman or a bad one, etc.

Make sure that the children understand that when we say 'character counts' it means that character is important and valuable.

Repeat these questions again and the children must shout out the answers. Repeat this a few times – we are going to repeat these questions and answers in every lesson about character.

- Who can remember our theme verse about character?"

Samuel 16:7, "... Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

PILLAR 1 – TRUSTWORTHINESS

1. Last week we spoke about trustworthiness.
 - Who remembers what trustworthiness is?
TRUSTWORTHINESS IS... being honest and keeping your word.
 - Can anyone remember the theme verse for trustworthiness or a part of the verse?
Luke 16:10-11 which says, "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much..."

So remember, **TRUSTWORTHINESS IS...** being honest and keeping your word.

For each pillar we will have a short phrase to describe the pillar and help children to remember what that pillar stands for. The more you repeat and emphasise these phrases the better the children will remember them. Get the children to repeat it a few times out loud.

Today we are going to expand on why it is really important to be a trustworthy person and how we can build trustworthiness into our lives.

TRUE AND FALSE FOR TRUSTWORTHINESS:

Tell the children that you are going to read out some characteristics that relate to trustworthiness. After you have read out each one, they must shout out "TRUE" if it is a characteristic of a trustworthy person and "FALSE" if it is not a characteristic of a trustworthy person.

A trustworthy person:

- | | |
|--|-------|
| • Tells the truth | TRUE |
| • Breaks their promises | FALSE |
| • Steals | FALSE |
| • Stands up for what they believe | TRUE |
| • Is a good friend | TRUE |
| • Keeps things that don't belong to them | FALSE |
| • Is open and honest | TRUE |
| • Is reliable | TRUE |
| • Keeps a secret | TRUE |
| • Lets a friend down | FALSE |
| • Pays their debts | TRUE |
| • Only makes promises they can keep | TRUE |

LET'S REMEMBER:

Last week we learned that there are 4 main characteristics of a trustworthy person. *Write these 4 points on the board again.*

See if any of the children remember any of these characteristics.

A trustworthy person:

- **Is honest.**
- **Keeps their word**
- **Stands up for what they believe and does what is right**
- **Is a good friend**

So remember, **TRUSTWORTHINESS IS ...** being honest and keeping your word.

Repeat this a few times with the children.

2. HOW CAN WE BUILD TRUSTWORTHINESS?

It is not always easy to build trustworthiness into our lives. Let's look at this scenario about Jane and see how she can try to build trustworthiness into her life.

Scenario:

Jane was very cross with her parents when they shouted out, "we don't trust you anymore."
Jane was so upset and wondered, "How could my own parents say this about me?" So she went into her bedroom and thought very hard, and she was amazed at what she remembered and how long her list was.

She remembered the day she forgot to switch off the tap in the kitchen and the water flooded everywhere. She got her friend into serious trouble with her parents when she blamed her for the disaster.

She remembered how she had lied to her mum that she was going to read for her exams in the library. Instead, she went to a movie with John and bumped into her big brother.

She remembered how many times she had been told to clean up her room. She would always say that she would do it but hardly ever did.

She remembered the times when her dad gave her money for fees or for groceries and she would come back saying it was lost or sometimes stolen.

LET'S DISCUSS:

As you discuss the following questions, remind the children of the characteristics of trustworthiness that you have written on the board.

- Can we point out all the things that Jane did that showed that she was untrustworthy?

Ideas:

She was not honest when she got her friend into trouble.

She let her friend down.

She was not honest about going to the library and she deceived her parents.

She did not keep her word when she agreed to clean her bedroom.

She was not reliable with money and lied to her father.

- How can Jane build trustworthiness?

Ideas:

Firstly, when we do something or forget to do something rather just say sorry. It is not right to get someone else into trouble for our own mistakes.

Secondly, we should look out for the interests of our friends and not let them down.

Thirdly, it is important to be honest with our parents about where we are going because anything could happen to us. If we want to go to a movie or a party, rather ask for permission from your parents first.

Fourthly, it is important to keep your word when your parents or teachers ask you to do something. It is of great importance to do what we say we are going to do. How would you feel if someone did not keep their word? Disappointed, angry So remember to keep your word.

Fifthly, if you are given money to pay for something, see to it that you do it and bring back the change. If you borrow something, make sure you return it.

Jane felt hurt and ashamed that her parents could not trust her, but she decided to do her best to show her parents that they could start to trust her.

The good news is that it is never too late to start again. We can ask the Lord to forgive us and ask Him to help us live a life that is trustworthy. Remember, nobody is perfect, and this is a little poem that helps us to build trustworthiness in our lives.

LET GOD BE NUMBER ONE

When I want to please myself,
And spoil somebody's fun,
Stop me being selfish

LET GOD BE NUMBER ONE

When I am feeling lazy
And there's work to be done
Help me get busy

LET GOD BE NUMBER ONE

When I feel like cheating and
A race is to be run
Help me to be honest

LET GOD BE NUMBER ONE

When I want to put me first

Remind me of God's son
Who gave his life to save us
AND LET GOD BE NUMBER ONE.

I AM TRUSTWORTHY:

Give each child a piece of paper and a pencil and ask them to write a short paragraph starting with these words:

I am trustworthy because ...

Encourage them to use the points on the board as a guide.

For the younger children, take them all aside and discuss this in groups. Encourage the children to think of practical ways in which they can show that they are trustworthy in their lives.

BEING FAITHFUL - LOOKING INTO THE WORD

Luke 16:10-11 says, "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?"

The section in bold is the part of the verse we want the children to remember as the theme verse – read this part again.

When we show people that they can trust us with small things or in small ways, they will start to see they can trust us with more.

How much attention do you pay to the little things? Do you ignore them and look forward to the day when you can do bigger and more important things? This could be a danger signal in your life which you should watch carefully. Jesus taught that when we are faithful in the little things, then He will be able to trust us with the bigger things. God is watching your life with great interest. He has great plans for you, but to achieve them remember the importance of the little things. Learn to do the little things well and you will graduate in the "School of God" to higher and greater things.

- What are some of these small things that God may be trusting us to do? Ideas: being a good friend, treating others with love and respect, doing loving things for those around you, being honest, obeying your parents and teachers, etc.

Another verse about trustworthiness is **1 Corinthians 4:2 which says, "Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful."**

Let us prove faithful and trustworthy in the things God has given us to do so that He can continue to use us.

LET'S PRAY:

Pray this prayer and let the children repeat after you:

Lord, thank you for all we have learned about trustworthiness

Thank you that you have shown us that the little things are stepping stones to greater things.

I do so want to be trustworthy

Please help me to build trustworthiness into my life

I ask you for Your grace to help me through these days of testing and challenge so that I might be able to do the greater things which you have prepared for me to do.

In Jesus' name

Amen.

LET'S REMEMBER:

Revise the pillars of character with the children:

Let them all say together with you:

PILLAR 1

TRUSTWORTHINESS IS ... being honest and keeping your word

Luke 16:10, "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much ..."

TRUSTWORTHINESS IS...
...being honest and keeping your word



TRUSTWORTHINESS

"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much..."

Luke 16:10

LESSON 5

CHARACTER COUNTS – PILLAR 2: RESPECT

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children understand:

- What being respectful means
- To whom we should show respect
- How we can build respect into our daily lives
- That God's Word teaches us to show respect to everyone

Theme Verses

Matthew 7:12, "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you."

1 Peter 2:17, "Show proper respect to everyone."

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

We have been learning about character and we have already discussed the first pillar of character – trustworthiness. *(Please us the visual aids)*

- Who can remember the answers to the character questions?

Why is character so important?

When you ask the question, they must answer:

Because character counts

The next important question is:

Why does character count?

When you ask this question, they must answer:

Because who I am is more important than what I am

This means that who I am on the inside is more important than whether I am a boy or girl, tall or short, clever or not, a good sportsman or a bad one, etc.

Make sure that the children understand that when we say 'character counts' it means that character is important and valuable.

Repeat these questions again and the children must shout out the answers. Repeat this a few times – we are going to repeat these questions and answers in every lesson about character.

- Who can remember our theme verse about character?
1 Samuel 16:7, "... Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

PILLAR 2 – RESPECT

Today we are going to talk about the second pillar of character – respect.

- Who remembers what respect means?
 Yes, respect means showing others that they are valued for who they are, it means treating others the way you want to be treated, it means never making fun of others or insulting others, it means respecting other people's differences; a respectful person is polite

So, to sum all of this up we can say that **RESPECT IS** ... treating people the way you want to be treated.

For each pillar we will have a short phrase to describe the pillar and help children to remember what that pillar stands for. The more you repeat and emphasise these phrases the better the children will remember them. Get the children to repeat it a few times out loud.

LET'S TALK:

- We all know now what it means to show respect but to whom should we show respect?
Write their ideas on the board. Try to include the following ideas:
 Parents and care-givers, our brothers and sisters, our teachers and pastors, our friends, other children in our class, elderly people, ourselves, people our parents work for, people who may work in our home, people who are different or come from another culture
- We should treat everyone with respect, even if they are different and even if we don't like them.
- What prevents us from showing respect?
 Ideas: we don't know how to show respect, we do not feel respectful, if people don't show respect to us we may not want to treat them with respect, it is hard to show respect to people we don't like or to people who have mistreated us
 - Do you think there are certain people to whom we don't have to show respect?
 Ideas: No – it can be very difficult, but the Bible is clear, **1 Peter 2:17 says that we should, "Show proper respect to everyone."** This verse doesn't say that we should show respect to *some* people, or *most* people – but *everyone*. Every person is worthy of respect. This doesn't mean that we have to like everyone, it doesn't mean that we have to do whatever anyone tells us to do, but it does mean that we should treat all people with respect. With God's help we can do this.

WHAT DOES RESPECT LOOK LIKE?

I am going to read out some sentences:

If respectful behaviour is shown – then stand up and cheer

If disrespectful behaviour is shown – the turn around and say boo

- You are talking to someone and the person is not listening at all!
- A new girl in school is wearing old, faded clothes. You are making fun of her because it makes your friends laugh.
- A boy is holding the door open for a lady/girl to pass.
- You are bored in class. Every time the teacher turns his/her back, you make faces to make your friends laugh.
- Your dad or your mom asks you to do something. You are moody and angry.
- There is someone in class from a different culture and he/she is doing strange things. The rest of the class is keeping a distance. You let him/her know that you are there as a friend.
- You see an old lady struggling with parcels. You help her.
- You are playing with a ball and accidentally throw it through someone's window. You quickly run away.
- Your mom's friend comes over to visit and brings her daughter. You don't enjoy spending time with this girl, but your mom asked you to play with her. As you hear them arriving you sneak out of the back door.

HOW CAN WE BUILD RESPECT?

- Are there people you do not like?
It is quite natural not to like everyone we come across in life and we must remember that we cannot all be the same. We all have different characters, personalities, attitudes, likes and dislikes, etc. However, we have to treat everyone with respect. It does not matter who we are, we are really all the same when we come to the foot of the cross. If there are people you do not like, please pray and ask God to help you to accept them as they are, even if they are irritating, noisy, quiet, playful, etc. Ask the Lord to help you to show these people proper respect.
- Do you think there are people God does not like?
God made each one of us and loves every one of us, He has no favourites. He respects each one of us because He made us in his image. In the same way, we should show others the respect they deserve.

RESPECT IS EARNED BUT NOT DEMANDED:

- How many of us like to be bossy when we are in charge? It is easy to forget to show people the proper respect when we are being bossy and so we need to be careful when we are put in a position of responsibility over others.

LET'S IMAGINE:

Imagine you are the Head boy or girl of your local school.

- How can you show respect to the rest of the students?
- How would you earn your respect?
- How easy is it for the head boy/girl to demand respect?
It is so easy to think that just because you are a leader you can treat people however you like. But boys and girls, we must remember that being humble and polite is the best thing we can ever do. Remember that it is God who blesses people with positions of leadership; respect is earned by treating others with respect rather than demanding respect.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE HAVE TO SAY?

There are all sorts of verses that teach us about respect. We have mentioned the kind of people to whom we should show respect – draw their attention to your list on the board. We are going to see what the Bible has to say about respecting others.

- Respecting our parents
1 Timothy 3:4, "see that his children obey him with the proper respect."
Ephesians 6:2, "Honour your father and mother...that it may go well with you." To honour someone naturally means showing respect to that person.
- Respecting those older than us
Leviticus 19:32 says that we should, "show respect for the elderly."
- What about those who are younger than us – a younger brother or sister, a younger child at your school or church?
1 Peter 2:17 says that we should "Show proper respect to everyone."
Romans 12:3 says "Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought..."
There is absolutely no excuse to treat those who are younger than us and weaker than us with disrespect. Jesus never treated anyone with disrespect.
- Respecting those under your authority or leadership e.g. if you are a prefect, class leader or head boy or girl; or someone who is working for your family.
1 Peter 5:3 speaks about, "not lording it over those entrusted to you" This passage is speaking to the elders in the church, but in the same way to those who are in positions of leadership and authority over others, that they should not lord it over them – this means that you don't treat people badly and disrespectfully just because you are in charge, rather you should lead by example.
Romans 12:3 reminds us, "Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought..."

- Respecting those you work for
Ephesians 6:5 says, “**Slaves (workers), obey your earthly masters with respect...**”
- Respecting those who are different to us
Galatians 3:28 says that, “**There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.**”
We need to learn to accept people who are different from us and treat them with the respect they deserve. It does not matter who you are, how wealthy or educated you are, or how poor or uneducated you are, we are all equal before the Lord. Each one of us has been created by God and He loves us all. Let us treat everyone with proper respect and, “**in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you**”- **Matthew 7:12**.
- Respecting ourselves
I Corinthians 6:20, “**...honour God with your body.**” The Bible also refers to respecting ourselves and taking care of ourselves – in this way we honour God because it is God who created us.

LET’S DISCUSS:

How would you know if someone respects you?

Divide the children into groups and give each group one of these topics and then let them discuss the questions below. Let each group share one or two examples with the others.

- Your brother or sister
- Your friend
- Your classmates
- Your teacher
- Your parents or caregivers
- Other ideas

Questions to discuss:

- How would you know if this person respects you?
- How does it make you feel when someone shows that they respect you?

Well, these ideas help us to know how we can make these people in our lives feel respected. As you get older and perhaps become parents, teachers or other leaders yourselves – remember how important it is to show people the respect they deserve.

So remember, **RESPECT IS** ... treating people the way you want to be treated.

Repeat this a few times.

LET’S PRAY:

We have learned so much about respect today. As we ask the Lord to help us to be more respectful in the way we treat others, let’s remember our theme verse for respect, **Matthew 7:12**, “**So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.**”

Close in prayer.

LET’S REMEMBER:

Revise the pillars of character with the children:

Let them all say together with you:

PILLAR 1

TRUSTWORTHINESS IS ... being honest and keeping your word

Luke 16:10, “**Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much ...**”

PILLAR 2

RESPECT IS ... treating people the way you want to be treated

Matthew 7:12, “**So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you...**”

RESPECT IS...

...treating people the way you want to be treated



RESPECT

"So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you..."

Matthew 7:12

LESSON 6

CHARACTER COUNTS – PILLAR 2: RESPECT (continued)

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children understand:

- What respect is
- The characteristics of a person who is respectful
- What respect looks like in our everyday lives
- The importance of building respect into our lives.

Theme Verses

Matthew 7:12, “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you...”

Romans 12:3, “Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought...”

Galatians 3:28, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

1 Peter 2:17, “Show proper respect to everyone.”

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

We have been learning about character and last week we discussed the second pillar of character – respect.

- Who can remember the answers to the character questions?

Why is character so important?

When you ask the question, they must answer:

Because character counts

The next important question is:

Why does character count?

When you ask this question, they must answer:

Because who I am is more important than what I am

*This means that who I am on the inside is more important than whether I am a boy or girl, tall or short, clever or not, a good sportsman or a bad one, etc.
Make sure that the children understand that when we say 'character counts' it means that character is important and valuable.*

Repeat these questions again and the children must shout out the answers. Repeat this a few times – we are going to repeat these questions and answers in every lesson about character.

- Who can remember our theme verse about character?
1Samuel 16:7, "... Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

PILLAR 2 – RESPECT

Today we are going to carry on talking about respect.

- Who can remember what **RESPECT IS...**? **RESPECT IS ...** treating people the way you want to be treated.
For each pillar we will have a short phrase to describe the pillar and help children to remember what that pillar stands for. The more you repeat and emphasize these phrases the better the children will remember them. Get the children to repeat it a few times out loud.
- Can anyone remember the theme verse for respect or any part of it? **Matthew 7:12, "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you..."**

LET'S LEARN:

There are several characteristics of a person who is respectful:

A respectful person:

- Honours the worth of others
- Is polite and well-mannered to others
- Accepts the differences of others
- Treats others in the way they would want to be treated
- Avoids violence
- Values people for who they are

Please write these points down on the board.

Today we are going to look at examples of respectful and disrespectful behaviour to help us to learn more about building respect into our character.

LET'S ACT:

We are now going to act out some dramas that show respectful and disrespectful behaviour.

Here are a few examples. *Give each group one scenario and tell them to make up a short drama:*

- Children sitting in a classroom and being naughty when the teacher is teaching.
- A teacher treating the children with respect
- A teacher treating the children with disrespect
- Children being disrespectful to prefects
- A father shouting at his wife in front of the children
- A pastor being respectful in front of the church
- A pastor being disrespectful in front of the church
- Children respecting their parents
- Children disrespecting their parents
- Being disrespectful to your sister/brother in front of your friends
- Beating up your younger brother
- Bullying the younger kids at school

After each drama ask the children if the drama showed respectful or disrespectful behaviour. Use the list on the board and ask the children which characteristics of respect were fulfilled or abused.

LET'S DISCUSS – WHAT WOULD RESPECT LOOK LIKE?

Keep the children in their groups and tell them that you are going to give them a few different scenarios to discuss.

For each scenario they must discuss what respect would look like in that situation. Give them a few minutes to discuss and then read out the next scenario.

What would respect look like if...

- You promised a friend that you would meet her after school, but later you remember that you have an extra math lesson after school
- You promised your mom that you would move the dining room furniture because the room is going to be painted. Your friends call and ask you to play a game of soccer.
- Your father says that he is expecting an important phone call. Five minutes later the phone rings. It's a friend from school.
- You need to say something urgently to your big brother. His door is closed.
- You are watching a school concert (or sitting in church) with your family and your little brother tells you he has to go to the toilet. He is squirming around and says that he can't wait much longer.

It is important to build respect into our daily lives, remembering to treat everyone in a respectful way.

LOOKING INTO THE WORD:

Draw the children's attention to the list on the blackboard.

Let's think about some of the verses we discussed last week and see whether applying them to our lives will help us to be more respectful.

Read out each verse and ask the children:

- If we apply this verse to our lives, will we start building these characteristics of respect into our character? Yes.
Help them to see which characteristics each verse might apply to.

Scripture verses:

- **Matthew 7:12, "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you..."**
- **Romans 12:3, "Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought..."**
- **Galatians 3:28, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."**
- **1 Peter 2:17, "Show proper respect to everyone."**

A MAN WHO CHANGED:

There is a story in the Bible (Luke 19:1-10) about a short man who was greedy and did not respect other people. He was a very wealthy tax collector. He was wealthy because he cheated people with their money and as a result he did not have many friends.

- Who knows what his name was? His name was Zacchaeus.

When he heard that Jesus was coming he hurried to join the crowd. He was so short that people did not take any notice of him. He ran and climbed a sycamore tree so that he would be able to see Jesus and that is where Jesus noticed him.

- Did Jesus tell Zacchaeus to go away? No, Jesus took notice of him and told him to climb down from the tree. Jesus even went to his house. Jesus is loving and He respects everyone.

Zacchaeus was sorry for his dishonest and disrespectful dealings and gave back all the money he owed to people. It is quite likely that Zacchaeus found that as he began to treat people with respect, he started making friends again.

Jesus can also change us and help us to treat people with the respect they deserve. When we treat people with respect, we follow Christ's example. We will draw people towards us and we will please our Father in heaven.

LET'S PRAY:

Ask the children these questions and tell them to answer quietly in their hearts:

Are you respectful?

- Do you treat others the way you would want to be treated?
- Are you polite and well-mannered?
- Do you treat others well even if they look, act or believe differently than you do?

Close in prayer, asking the Lord to help the children to see how they can build respect into their character. Challenge the children to follow Christ's example and His teaching in order to become more respectful. Thank the Lord that He is always willing and ready to help us to live for Him.

LET'S REMEMBER:

Revise the pillars of character with the children:

Let them all say together with you:

PILLAR 1

TRUSTWORTHINESS IS ... being honest and keeping your word

Luke 16:10, "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much ..."

PILLAR 2

RESPECT IS ... treating people the way you want to be treated

Matthew 7:12, "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you..."

RESPECT IS...

...treating people the way you want to be treated



RESPECT

“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you...”

Matthew 7:12

LESSON 7

CHARACTER COUNTS – PILLAR 3: RESPONSIBILITY

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children understand:

- What responsibility is
- The importance of being responsible
- The characteristics of a responsible person
- About being accountable
- About being self-controlled

Theme Verse

Romans 14:12 says that, “...each of us will give an account of himself to God.”

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

We have been learning all about the six pillars of character and today we are going to learn about the third pillar of character.

Who can remember the answers to the character questions?

Why is character so important?

When you ask the question, they must answer:

Because character counts

The next important question is:

Why does character count?

When you ask this question, they must answer:

Because who I am is more important than what I am

This means that who I am on the inside is more important than whether I am a boy or girl, tall or short, clever or not, a good sportsman or a bad one, etc.

Make sure that the children understand that when we say ‘character counts’ it means that character is important and valuable.

Repeat these questions again and the children must shout out the answers. Repeat this a few times – we are going to repeat these questions and answers in every lesson about character.

Who can remember our theme verse about character?

1 Samuel 16:7, "... Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

Briefly review the pillars they have learned about. As you revise them, hold up the card for each pillar and see if the children can remember the definition.

PILLAR 1 – TRUSTWORTHINESS IS ... being honest and keeping your word

PILLAR 2 – RESPECT IS ... treating people the way you want to be treated

PILLAR 3 - RESPONSIBILITY

The 3rd pillar is responsibility.

Add the responsibility pillar to the other two pillars in the wall of wisdom.

LET'S THINK:

- Who can remember from last year what RESPONSIBILITY IS?

RESPONSIBILITY IS ... being answerable for your actions and choices

Responsibility is doing what you are supposed to do.

Responsible people think ahead, they set reasonable goals, they are self-controlled and they do their best.

Responsible people do not give up easily, especially if people are counting on them.

Responsible people consider the consequences of their decisions and they don't blame other people for their mistakes.

So, **RESPONSIBILITY IS ...** being answerable for your actions and choices.

For each pillar we will have a short phrase to describe the pillar and help the children to remember what that pillar stands for. The more you repeat and emphasize these phrases the better the children will remember them. Get the children to repeat it a few times out loud.

THE KEY:

Try to have a key to show the children as you teach this object lesson.

Each of us holds the key to our lives, to our choices. We have to make our own choices; no-one can force us to make good and right decisions.

By taking responsibility for my choices, actions and attitudes, I can use this key to discover all that God has for me. How I use this key will affect and direct the course of my life.

LET'S LEARN:

There are 5 main characteristics of a responsible person.

A responsible person:

- Is answerable for his/her choices
- Is self-controlled
- Plans and sets goals
- Chooses his/her attitude
- Does his/her duty

Write these main points on the board and make sure they stay visible during the lesson.

In these next two lessons we are going to look at each of these points in some more detail.

1. BEING ANSWERABLE FOR YOUR CHOICES:

Being answerable for your choices means thinking before you act. It is always important to consider the consequences of our decisions before we act on them.

Being answerable means accepting responsibility for what you do and for what you don't do. Don't make excuses and blame others.

DO'S AND DON'TS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Read out the following statements and let the children answer whether it is a "DO" or "DON'T" of responsibility.

A "DO" is something a responsible person would do

A "DON'T" is something a responsible person would not do

Should a responsible person:

Accept responsibility for the consequences of his/her choices? DO
Look the other way when they can make a difference? DON'T
Set a good example? DO
Make excuses? DON'T
Blame others? DON'T
Think ahead? DO
Be reliable? DO
Take the credit for other people's work? DON'T
Neglect their duties? DON'T
Do their best? DO
Give up? DON'T
Be prepared? DO

2. BE SELF-CONTROLLED:

Self-control means to take charge of your life. You can choose to act after thinking carefully and not out of anger, fear or revenge.

BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

Think of some behaviour that sometimes gets you into trouble with your friends, parents or teachers. Write down the behaviour and your usual excuses, and then re-phrase your response/excuse, using the word "I", so that you take more responsibility.

Tell the children to write these points down on their paper and then give them some time to think about the answers. Encourage them to keep their paper and take it home as a reminder to follow through on their plan to change.

Adapt this activity for the younger children – you could make it a small group discussion for them.

Problem Behaviour:
Excuse:
Taking Responsibility: I.....

BE MORE RESPONSIBLE:

We have talked a lot about being responsible and we all have areas in which we can become more responsible.

Romans 14:12 says that, "...each of us will give an account of himself to God."

Ultimately we will all be answerable to God, and I doubt any of us want to be ashamed or embarrassed when we come before the Lord and give an account of how we have lived our lives. Let us strive to live responsibly before the Lord in all that we do.

So remember, **RESPONSIBILITY IS** ... being answerable for your actions and choices

Say this together with the children.

LET'S PRAY:

Ask the Lord to help the children to grow in the area of responsibility.

Ask the Lord to help the children to become more accountable for the decisions they make and ask the Lord to help them to take more responsibility for the problem behaviour they wrote down.

Thank the Lord that He is able to help us to change.

Ask the Lord to help each child to grow and develop in good character, that more and more they will reflect the good and perfect character of Christ

<u>LET'S REMEMBER:</u>

<i>Revise the pillars of character with the children:</i>

Let them all say together with you:

PILLAR 1

TRUSTWORTHINESS IS ... being honest and keeping your word

Luke 16:10, "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much ..."

PILLAR 2

RESPECT IS ... treating people the way you want to be treated

Matthew 7:12, "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you..."

PILLAR 3

RESPONSIBILITY IS ... being answerable for your actions and choices

Romans 14:12, "... Each of us will give an account of himself to God."

RESPONSIBILITY IS...
...being answerable for your actions and choices



RESPONSIBILITY

“...Each of us will give an account of himself to God.”

Romans 14:12

LESSON 8
**CHARACTER COUNTS –
PILLAR 3: RESPONSIBILITY (continued)**

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children understand:

- What responsibility is
- The importance of responsibility
- The characteristics of responsibility
- More about planning and setting goals
- More about choosing your attitude and doing your best
- More about doing your duty.....

Theme Verses

Romans 14:12 says that, "...each of us will give an account of himself to God."

Colossians 3:23, "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men."

Ecclesiastes 12:13b says, "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

We have been learning all about the 6 pillars of character and today we are going to learn more about the 3rd pillar of character – responsibility.

- Who can remember the answers to the character questions?

Why is character so important?

When you ask the question, they must answer:

Because character counts

The next important question is:

Why does character count?

When you ask this question, they must answer:

Because who I am is more important than what I am

This means that who I am on the inside is more important than whether I am a boy or girl, tall or short, clever or not, a good sportsman or a bad one, etc.

Make sure that the children understand that when we say 'character counts' it means that character is important and valuable.

Repeat these questions again and the children must shout out the answers. Repeat this a few times – we are going to repeat these questions and answers in every lesson about character.

- Who can remember our theme verse about character?

1 Samuel 16:7, "... Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

Briefly review the pillars they have learned about. As you revise them, hold up the card for each pillar and see if the children can remember the definition.

PILLAR 1 – TRUSTWORTHINESS IS ... being honest and keeping your word

PILLAR 2 – RESPECT IS ... treating people the way you want to be treated

PILLAR 3 – RESPONSIBILITY IS ... being answerable for your actions and choices

PILLAR 3 - RESPONSIBILITY

This week we will continue learning about responsibility.

LET'S REMEMBER:

- Who can remember from last year what RESPONSIBILITY IS?
RESPONSIBILITY IS ... being answerable for your actions and choices
- Who can remember our key verse?
Romans 14:12 says that, "...each of us will give an account of himself to God."

So, **RESPONSIBILITY IS ...** being answerable for your actions and choices.

For each pillar we will have a short phrase to describe the pillar and help children to remember what that pillar stands for. The more you repeat and emphasise these phrases the better the children will remember them. Get the children to repeat it a few times out loud.

THE KEY:

Try to have a key with you to show to the children to remind them.

Remember how we learned last week that we hold the key to our lives and to our choices.

By taking responsibility for our choices, actions and attitudes, we can use this key to discover all that God has for us. How we use this key will affect and direct the course of our lives.

LET'S LEARN:

There are 5 main characteristics of a responsible person. A responsible person:

1. Is answerable for his/her choices
2. Is self-controlled
3. Plans and sets goals
4. Chooses his/her attitude
5. Does his/her duty

Write these main points on the board and make sure they stay visible during the lesson.

Last week we discussed being accountable and being self-controlled. Today we will continue to learn more about responsibility.

3. PLAN AND SET GOALS:

This means taking responsibility for your life by setting specific goals and planning to achieve them. It is no good to set goals and then do nothing active to try and achieve them.

In our lives we need to set short-term goals and long-term goals.

- Who can tell me what the difference is between a short-term goal and a long-term goal? **Short-term goals** are goals that we plan to achieve within a few days, weeks or months. Examples:

wanting to do well in a test or an assignment, wanting to get into the soccer team, deciding to try and keep your room tidy, trying to be more helpful around the house. **Long-term goals** are goals that we set for the future and that we plan to achieve within the next year, the next few years or even in many years' time. However, in order to achieve our long-term goals we need to be working on them now. Examples: wanting to do well at the end of the year, wanting to be a prefect, wanting to go to college or university one day, wanting to live a life that is pleasing to God.

LET'S DISCUSS:

Divide the children into small groups and let them discuss these questions:

- What are your long-term goals?
- What are your short-term goals?
- Come up with two specific plans to work towards these goals – one for your long-term goal and one for your short-term goal. Share them with the group.

4. CHOOSE YOUR ATTITUDE - DO YOUR BEST

No-one can choose our attitude for us. We can choose to go through life with a good, positive attitude or we can choose to go through life with a bad, negative attitude.

LET'S TALK:

- How do we feel when we are around someone who has a positive attitude?
- How do we feel when we are around someone who has a negative attitude?
- Is it easy to keep a positive attitude? It is not always easy
to have a positive attitude, but remember we have God on our side, and we can ask Him to help us to have a positive attitude even when things are difficult/not going our way.

An important attitude to have is that of doing your best. The Bible challenges us to do our best in everything we do, as though we are doing it for the Lord.

Colossians 3:23, "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men."

We can go through life doing our best in all that we do, or we can go through life giving a half-hearted effort to what we do. Doing our best does not always mean great success or the highest marks, it means doing the best that we are capable of doing and using the talents and skills God gave us to the best of our ability.

Choose to do your best!!

SCENARIOS:

Chris and Faith have very different attitudes. Chris' attitude is to do the best in all that he does, whereas Faith's attitude is to do just enough to get by.

Have two children come forward and stand before the group to represent these two people. Then ask the following questions and let the children give ideas:

What would Chris or Faith's actions look like in the following situations?

- **Cleaning their rooms**
Ideas: Chris would make an effort to keep his room tidy. He would not have to be nagged by his mother, would put things where they belong.
Faith would clear things up when her room was getting really messy, she would wait for her mother to ask her to clean her room, she would put things anywhere just make things look neat.
- **Studying for a test in a subject they found difficult**
Ideas: Chris would give extra time to studying for a subject he battles with, he might ask someone to help him with this subject
Faith would study just enough to pass, wouldn't bother to spend time on a subject she battles with or dislikes.
- **They got tired in the middle of a job they were doing**
Ideas: Chris would persevere and stick it out until he had done what he had committed himself to do, he would continue to do his best even though it wasn't easy.
Faith would just give up the job or lose interest and give a half-hearted effort.
- **They were learning something new**
- **They were organizing a party**

Who is more responsible?
Whose life is going to be more pleasing before the Lord?

5. DO YOUR DUTY/ BE RELIABLE/ DO WHAT YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO DO

Being responsible means doing your duty or doing what you are supposed to do even when you don't feel like it. Responsible people do not allow their feelings to dominate or manipulate their decisions.

- What are some of your duties at home?
- Do you do these duties responsibly or do you need to be reminded to do them? Do you do them with a positive attitude or do you do them resentfully?
- What are some of the things you are expected to do at school?
- What responsibilities do you have towards your friends?

As you grow up other things will be expected of you – from your church, your job, the law. The Bible reminds us of the importance of doing our duty before the Lord.

Ecclesiastes 12:13b says, “Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.”

BE MORE RESPONSIBLE:

We have talked a lot about being responsible and we all have areas in which we can become more responsible.

We are going to go over the 5 main characteristics of a responsible person. As we do, think about which of these you are weakest in and then we are going to ask the Lord to help us to develop and grow in that area.

1. Being answerable for your choices
2. Be self-controlled
3. Plan and set goals
4. Choose your attitude - do your best
5. Do your duty/ be reliable/ do what you're supposed to do

Romans 14:12 says that, “...each of us will give an account of himself to God.”

Ultimately we will all be accountable to God. Let us strive to live responsibly before the Lord in all that we do.

So remember, **RESPONSIBILITY IS** ... being answerable for your actions and choices.

Say this together with the children.

LET'S PRAY:

Ask the Lord to help the children to grow in the area of responsibility.

Tell the children to spend a few moments in prayer asking the Lord to help them in the area they realize they are weakest in.

Thank the Lord that He hears our prayers and that He is more than able to help us to grow in responsibility if we are willing.

Ask the Lord to help each child to grow and develop in good character, that more and more they will reflect the good and perfect character of Christ

LET'S REMEMBER:

Revise the pillars of character with the children:

Let them all say together with you:

PILLAR 1

TRUSTWORTHINESS IS ... being honest and keeping your word

Luke 16:10, “Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much ...”

PILLAR 2

RESPECT IS ... treating people the way you want to be treated

Matthew 7:12, “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you...”

PILLAR 3

RESPONSIBILITY IS ... being answerable for your actions and choices

Romans 14:12, "... Each of us will give an account of himself to God."

RESPONSIBILITY IS...
...being answerable for your actions and choices



RESPONSIBILITY

“...Each of us will give an account of himself to God.”

Romans 14:12

LESSON 9

CHARACTER COUNTS – PILLAR 4: FAIRNESS

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children understand:

- What Fairness is
- The importance of being Fair
- The characteristics of Fairness
- How to be fair in practical situations
- That they should strive to be fair

Theme Verse

2 Chronicles 19:7b, “Judge carefully, for with the Lord our God there is no injustice or partiality or bribery.”

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

We have been learning all about the 6 pillars of character and today we are going to learn about the 4th pillar of character.

- Who can remember the answers to the character questions?

Why is character so important?

When you ask the question, they must answer:

Because character counts

The next important question is:

Why does character count?

When you ask this question, they must answer:

Because who I am is more important than what I am

This means that who I am on the inside is more important than whether I am a boy or girl, tall or short, clever or not, a good sportsman or a bad one, etc.

Make sure that the children understand that when we say ‘character counts’ it means that character is important and valuable.

Repeat these questions again and the children must shout out the answers. Repeat this a few times – we are going to repeat these questions and answers in every lesson about character.

- Who can remember our theme verse about character?

1 Samuel 16:7, "... Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

Briefly review the pillars they have learned about. As you revise them, hold up the card for each pillar and see if the children can remember the definition.

PILLAR 1 – TRUSTWORTHINESS IS ... being honest and keeping your word

PILLAR 2 – RESPECT IS ... treating people the way you want to be treated

PILLAR 3 – RESPONSIBILITY IS ... being answerable for your actions and choices

PILLAR 4 - FAIRNESS

The 4th pillar of character is called Fairness.

LET'S TALK:

- Who can remember from last year what FAIRNESS IS.....?
FAIRNESS IS.... Treating people equally and honestly
- Can anyone remember the verse or part of the verse that encourages us to fair?
2 Chronicles 19:7b, "Judge carefully, for with the Lord our God there is no injustice or partiality or bribery."
If God is fair, then we should also be fair in the way we deal with other people.

Fairness is playing by the rules, taking turns, sharing and listening. Fair people do not take advantage of others, they consider what people have to say before they make a decision and they don't blame others unjustly.

- How do we feel when we are treated unfairly?
- How do you feel when you are treated fairly?

EQUAL PIECES

Try to have some kind of fruit or vegetable that you can cut up into equal parts in front of the children. Tell the children that this illustrates fairness because everyone gets a fair share. When you think of fairness, think of giving out equal sections of an orange/tomato/potato to your friends or those around you.

WHAT IS FAIRNESS?

A fair person:

- **Sees that everyone knows the rules** – in order to be fair people must know the rules and what is expected of them. This applies to games, sports, school, and the home.
- **Does not show favour** – this means you don't take sides and you don't give preference to certain people, you treat all people equally.
- **Gets all the facts** – never be quick to accuse people but be sure to get all the facts and make a fair decision.
- **Gives a fair hearing** – allow people to tell their side of the story and be willing to listen with an open mind.

Write the main points in bold on the blackboard as you go through them.

So, **FAIRNESS IS....** Treating people equally and honestly

Repeat this several times with the children.

WHAT DOES FAIRNESS LOOK LIKE?

Divide the children into groups, then read out the points one at a time, giving the children some time to discuss each scenario in their groups before reading out the next point.

- A friend offers you a copy of the final exam. What will you do?
- You witness a friend shoplifting. What will you do?
- The shop assistant forgot to charge you for one of the books you bought. What will you do?

- You are being punished and your parents have told you that you may not leave the house. Some friends come by to take you with them to go and play some soccer/handball for a few hours before your parents get home. What will you do?
- You can't find your homework book. You've looked everywhere. Your mother looked through it yesterday and you think she might have forgotten to give it back.
Remember fairness involves finding out all the facts before making a decision.
- Add others you may think of.

ARE YOU FAIR?

As we spend time learning about these pillars of character, we will discover aspects of our characters that are weak. Don't be discouraged but rather use this as an opportunity to commit your weakness into God's hands and ask Him to help you to grow in that area.

6. Do you play by the rules?
7. Do you take turns and share?
8. When you disagree, do you try to see the other person's side?
9. Do you speak up if you know something is unfair?
10. Do you listen to both sides before you judge?

Remember our theme verse for fairness is,

2 Chronicles 19:7b, "Judge carefully, for with the Lord our God there is no injustice or partiality or bribery."

To show partiality means to show favour to some people and not others – God is not like this and He doesn't want us to be like this either. God is fair and He wants us to be like Him.

LET'S PRAY:

If these questions have made you realise that you are not a very fair person, then ask the Lord to help you in this area as you seek to develop good character that is pleasing to God.

Give the children a few moments to pray, asking the Lord to help them to change and to grow in the areas they are weak in.

Then close in prayer, thanking the Lord that He hears our prayers and that He is more than able to help us to grow in fairness if we are willing.

Ask the Lord to help each child to grow and develop in good character, that more and more they will reflect the good and perfect character of Christ.

LET'S REMEMBER:

Revise the pillars of character with the children:

Let them all say together with you:

PILLAR 1

TRUSTWORTHINESS IS ... being honest and keeping your word

Luke 16:10, "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much ..."

PILLAR 2

RESPECT IS ... treating people the way you want to be treated

Matthew 7:12, "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you..."

PILLAR 3

RESPONSIBILITY IS ... being answerable for your actions and choices

Romans 14:12, "... Each of us will give an account of himself to God."

PILLAR 4

FAIRNESS IS ... treating people equally and honestly

2 Chronicles 19:7b, "Judge carefully, for with the Lord our God there is no injustice or partiality or bribery."

FAIRNESS IS...
...treating people equally and honestly



FAIRNESS

"...Judge carefully, for with the Lord our God there is no injustice or partiality or bribery."

2 Chronicles 19:7

LESSON 10

CHARACTER COUNTS – PILLAR 4: FAIRNESS (continued)

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children understand:

- What Fairness is
- Why we should be fair
- Fair and unfair behaviours in practical situations
- That we should strive to be fair as God is fair

Theme Verses

2 Chronicles 19:7b, “Judge carefully, for with the Lord our God there is no injustice or partiality or bribery.”

Psalms 9:16, “The Lord is known by His justice...”

1 John 3:20, “For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.”

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

We have been learning all about the 6 pillars of character and today we are going to learn more about fairness. But before we start:

Why is character so important?

When you ask the question, they must answer:

Because character counts

The next important question is:

Why does character count?

When you ask this question, they must answer:

Because who I am is more important than what I am

This means that who I am on the inside is more important than whether I am a boy or girl, tall or short, clever or not, a good sportsman or a bad one, etc.

Make sure that the children understand that when we say ‘character counts’ it means that character is important and valuable.

Repeat these questions again and the children must shout out the answers. By now you really should know the answers well. Ask one or two children to explain the answers to the questions to check that they understand.

- Who can remember our theme verse about character?

1 Samuel 16:7, "... Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

Briefly review the pillars they have learned about. As you revise them, hold up the card for each pillar and see if the children can remember the definition.

PILLAR 1 – TRUSTWORTHINESS IS ... being honest and keeping your word

PILLAR 2 – RESPECT IS ... treating people the way you want to be treated

PILLAR 3 – RESPONSIBILITY IS ... being answerable for your actions and choices

PILLAR 4 - FAIRNESS

Last week we learned about the 4th pillar of character, Fairness. Today we are going to talk more about fairness.

LET'S TALK:

- Who can remember what FAIRNESS IS.....?
FAIRNESS IS...treating people equally and honestly
- Can anyone remember the verse or part of the verse that encourages us to be fair?
2 Chronicles 19:7b, "Judge carefully, for with the Lord our God there is no injustice or partiality or bribery."

WHY BE FAIR?

Remind the children that fairness means:

- Everyone is given the same chance
- People aren't picked-on because of how they look
- People aren't liked just because of what they have or what they can do for you

LET'S DISCUSS AND ACT

Divide the children into small groups and discuss the following questions:

- What could happen if you aren't fair to other people?
- Can you think of a time when someone was not fair to you or to someone else?
Encourage the children to explain why it was unfair and how they felt about it.
- Can you think of a time when you didn't act fairly?
Encourage the children to be honest and remind them that none of us is perfect and we have all done things that we are not proud of.

Use one of these examples or make up an imaginary situation and create a short drama. Then have the children re-do the situation to make it a fair one in another short drama.

Allow the groups to act out their dramas for each other.

LET'S THINK

We are thinking about why it is so important to be fair.

- Let's think of a few jobs that adults have.
Ideas: shop owner, policeman, doctor, nurse, accountant, headmaster, teacher, etc.
Write these jobs down on the blackboard.

Choose some of the jobs mentioned and go through these questions:

- Why is it important for that person to be fair?
- What might happen if that person was unfair?

LOOKING INTO THE WORD:

Who thinks God is fair? Why?

Our theme verse for fairness makes it very clear that God is fair.

2 Chronicles 19:7b, “Judge carefully, for with the Lord our God there is no injustice or partiality or bribery.”

As you teach this part of the lesson encourage participation from the children by getting different children to read some of the verses. Do make sure that the children read loudly and clearly so that the other children can hear, otherwise read the verse again yourself so that everyone can hear.

God is fair because:

- The Bible certainly makes it very clear to us what the “rules” are if we want eternal life. We know that if we want to be saved and enjoy eternal life with Jesus, we need to believe in Him, repent and live for Him. **John 3:16, “For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”**
- The Bible tells us that we will all stand before God one day, and isn’t it wonderful to know that we will get a fair hearing because God is just.
Psalm 9:16, “The Lord is known by His justice...”
Psalm 97:2b, “... righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne.”
- We also know that we will get a fair hearing because He certainly knows all the facts, for He is an all-knowing God
Job 37:16, “... him who is perfect in knowledge.”
1 John 3:20, “For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.”
- We also know from our theme verse that God is not partial – He does not show favouritism and He does not take sides (2 Chronicles 19:7).

Let us make every effort to be fair in our dealings with others as God is fair with us.

So remember, **FAIRNESS IS...**treating people equally and honestly

LET’S PRAY:

Thank the Lord that we can trust Him to be fair. Ask Him to help us to develop into people that others can trust to be fair. Ask the Lord to help us to turn our unfair behaviours into fair behaviours that glorify God. Ask the Lord to help each child to grow and develop in good character, that more and more they will reflect the good and perfect character of Christ. Remind the children that God sees the heart.

LET’S REMEMBER:

Revise the pillars of character with the children:

Let them all say together with you:

PILLAR 1

TRUSTWORTHINESS IS ... being honest and keeping your word

Luke 16:10, “Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much ...”

PILLAR 2

RESPECT IS ... treating people the way you want to be treated

Matthew 7:12, “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you...”

PILLAR 3

RESPONSIBILITY IS ... being answerable for your actions and choices

Romans 14:12, “... Each of us will give an account of himself to God.”

PILLAR 4

FAIRNESS IS ... treating people equally and honestly

2 Chronicles 19:7b, “Judge carefully, for with the Lord our God there is no injustice or partiality or bribery.”

FAIRNESS IS...
...treating people equally and honestly



FAIRNESS

"...Judge carefully, for with the Lord our God there is no injustice or partiality or bribery."

2 Chronicles 19:7

LESSON 11

HIV/ AIDS PREVENTION AND QUESTIONNAIRE

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is to:

- Teach the children that HIV/AIDS will affect their lives in some way and, therefore, it is important that they know some basic information about it.
- Teach some of the basics about HIV/AIDS
- Challenge the children to reach out to those who are suffering as a result of HIV/AIDS
- Evaluate the children's knowledge and understanding of HIV/AIDS

Theme Verses

Luke 6:31, "Do to others as you would have them do to you."

Matthew 25:40, "...I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

For the next two lessons we are going to take a break from learning about character and revise what we have learned before about HIV/AIDS. The reason why it is so important to know the basics about HIV/AIDS is because it is a very real threat to each one of us here today. By teaching you about HIV/AIDS and how to prevent it, we hope to make a difference in your lives and the lives of those around you.

LET'S BE AWARE:

GLOBAL HIV/AIDS ESTIMATES AT THE END OF 2005:

- Can any of you guess how many people live in a town the size of Mutare?
- Can any of you guess how many people live in a city the size of Harare?

We are going to use these statistics to help us to understand what HIV/AIDS is doing around the world. Some of the latest figures on the world-wide epidemic of HIV/AIDS were published at the end of 2005.

In order to make the statistics meaningful to the children we have compared them to the populations of Harare and Mutare – choose one of these towns to help the children to make sense of the statistics

– let them close their eyes and help them to imagine that town and the number of people living there. Use the statistics and comparisons that you think will be most effective and meaningful for the children you teach.

People living with HIV/AIDS in 2005 – 38.6 million (this is 20 times the number of people living in Harare, or 106 times the number of people living in Mutare)

People newly infected with HIV in 2005 – 4.1 million (this is twice the number of people living in Harare, or 24 times the number of people living in Mutare)

AIDS deaths in 2005 – 2.8 million (this is one and a half times the number of people living in Harare, or 16 times the number of people living in Mutare)

Young people (15-24 years old) account for half of all new HIV infections worldwide. Every day, more and more people are being infected with HIV.

But now, let's get a bit closer to home:

Africa has 12 million AIDS orphans (this is 6 times the number of people living in Harare, or 70 times the number of people living in Mutare)

Africa, the continent that we live on, has the highest ratio of people living with HIV, being infected with HIV and dying as a result of HIV/AIDS.

In Zimbabwe about 1 person out of every 5 people is living with HIV. Help them to realise this by making every 5th child stand up. Help them to understand that if they as a group represented the population of Zimbabwe – as many people as the children standing up could be infected with HIV/AIDS. We need to do what we can to start bringing these numbers down.

LET'S SEE WHAT WE KNOW AND REMEMBER:

What we are going to do today is to ask you to answer some questions about HIV/AIDS to help us to see what you know and remember. This will also help us to know what we need to teach you about HIV/AIDS. This is important because as we said at the beginning of the lesson, HIV/AIDS is something that will affect each one of us in some way. Please assure the children that it doesn't matter whether or not they know all the answers; we just want to get an idea of what they know. It is not like a school test, they don't even have to put their names on their papers.

If you are able, photocopy the questionnaire for the children and give them a certain amount of time to complete it. It doesn't matter if they don't all finish.

Or you can read out the questions – it doesn't matter if they don't all manage to finish.

For the younger children: get them into a separate group or groups and let the volunteer go through some of the questions with them and write down some of the answers, or note questions that they did or didn't answer well.

See: **HIV/AIDS BASELINE QUESTIONNAIRE** at the end of the lesson and **ANSWER SHEET**

LET'S PLAY:

Give the children a break and play a game or two and then finish the lesson.

LET'S LEARN:

REVISION ABOUT HIV AND AIDS:

- *It is important to remind ourselves about some of the basics of HIV/AIDS. We are going to revise just a few things before we finish today.*
See visual aids at the end of the lesson.

- Who can remember what HIV stands for?

Write the letters and what they stand for on the blackboard or manila boards for the children to see

H	stands for Human
I	stand for Immunodeficiency
V	stands for Virus

This means that HIV is a virus that attacks the human body. It attacks our immune system, which is the system in our bodies that fights off infections.

So, HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus. Get all the children to repeat this a few times together.

- Who can remember what AIDS stands for?

A stands for Acquired which means not inherited, it something you get
I stand for Immuno, which stands for the body's defence against disease
D stands for Deficiency, which means a lack of or weakness of the body's immune system
S Syndrome stands for a collection of or combination of signs and symptoms of illness

This means that AIDS is something we get as a result of infection by the HIV virus. The virus attacks our immune system and gradually weakens it - this is what is meant by immune deficiency. Eventually our immune system is so weak that a number of different infections can attack our body and eventually cause our death.

So, AIDS stands for Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER INFECTION WITH HIV?

In the beginning stages a person who has been infected with HIV will appear perfectly well and this is the stage when we say that someone is HIV positive. Because the HIV positive person may appear perfectly well and healthy, there is no way of telling whether a person is infected or not.

As the virus weakens the immune system (the body's defense system against disease) the person will start to get sick more often and they will get to a point when they are unable to recover from illnesses – this is the stage when we say that someone has AIDS.

- What are some of the diseases that a person with AIDS can die from?
 Let the children respond first.
 The person will eventually die from one or more different illnesses e.g. pneumonia, TB, meningitis, diarrhea. The illnesses that cause the death of a person with AIDS will differ from person to person.
- Who knows what some of the signs and symptoms of HIV/AIDS are?
 Fever; mouth, throat and chest infections; pneumonia; sexually transmitted infections; tuberculosis; ongoing diarrhea; headaches; cancer; tiredness and weakness; memory and concentration loss; severe weight loss

WHAT IS OUR RESPONSE?

As Christians we really do have a responsibility to care for those who are living with HIV/AIDS. We may not always know whether someone who is sick has HIV/AIDS, but we can act in love towards anyone we know who is sick.

There are two verses in the Bible that will encourage us to act in a loving and caring way towards those who are suffering.

Luke 6:31, "Do to others as you would have them do to you."

We all know how we would like others to treat us, especially when we are sick or sad. In the same way, we should try to do these things for people whom we know are sick and suffering. People may be suffering because they are infected or because they have lost a loved one as a result of HIV/AIDS.

Matthew 25:40, "...I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."

Matthew 25:31-46: In this passage Jesus teaches that when we show love, care and compassion to others, it is as though we are doing it to Him.

This is such a challenge for us as Christians to act in love. And remember, even if your actions are not always noticed or appreciated, Jesus will notice and see what you do.

LET'S PRAY:

Lord, thank you for all that we have learned today. Help us to use this knowledge to make a difference in our lives and in the lives of others. Please help us to show love, care and compassion to those who are suffering as a result of HIV/AIDS.

HIV/AIDS BASELINE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What does HIV stand for?

2. What does AIDS stand for?

3. Will a person who has been infected with HIV become sick immediately? _____

4. Can you tell if someone is HIV+?

5. What are some of the signs and symptoms of HIV/AIDS?

6. How is HIV transmitted?

7. Tick if correct, cross if incorrect

You can get HIV from:

- _____ Holding hands
- _____ Hugging
- _____ Sharing a cup
- _____ Sexual intercourse
- _____ Sneezing and coughing
- _____ Kissing
- _____ Mosquitoes

8. Can HIV/AIDS be cured?

9. Do you know of ways that HIV can be cured?

10. What are some of the ways some people think you can be cured from HIV/AIDS?

11. What is the only way you can prevent someone getting HIV through sexual intercourse?

12. What does it mean to abstain from sex?

13. Should we mix with people who are HIV+ or who have AIDS? _____
Why/Why not?

14. Should the church be involved in dealing with the challenge of HIV/AIDS? _____
Why or why not?

15. Are condoms 100% safe? _____

16. Would Jesus have cared for those who have HIV/AIDS?

HIV/AIDS BASELINE QUESTIONNAIRE – ANSWER SHEET

- What does HIV stand for? Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus
- What does AIDS stand for? Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
- Will a person who has been infected with HIV become sick immediately? No, in the beginning stages the person will appear perfectly well and this is the stage when we say that someone is HIV positive. As the virus weakens the immune system (the body's defense system against disease) the person will start to get sick more often and they will get to a point when they are unable to recover from illnesses – this is the stage when we say that someone has AIDS. The person will eventually die from one or more different illnesses e.g. pneumonia, TB, meningitis, diarrhea. The illnesses that cause the death of a person with AIDS will differ from person to person.
- Can you tell if someone is HIV+? No. In the beginning stages of infection, the HIV positive person may appear perfectly well and healthy, so there is no way of telling whether a person is infected or not.
- What are some of the signs and symptoms of HIV/AIDS? Fever; mouth, throat and chest infections; pneumonia; sexually transmitted infections; tuberculosis; ongoing diarrhea; headaches; cancer; tiredness and weakness; memory and concentration loss; severe weight loss
- How is HIV transmitted? There are 3 ways in which HIV is transmitted: 1. Sexual intercourse 2. Through HIV infected blood 3. From mother to child
- Tick if correct, cross if incorrect
You can get HIV from:
☒ Holding hands
☒ Hugging
☒ Sharing a cup
☒ Sexual intercourse
☒ Sneezing and coughing
☒ (only deep kissing if there are sores/cuts in the mouth) Kissing
☒ Mosquitoes
- Can HIV/AIDS be cured? No
- Do you know of ways that HIV can be cured? Respond to their answers
- What are some of the ways some people think you can be cured from HIV/AIDS? Remind the children that there is no cure for HIV/AIDS
- What is the only way you can prevent getting HIV through sexual intercourse? By having no sex before marriage (abstinence) and by both partners in a marriage being faithful to each other (not having sex with anyone else)
- What does it mean to abstain from sex? No sex before marriage
- Should we mix with people who are HIV+ or who have AIDS? Yes Why/Why not? We can't get HIV just by mixing with people and the Bible is clear that we should treat others as we would like them to treat us, and that we should love and accept one another.
- Should the church be involved in dealing with the challenge of HIV/AIDS? Yes
Why or why not? Yes – the church should be reaching out with God's love to those who are suffering in any way.

- Are condoms 100% safe? **No**
- Would Jesus have cared for those who have HIV/AIDS? **Yes – Jesus reaches out with love and compassion to all those in need**

The purpose of giving you the answers is to help you to see where the children need more teaching or if there are things they don't understand. To make the questionnaire useful, you need to decide which questions were most poorly answered and then use the answers to teach the children in the next lesson. Don't say to them that you are teaching them something because they answered the question poorly – rather keep things positive and just use their answers as a guide for your teaching in the next lesson.

Some of this teaching is included at the end of this lesson.

H	Human
I	Immuno- Deficiency
V	Virus

A	Acquired
I	Immune
D	Deficiency
S	Syndrome

LESSON 12

HIV AND AIDS PREVENTION

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is to teach the children:

- The importance of the prevention of HIV/AIDS
- The 3 ways in which HIV is spread
- Practical ways to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS
- The importance of having purpose in life
- That Abstinence and Faithfulness are God's answer to prevention

1 Thessalonians 5:23 "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"(New King James Version)

1 Thessalonians 4:3-4 says, "it is God's will that you should be sanctified: That you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is honourable,"

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

Last week we spoke a bit about HIV/AIDS and today we are going to talk about how we can prevent it from spreading. We have been talking a lot about character and it is important to realize that developing godly character will help to prevent us from getting HIV/AIDS.

- What does it mean to prevent something?
In the context of HIV/AIDS, prevention is the process of reducing risky behaviour that increases the transmission of HIV.
- What are some of these risky behaviours that will increase our chance of getting HIV/AIDS?
Ideas: unhealthy relationships, sex, drinking, drug abuse, etc.

In 2003 the former South Africa president Nelson Mandela was quoted as saying, "AIDS is a war against humanity." This means that AIDS is a war against all human life. If we want to help to win this war we need to be making efforts to prevent the spread of this disease – in our own lives and through our influence on those around us.

Therefore, it is very important for you children to learn about HIV and to protect yourselves from this disease, because it causes so much suffering.

- What sort of suffering has HIV/AIDS brought?
Let the children answer. Ideas: orphans, child-headed families, a lot of deaths, sicknesses and deterioration of human bodies, loss of breadwinners, etc.

LET'S REMEMBER:

- Who remembers from last week what HIV stands for?
Human Immunodeficiency Virus
- Who remembers what AIDS stands for?
Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome

So, we remember that HIV attacks our immune system - this is the system that helps our bodies to fight off disease. It eventually causes the immune system to become so weak that the person cannot recover from diseases and will die from one or a number of different diseases.

LET'S REVISE:

Having reviewed the children's answers to the questionnaire and the lesson material for Lesson 11 and 12, please add whatever other teaching you feel is necessary as a result of the questionnaire, using the answers we have given you to guide your teaching. Most of the information has been covered in these two lessons.

HOW DOES HIV/AIDS SPREAD?

- Who can remember how HIV is spread?

Then teach them the following:

THERE ARE 3 WAYS IN WHICH HIV IS SPREAD:

Write the 3 main underlined headings on the blackboard

- **Through sexual intercourse** - this is the main way in which HIV is spread. Therefore, we urge you children to follow in God's ways and abstain from sexual intercourse – this means no sex before marriage.
- **Through HIV-infected blood gaining entry into the body**. Therefore, we urge you children to avoid touching any blood because one is never certain about whether the blood is infected.
- **Through infected parents causing mother-to-child transmission**. At this point you as the child can do nothing about this. However, the pregnant mother may be in a position to prevent the virus from infecting the child through a drug called Nevirapine. Nevirapine is a medication administered to the HIV positive pregnant woman at the time of delivery.

Get one or two children to stand up and tell the rest of the children the 3 ways in which HIV is spread.

LET'S DISCUSS:

Group work:

Get the children into groups for a discussion of ways of preventing themselves from contracting HIV. Let each group share one of their ideas with the rest of the children.

Simple ways of preventing oneself from contracting HIV:

Teach the children about taking care of themselves in terms of HIV prevention.

For example: do not touch any blood, do not use someone else's razor blade, do not use old syringes, etc.

- What should you do if a friend is hurt and there is blood coming out of the wound?
Do not touch the blood but help the friend with hands wrapped with plastic or gloves, or call an adult. Avoid touching blood with uncovered hands.

Most importantly - avoid sexual intercourse, since it is the major enemy for contracting HIV; and encourage your friends to do the same - their lives are special. Learn to avoid situations that may lead to sexual intercourse.

LET'S REMEMBER:

Ask the children if any of them remember our saying about abstinence and faithfulness. Then remind them of this saying:

Abstinence before marriage

Faithfulness in marriage

That's the way

***That's God's way
I'm gonna do it God's way***

Let the children repeat the saying a few times together – make it fun!

- Who can tell us what abstinence means?
This means no sexual intercourse before marriage
- Who can tell us what it means to be faithful in a marriage? This means that once married, a husband and a wife only have sexual intercourse with each other and do not get involved in sexual relationships with any other people. The Bible says in **1 Corinthians 7:2**, “... **But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband.**”

LIVING WITH PURPOSE:

One of the keys of prevention is to have a purpose-driven life.

- What does it mean to have a purpose-driven life or to live life with purpose? Let the children come up with their own ideas and help them to think of things that give life purpose or meaning. People who live with purpose have a dream for the future. We should know our dream for the future.
- Who has a dream for the future?

For example: becoming a teacher, Doctor, Businessman/woman, etc.

In order for you to achieve your dreams, you need to take care of your body and do your best to prevent yourself from contracting HIV so that you do not spoil your future. Remind yourself of your dreams for the future (you may want to give the children a few moments to think back and remind themselves of their dream for the future.) Our dreams are so special.

LOOKING INTO THE WORD:

The Bible warns us about many problems that will take place in the end times and some of these problems already exist in our generation. **Matthew 24:7** says “**For nations will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences and earthquakes in various places.**” (New King James Version)

It is not so surprising, then, that there is so much war, famine and disease and many natural disasters. We could see HIV/AIDS as one of these diseases.

We are going to look at two Scriptures that teach us about what we say in our special saying:

***Abstinence before marriage
Faithfulness in marriage
That's the way
That's God's way
I'm gonna do it God's way***

The Bible emphasizes the need for each one of us to take care of our bodies.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 says “**Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**” (New King James Version).

If we love the Lord Jesus, part of our purpose in life is to please Him. So, as we live our lives we need to watch out for activities and decisions that are displeasing to God and may spoil our dreams. The verse talks about keeping our bodies blameless (pure) – this includes abstaining from sexual activities until we are married and being faithful to our marriage partner one day. This verse also teaches us that it is God who will help us and work in us to live lives that will please Him.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-4 says, “**God wants you to be holy, so you should keep clear of all sexual sin. Then each of you will control your body and live in holiness and honor.**” (New Living Translation)

Once again, if we want to live lives that are pleasing to the Lord we need to follow His ways and obey His Word. This verse makes it clear that God's way is **Abstinence** before marriage and **Faithfulness** within marriage. Let us ask the Lord to help us to honour Him with our bodies.

Let the children repeat the saying again.

Teach the children about the Centres is test your HIV status for your benefit. The test is helpful because after you know your status, you will be able to get adequate help and advice. This is only

possible if you ask your parents or guardians for permission to go for the test. There is a small amount of money required for payment of the service.

The volunteers need to know where HIV status is tested in their community so as to give correct information to the children.

LET'S PRAY:

Thank the Lord for all that we have learned today and ask Him to help the children to remember what they have learned about preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS. Remind them that living a purpose-driven life will help them to avoid activities that may spoil their future. Ask the Lord to help the children to have a dream for the future and to help them to live the kind of lives that will be pleasing to Him and that will help them to reach their dreams.

Let the children pray aloud, "Thank you Lord that I am special and you love me. Please help me to do my best to live an HIV-free life."

Remind the children lovingly that although we can do our best to keep ourselves HIV-free, some children, youth and adults find themselves in situations in which they have no control and are unable to protect themselves. We have discussed this in previous lessons. Remind them of the importance of going for help and that children are welcome to talk to any of the volunteers if they want to.

CHARACTER COUNTS – PILLAR 5: CARING

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children understand:

- What it means to be caring
- Why caring is so important
- That they need to develop a caring heart
- The challenge to be more caring in their daily lives

Theme Verses

Philippians 2:4, “Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.” (New King James Version)

Matthew 25:35-36, “For I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed me.” (New King James Version)

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

We have been learning all about the 6 pillars of character and today we are going to learn about caring.

We've had a bit of a break from learning about character, so let's see who can remember?

Why is character so important?

When you ask the question, they must answer:

Because character counts

The next important question is:

Why does character count?

When you ask this question, they must answer:

Because who I am is more important than what I am

This means that who I am on the inside is more important than whether I am a boy or girl, tall or short, clever or not, a good sportsman or a bad one, etc.

Make sure that the children understand that when we say 'character counts' it means that character is important and valuable.

Repeat these questions again and the children must shout out the answers. By now you really should know the answers well. Ask one or two children to explain the answers to the questions to check that they understand.

- Who can remember our theme verse about character?

1 Samuel 16:7, "... Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

Briefly review the pillars they have learned about. As you revise them, hold up the card for each pillar and see if the children can remember the definition.

PILLAR 1 – TRUSTWORTHINESS IS ... being honest and keeping your word

PILLAR 2 – RESPECT IS ... treating people the way you want to be treated

PILLAR 3 – RESPONSIBILITY IS ... being answerable for your actions and choices

PILLAR 4 – FAIRNESS IS ...treating people equally and honestly

PILLAR 5 - CARING

The 5th pillar of character is Caring (add the visual aid for Caring to the other 4 pillars)

Can any of you remember what **CARING IS**... from last year?

CARING IS ...showing others that you love them

LET'S LISTEN:

I'm going to start by telling you a story:

Chipo was a grade 1 pupil who was learning at a nearby primary school, which was a distance of about 800 metres away. She was living with both parents and she had a young brother John, who was 1 year old. One day, she came back from school only to find the door closed and no-one at home. Her mother had gone to the clinic with John, who had suddenly developed stomach pains. When Chipo got home, she was very confused. At that moment of shock and confusion, Mrs. Khala, who lived nearby, saw Chipo sitting at the door looking very sad. She came closer to find out what was wrong with Chipo. Chipo told her that she had come home to find the door closed and no-one there. Mrs. Khala invited Chipo to go home with her while she waited for her mother, and she prepared a meal for her.

LET'S TALK:

Ask the children the following questions:

11. Was there anything about caring in this story?

12. Who cared for who?

Ideas: Mrs Khala cared for Chipo

13. What did she do in order to show that she cared? Ideas: She showed compassion, concern and kindness by asking Chipo to go home with her and by feeding her.

THE DO'S AND DON'T'S OF CARING

We are going to read a few statements – some of them are things that caring people DO and some of them are things that caring people DON'T do.

Tell the children to shout out 'DO' or 'DON'T' after you have read each statement

A caring person:

- Shows kindness and compassion **DO**
- Is generous towards others **DO**
- Is cruel to others **DON'T**
- Live by the golden rule, that is: treat others the way you want them to treat you. **DO**
- Is selfish and self-centered **DON'T**
- Thinks before putting things in action **DO**
- Is considerate and thinks about how his/her decisions and actions will affect others. **DO**
- Doesn't consider the feelings of others **DON'T**

So, we can say that **CARING IS** ...showing others that you love them.

Repeat this a few times with the children.

LET'S LOOK INTO THE WORD:

Jesus taught when we show care for others it is as though we are doing it to Him.

Matthew 25:35-36, "For I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed me." (New King James Version)

- What are some of the things that we can do for others as though we were doing it for Christ Himself?

This passage encourages us to show care to everyone.

It helps us to care for others, if we remember that it is as though we were caring for Jesus.

Philippians 2:4 says, "Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others." (New King James Version)

In order to show care we need to be aware of the needs and interests of others.

If we put the interests of others before our own we will be showing them that we care.

This is our theme verse for caring, so encourage the children to repeat it a few times and try to memorise it.

While Jesus was on earth He showed His care for others in many different ways. If we want to be like Jesus and please Him, then we need to do the same.

If we want to be caring people then we need to have a caring heart. *Draw a big heart on the blackboard.*



So, **CARING IS** ... showing others that you love them

LET'S WRITE:

Divide the children into groups and give each child a newsprint paper and a pencil or coloured pencil to answer the following questions:

- Have you ever shown care to any one?
- What did you do to show that you cared?
- Who cares for you in your life?
- Who does not care for you in your life?

Once they have answered the questions they can spend some time discussing their answers in their groups.

LET'S IMAGINE:

Close your eyes and imagine yourself as a child with a caring character. Imagine yourself caring for others. Imagine some of the things that you do.

Then let the children respond by writing and/or drawing pictures about themselves as caring people.

If there is time, some of them can share with the group what they have written or drawn.

Encourage them to take their pictures home to remind themselves of what they should be doing as caring children.

LET'S PRAY:

Let all the children pray, asking God to give them a caring heart for every day of their lives.

LET'S REMEMBER:

Revise the pillars of character with the children:

Let them all say together with you:

PILLAR 1

TRUSTWORTHINESS IS ... being honest and keeping your word

Luke 16:10, "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much ..."

PILLAR 2

RESPECT IS ... treating people the way you want to be treated

Matthew 7:12, "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you..."

PILLAR 3

RESPONSIBILITY IS ... being answerable for your actions and choices

Romans 14:12, "... Each of us will give an account of himself to God."

PILLAR 4

FAIRNESS IS ... treating people equally and honestly

2 Chronicles 19:7b, "Judge carefully, for with the Lord our God there is no injustice or partiality or bribery."

PILLAR 5

CARING IS ... showing others that you love them

Philippians 2:4, "Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others." (New King James Version)

CARING IS...
...showing others that you love them



CARING

"Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others."

Philippians 2:4

LESSON 14

CHARACTER COUNTS – PILLAR 5: CARING (continued)

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children understand:

- What caring is
- The characteristics of a caring person
- That the Bible teaches us to be caring
- What it means to be caring in our daily lives

Theme Verses

Philippians 2:4, “Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.” (New King James Version)

Ephesians 4:32, “Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

We have been learning all about the 6 pillars of character and today we are going to learn about caring.

We’ve had a bit of a break from learning about character, so let’s see who can remember?

Why is character so important?

When you ask the question, they must answer:

Because character counts

The next important question is:

Why does character count?

When you ask this question, they must answer:

Because who I am is more important than what I am

This means that who I am on the inside is more important than whether I am a boy or girl, tall or short, clever or not, a good sportsman or a bad one, etc.

Make sure that the children understand that when we say 'character counts' it means that character is important and valuable.

Repeat these questions again and the children must shout out the answers. By now you really should know the answers well. Ask one or two children to explain the answers to the questions to check that they understand.

- Who can remember our theme verse about character?

1 Samuel 16:7, "... Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

Briefly review the pillars they have learned about. As you revise them, hold up the card for each pillar and see if the children can remember the definition.

PILLAR 1 – TRUSTWORTHINESS IS ... being honest and keeping your word

PILLAR 2 – RESPECT IS ... treating people the way you want to be treated

PILLAR 3 – RESPONSIBILITY IS ... being answerable for your actions and choices

PILLAR 4 – FAIRNESS IS ... treating people equally and honestly

PILLAR 5 – CARING IS ... showing others that you love them

PILLAR 5: CARING

Last week we were learning about caring and today we are going to carry on talking about being caring.

- Is caring important?
- How would we feel if no one cared for us?

Let the children shout out the answers

LET'S TALK AND ACT:

Remind the children about the four main characteristics of caring.

Write the four main points on the blackboard, and explain each point so that the children understand what it means.

We can care for others in the following ways:

- **Be compassionate and sympathetic.**
 - Being sensitive to other children's needs
 - Being unselfish
 - Be available to give help wherever it is possible
- **Be kind, loving and considerate**
 - Be nice to other children
 - Helping others in need
 - Do small things with great love
 - Have a caring heart
 - Do all things in love
- **Be thankful and express gratitude**
 - Be grateful for the things other people do for you
 - Always remember to say thank you and to show people that you are grateful
- **Be forgiving**
 - Be willing to forgive other children who might have wronged you
 - Be reconciled to other children – make peace with other children

Ask 8 children to come up to the front. Tell them that you will point to one of the characteristics of caring and they need to say loudly to the rest of the children, "We need to be _____" (using the word/phrase you point to.)

Then the other children must repeat the same words.

The 8 phrases you are going to point out are:

We need to be compassionate, sympathetic, kind, loving, considerate, thankful; express gratitude; be forgiving. Each child will use one of the caring words/phrases.

Remember, **CARING IS** ... showing others that you love them

LET'S THINK:

We often hear people say, "You are so uncaring and selfish!"

To get the children thinking, ask them the following questions:

- Why do you think people are uncaring and selfish?
- To what extent would you go out of your way for another person? What does it mean to go out of your way for someone?
- How important is caring in your life?
- Remember, **CARING IS** ...showing others that you love them
- What is the benefit of being caring?

LET'S LOOK INTO THE WORD:

Remember our theme verse for caring: **Philippians 2:4, "Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others." (New King James Version)**

- What does this verse mean?

Encourage the children to come up with ideas of their own.

Ideas: In order to show care we need to be aware of the needs and interests of others. If we put the interests of others before our own we will be showing them that we care.

Also remember, **Matthew 7:12, "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you..."**

There are some lovely verses in the Bible that teach us about caring and what we should be doing in order to show care. We will look at just a few.

Remind the children of the four main characteristics of caring that we have learned about – try to have this up on the blackboard still.

Tell the children to remember these points as we read these verses and see how God's Word teaches us these things.

Tell the children to listen out for caring words as you read and after each Scripture, get the children to give you the key words about caring – write these on the board below the characteristics of caring.

The underlined parts of each verse are the key words you are looking for.

Ephesians 4:32, "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

Ephesians 5:1-2, "Be imitators of God ... and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us..."

Colossians 3:12-13, "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you."

Colossians 3:15, "... And be thankful."

Now show the children how the key words match up with the characteristics of caring that we have learned about.

The Bible is quite clear that we need to be caring.

While Jesus was on earth He showed His care for others in many different ways. If we want to be like Jesus and please Him, then we need to do the same.

LET'S DISCUSS:

Divide the children into groups and ask them to hold a discussion in a question-and-answer scenario.

Tell them that each child should have a chance to ask the questions and to answer the questions.

- Can you give an example of how you were kind with your words during the last week?
- Will you tell us something that you did which was helpful during the last week?
- Tell us how you showed that you were thankful to someone this week.

When you become a child with a caring character you will grow up able to prevent yourself from contracting HIV/AIDS by making good choices in life and carefully deciding what to do and what not to do.

WHAT DOES CARING LOOK LIKE?

Keep the children in their groups and give each group one of the following scenarios to act out for the rest of the children. In a short drama they must act out what caring would look like in that situation.

What would caring look like if ...

- You were doing one of your chores at home?
- You noticed that one of your friends looked a bit sad?
- You came in from playing outdoors and started talking to your mother?
- You were in charge of caring for your family pet (dog/cat...)?
- Your sister lets you borrow something she really likes?
- Your friend says sorry for something he/she did that upset you?
- Another child was sick and bed-ridden due to HIV/AIDS?

Tell them to keep the characteristics of caring in mind – have the blackboard where the children can all see.

LET'S PRAY:

*Let the volunteers present pray with the different groups of children. In those small groups ask the Lord God to help each child to develop a **CARING CHARACTER**:*

14. Being kind
15. Being compassionate; showing care to others
16. Expressing gratitude
17. Forgiving others
18. Helping others in need

LET'S REMEMBER:

Revise the pillars of character with the children:

Let them all say together with you:

PILLAR 1

TRUSTWORTHINESS IS ... being honest and keeping your word

Luke 16:10, "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much ..."

PILLAR 2

RESPECT IS ... treating people the way you want to be treated

Matthew 7:12, "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you..."

PILLAR 3

RESPONSIBILITY IS ... being answerable for your actions and choices

Romans 14:12, "... Each of us will give an account of himself to God."

PILLAR 4

FAIRNESS IS ... treating people equally and honestly

2 Chronicles 19:7b, "Judge carefully, for with the Lord our God there is no injustice or partiality or bribery."

PILLAR 5

CARING IS ... showing others that you love them

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

CARING IS...
...showing others that you love them



CARING

"Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others."

Philippians 2:4

LESSON 15

CHARACTER COUNTS – PILLAR 6: GOOD CITIZENSHIP

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children understand:

- What it means to be a good citizen
- The importance of order and leadership
- The importance of being a good citizen
- That God's Word teaches us to be good citizens
- That it all starts with each one of us

Theme Verses

Romans 13:1, "Everyone must submit to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established..."

I Peter 2:17, "Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king."

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

We have been learning all about the 6 pillars of character and today we are going to learn about caring.

We've had a bit of a break from learning about character, so let's see who can remember?

Why is character so important?

When you ask the question, they must answer:

Because character counts

The next important question is:

Why does character count?

When you ask this question, they must answer:

Because who I am is more important than what I am

This means that who I am on the inside is more important than whether I am a boy or girl, tall or short, clever or not, a good sportsman or a bad one, etc.

Make sure that the children understand that when we say 'character counts' it means that character is important and valuable.

Repeat these questions again and the children must shout out the answers. *By now you really should know the answers well. Ask one or two children to explain the answers to the questions to check that they understand.*

- Who can remember our theme verse about character?

1 Samuel 16:7, "... Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

Briefly review the pillars they have learned about. As you revise them, hold up the card for each pillar and see if the children can remember the definition.

PILLAR 1 – TRUSTWORTHINESS IS ... being honest and keeping your word

PILLAR 2 – RESPECT IS ... treating people the way you want to be treated

PILLAR 3 – RESPONSIBILITY IS ... being answerable for your actions and choices

PILLAR 4 – FAIRNESS IS ... treating people equally and honestly

PILLAR 5 – CARING IS ... showing others that you love them

PILLAR 6: GOOD CITIZENSHIP

The last pillar of character is called 'Good Citizenship'.

- What do you think it means to be a good citizen?
- Who remembers from last year what **GOOD CITIZENSHIP IS...** ?

GOOD CITIZENSHIP IS ... showing your concern by doing your duty.

Remember to repeat and emphasise this phrase so that the children will remember it.

- What is order? Ideas: order means that things are organized, structured, carefully thought out, planned, etc.
- Who thinks order is important?
- What would you prefer in your community – order or chaos?

There would be no order in any society or family without leadership. Therefore, God has instituted leadership in all levels of society.

- Who are some of these leaders?
Ideas: government authorities, chiefs, community leaders, school principals, teachers, pastors, parents, family members.
- How do you think our communities would look if there were no leaders in place and no law or rules in place?
Let the children come up with their own ideas. Help them to see the value of having leaders, rules and laws in place in our communities.

When God created the world He created order. It has always been God's will for children, adults and all living creatures to live in an orderly way. We can do this by being good citizens and observing the following principles:

- **Doing your duty**
- **Doing your share**
- **Obedying the rules**
- **Respecting the law and authorities**

Write these 4 principles on the blackboard.

Good citizenship is doing your share to help your family and make your community a better place. Good citizens are good neighbours, they co-operate and work together with others. Good citizens obey laws and rules and they respect the authority of parents, teachers and others. Good citizens care about and protect the environment.

LET'S ACT

We are going to play a game about obeying the rules.

Prepare 3 pictures to represent traffic lights – one picture with a red circle on it, another with a yellow circle and the other with a green circle. Get three children to hold up these pictures and tell the children that they represent the robot lights which control the traffic in town.

Then ask 3 children to come up and pretend to be driving cars. The first one drives through the red robot - this is breaking the law. The second one drives through the yellow robot – this also has some degree of danger, while the last one drives through a green robot.

Now ask the children seated to answer these questions:

- Who broke the law? Answer: the first child
- What could have happened in this situation? Answer: this car might have crashed into another car causing damage to the cars and perhaps to people in the cars as well, someone in the car or a pedestrian might have been killed or seriously injured.
- Who may not have broken the law? Answer: the second child
- What could have happened in this situation? Answer: the yellow light is a warning to be careful, so if this driver did not go through the yellow light cautiously – then he might have hit another car or pedestrian.
- Who did not break the law? Answer: the last child
- What would have happened in this situation? Answer: the driver would have passed safely across the intersection.

From this example we can see that rules and laws are put in place to protect us and others. When people break the law, there are usually serious consequences, as we saw from this example.

19. Is it important to obey the law? Yes. Ask them this question twice and let them shout out the answer together.

LOOKING INTO THE WORD:

Our theme verse for this pillar is **Romans 13:1, “Everyone must submit to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established...”**

We have already spoken about who these authorities are – the government, chiefs, local authorities, community leaders, teachers, pastors, parents and family members.

God in His almighty knowledge allows certain people to be leaders. However, they are accountable to God Himself.

- How do we submit to these authorities? Ideas: showing them respect, obeying them, doing what they ask or expect us to do. It is important to understand though, that God does not expect us to do things that are against His will. So if someone in a position of authority over you asks you to do something you know is wrong, then go and speak to someone who can help you and advise you.

In **Matthew 22:21** Jesus said, **“Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.”**

Caesar was the name of the man who governed the Roman world and everyone had to pay taxes to Caesar. Jesus is teaching about honouring the government and he is saying that we must pay the taxes that we are expected to pay. We see that Jesus Himself led by example on this issue of paying taxes. When you grow and by God’s grace you earn a salary, you should remember to pay taxes.

This is one of the ways in which we can do our duty.

Another verse that teaches us about Good Citizenship is **1 Peter 2:17, “Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king.”**

This text teaches us about relating well to others while we are doing our personal business and living in our communities. We should be good neighbours and we should try to volunteer to do things to make our homes, school and community a better place. This verse teaches us about honoring God and our leaders.

We need to ask ourselves if we are good citizens. Answer these questions for yourself:

- Do you co-operate with others?
- Do you obey rules and laws?
- Do you do your share to make your home, school and neighbourhood better?

- Do you help to protect the environment?

If we want to be good citizens we need to be doing these sorts of things and follow the 4 principles we learned about (on the blackboard).

Remember it starts with each one of us. Remember that:

**To build cities and towns of character,
We need families of character.
To have families of character,
We need adults and children of character.
To have children of character,
Each child needs to make one good choice at a time.**

LET'S WRITE

Give the children some newsprint papers and pencils or coloured pencils to write or draw children who are respecting the law and authorities. Let the children write: Whose responsibility is it to make this a better country for us all?

After that let some of the children share what they have written or drawn with other children. Thereafter, teach the children that "To build a country of character, we need to be children of character – if we want this country to be a good place to live in then we ourselves need to make it a good place for us all to live in."

*It is important for the children to understand that to be a child of character one needs to be **Trustworthy, Respectful, Responsible, Fair in one's dealings, and Caring towards others - all these will lead them to be Good citizens.***

LET'S PRAY

Pray with the children that God may help them to be true citizens who will grow up and desire to please God by being good citizens. While in the spirit of prayer ask the children to ask the Lord to forgive them for ways in which they have not been good citizens and ask Him to help them to improve in these areas.

LET'S REMEMBER:

Revise the 6 pillars with the children:

Let them all say together with you:

PILLAR 1

TRUSTWORTHINESS IS ... being honest and keeping your word

Luke 16:10, "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much ..."

PILLAR 2

RESPECT IS ... treating people the way you want to be treated

Matthew 7:12, "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you..."

PILLAR 3

RESPONSIBILITY IS ... being answerable for your actions and choices

Romans 14:12, "... Each of us will give an account of himself to God."

PILLAR 4

FAIRNESS IS ... treating people equally and honestly

2 Chronicles 19:7b, "Judge carefully, for with the Lord our God there is no injustice or partiality or bribery."

PILLAR 5

CARING IS ... showing others that you love them

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

PILLAR 6

GOOD CITIZENSHIP IS ... showing your concern by doing your duty

Romans 13:1, “Everyone must submit to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established...”

GOOD CITIZENSHIP IS...
...showing your concern by doing your duty



GOOD CITIZENSHIP

"Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established..."

Romans 13:1

LESSON 16

CHARACTER COUNTS – YOUR WALL OF CHARACTER

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children:

- Are encouraged to build a strong wall of character with all 6 pillars
- Are reminded of the 6 pillars of character
- Understand how our character affects our everyday life
- Are encouraged to identify the weaknesses in their character and work on building good, godly character

Theme Verse

1 Samuel 16:7, "... Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

We have learned so much about character. We have learned that character is all about our thoughts, attitudes and actions. It is all about who we are on the inside. Here is a lovely quote that should inspire us to want to develop character in our lives.

***Watch your thoughts; they become your words;
Watch your words; they become your action;
Watch your actions; they become your habits;
Watch your habits; they become your character;
Watch your character, it becomes your destiny
Said by Frank Outlaw***

This is the last lesson on character and so for the last time, let's hear it:

Why is character so important?

Because character counts

Why does character count?

Because who I am is more important than what I am

By now we really hope that the children have learned some of the verses and phrases about character. This is the last lesson on character, so if possible try to have a few small prizes for children who can answer some of the questions. If this is not possible, get the children to cheer loudly for those who know the answers.

- Who can remember our theme verse about character?

1 Samuel 16:7, "... Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

A STRONG WALL OF CHARACTER

We have seen over these last weeks as we have learned about character, how the 6 pillars of character stand together to form a strong wall of character. Use the visual aids to help them to see this.

Now we are going to play a game to show us how important it is to have all 6 pillars in place in our character.

Ask 6 children to come up to act as the wall of character. Each child represents one of the pillars of character that we have learned about. Tell them to stand next to each other and link up with each other by hooking their arms around each others' arms. Tell them to stand with their feet apart so that they are really steady, and to hold the wall together as tightly as they can.

Then ask one child to come and try to give the wall a good shaking and pulling – see if they can find a weak spot and see if they can manage to break up the wall. Then ask another child and let the 2 of them try together and then get a third child to join them.

Then remove one of the pillars from the wall and repeat the exercise.

Then remove another two pillars and repeat the exercise and so on,

The fewer the pillars there are, the weaker the wall.

Use this exercise to show the children how our wall of character is strongest when we have all the pillars in place and that our character gets weaker and weaker when fewer of these pillars are in place.

THE 6 PILLARS OF CHARACTER:

Before we go any further, let's see who can remember some of what we have been learning about.

- Who can list for us the 6 pillars of character?

They are: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Good Citizenship. It doesn't matter what order they list the pillars in. Encourage a few children to respond and give prizes and/or cheers for the children who do well.

Now we are going to go through the 6 pillars. *Please use the visual aids as you go along and stick them up somewhere for all the children to see.*

Go through each pillar from the 1st pillar to the 6th pillar and ask the children these 2 questions:

- What does this pillar stand for?

The answer should begin with the name of the pillar e.g. Trustworthiness is...

- What is the theme verse for this pillar?

If the children are not sure, let them try to remember at least part of the verse or some of the words in the verse.

After each pillar let all the children repeat the answers together.

The answers are:

PILLAR 1

TRUSTWORTHINESS IS ... being honest and keeping your word

Luke 16:10, "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much ..."

PILLAR 2

RESPECT IS ... treating people the way you want to be treated

Matthew 7:12, "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you..."

PILLAR 3

RESPONSIBILITY IS ... being answerable for your actions and choices

Romans 14:12, "... Each of us will give an account of himself to God."

PILLAR 4

FAIRNESS IS ... treating people equally and honestly

2 Chronicles 19:7b, “Judge carefully, for with the Lord our God there is no injustice or partiality or bribery.”

PILLAR 5

CARING IS ... showing others that you love them

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

PILLAR 6

GOOD CITIZENSHIP IS ... showing your concern by doing your duty

Romans 13:1, “Everyone must submit to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established...”

THE 6 PILLARS IN REAL LIFE:

We are going to look at several different actions and you have to decide which symptom/s are underlying the actions.

Write the following symptoms on the blackboard:

- This is being untrustworthy
- This is being disrespectful
- This is being irresponsible
- This is being unfair
- This is being uncaring
- This is being a bad citizen

For each action you read out, the children must decide on one or more of the underlying symptoms. The answers are a guide.

Actions:

- Not looking after one’s own health 3, 5
- Taking things without permission 1, 2, 3
- Not listening to others 2, 4, 5,
- Shouting at someone 2, 5
- Not obeying the rules 6
- Blaming others 3, 4
- Hurting others by gossiping 5, 1, 2
- Not doing something you said you would do 1, 3
- Missing school without a good reason 1, 3, 6
- Acting cruelly and insensitively 5, 2
- Manipulating others 2, 5, 4
- Only telling the truth when it is convenient 1, 3
- Damaging other people’s property 2, 3, 5
- Having an “I don’t care” attitude 3, 6
- Listening to only one side of the story 4
- Not accepting others just because they are different 4, 2, 6
- Not telling the truth because you are afraid 1
- Not bothering to plan things 3

You could do this as a quiz and get the children to write their answers down on paper. Collect their answers and you can use this to evaluate how effectively you have taught the pillars of character..

YOUR WEAK SPOT:

We saw earlier that the more firmly all 6 pillars are in place, the more likely it is that our good character will stand firm and strong when we are under pressure. Let’s find our weak spots and work on strengthening them so that they don’t produce signs of bad character.

Make sure the children can see the visual aids of the 6 pillars of character. If necessary write the 6 pillars on the blackboard as well.

Tell the children that you are going to read out a few questions and as you do, you want them to look at their own wall of character and see if one or some of the pillars are missing or weak. They can

answer the questions quietly for themselves. Encourage them to ask the Lord to help them to see which pillar they need to work on most. Read this to the children:

- **TRUSTWORTHINESS:** Are you honest? Do you keep your word?
- **RESPECT:** Do you treat others the way you want to be treated?
- **RESPONSIBILITY:** Are you answerable for your actions and choices?
- **FAIRNESS:** Do you treat people equally and honestly?
- **CARING:** Do you show others that you love them?
- **GOOD CITIZENSHIP:** Do you show your concern by doing your duty?

Once we have worked out where the weaknesses are then we can start to focus on building that pillar of character in their lives. For each of us, some of these pillars will be more difficult to build than others – but each one of us can ask God to help us in this area. As we work to build good character in our lives, we will become more and more like Christ. Remember that He is always there to help us.

MAKE YOUR OWN MOTTO:

Give each child some paper and a pencil and tell them to come up with their own mottos about how they are going to develop good character and how they are going to build up the pillar that is the weakest in their wall of character.

If they want to, some of the children can share their mottos with the others.

Encourage the children to draw the wall of character together with their mottos and label the 6 pillars so that they will always remember them. Make sure they can see the visual aids of the 6 pillars clearly to copy them.

LET'S PRAY:

As you close, encourage the children to build strong walls of character, and to work towards having 6 strong pillars supporting their wall of character. Remind them that these pillars will guide them as they make decisions in life.

Encourage them to build good and godly character and to become more and more like Christ.

GOOD CITIZENSHIP IS...
...showing your concern by doing your duty



GOOD CITIZENSHIP

"Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established..."

Romans 13:1

LESSON 17

THE MAN OR WOMAN YOU WANT TO BE

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children:

- Are encouraged to have dreams and goals for the future
- Remember that God looks at the heart
- Learn that what really counts is that we know and love the Lord
- Learn that if we love the Lord our actions and the way we live our lives should show it

Theme Verses

1 Samuel 16:7, "... Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

Matthew 22:37-39, "Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'"

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

We have often reminded you children of how important it is to dream and have dreams and goals for the future.

- Why do you think this is important?
Let them respond first. Ideas: if we have a dream for the future – we have something to work towards and to work for. Our dream helps to motivate us and encourage us to keep working towards our goals and not to give up. Sometimes our dreams may even give us a reason to live.

LET'S IMAGINE:

So, today, we are going to spend some time dreaming again.

Ask the children to lie down, close their eyes and imagine themselves in 20 years' time.

As they do this, slowly ask them the following questions. Pause between each question to give them time to imagine and think about their response, tell them not to answer out loud but to imagine instead.

- **What do you look like?** – How tall are you? Are you thin or fat? What sort of clothes are you wearing?
- **What do you do?** – Do you have a job? Are you a mother or father? etc.
- **Where do you live?** – In what area do you live? What does your home look like?
- **Who are the other people in your life?** – do you have family and friends? Are your friends from work, from the community, from church?
- **What are you like?** - What sort of character do you have? What do you spend your time doing? What things are most important to you? What values do you live by?

LET'S DRAW:

Now give all the children some paper and something to draw with and ask them to draw a picture of themselves in 20 years' time. They can also use words to describe their picture. As they draw, write the questions that you asked them on the black board – just write the main part of the question (the part in bold.)

LET'S DISCUSS:

Place the board where the children can see it and read the questions again. Then ask the children the following questions:

- Which of these things is most important to you?
Give a few children a chance to answer.
- Which do you think is the most important to God? Let them answer first. What we are like on the inside is what is most important to God – our character, our priorities, our values, etc.
- Does this mean that the other things are not important to God? No, God is interested in every part of our lives, but what is most important to Him is who we are on the inside.

This year we have spoken so much about character. We have all been challenged to build the 6 pillars of character into our lives so that we will develop strong and godly character. We have also kept reminding ourselves that God looks at the heart and not the outward appearance.

- Who can remember what 1 Samuel 16:7 says?

1 Samuel 16:7, "... Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

And what does God want to see when He looks at our hearts? He wants to see that we love Him with all of our hearts.

Matthew 22:37-38, "Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment."

Tell the children to spend some time thinking about their drawings again and to add or change anything they might want to.

LOOKING INTO THE WORD:

We are going to look at a few passages from the Bible that help to show us that God looks at the heart and that what really counts is that we know and love the Lord.

David – 1 Samuel 16:

We should know this passage well by now. God told Samuel to go the house of Jesse in Bethlehem because He had chosen one of his sons to be king. Seven of Jesse's sons passed before Samuel but God told Samuel that none of these was the one He had chosen. Finally, David, the youngest son, was brought before Samuel. God told Samuel that he was the one He had chosen. David's other brothers would have been taller and stronger but remember what the Lord tells Samuel, **"... Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."** (1 Samuel 16:7)

And what does God want to see when He looks at our hearts?

In **Acts 13:22** it says that God said, **" 'I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.' "**

What God wants is that we know and love Him and that we have a heart that desires to please Him.

Cain and Abel – Genesis 4:2b-5:

Cain and Abel were brothers and this is a story that also helps us to see that God looks at the heart, not the outward things.

“Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord. But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The Lord looked with favour on Abel and his offering but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favour.” (Genesis 4:2b-5)

Both brothers brought an offering before the Lord – the Lord accepted one and rejected the other.

- Why?
- Do you think God accepted Abel’s offering because his offering was better than Cain’s?
- Or do you think that God looked at their hearts?

It is not about what Cain or Abel gave as their offering, it is about their heart attitude and their motive for giving an offering. It is about giving a careless, thoughtless offering to God or a special, generous offering. Once again we see that God does not look at the outward appearance of things, He looks at the heart.

The Pharisees – Luke 16:15:

The Pharisees were religious leaders at the time of Jesus. The people looked up to them and respected them, they were leaders in society, they looked important, they did the right things and dressed the right way. On the outside they looked good but listen to what Jesus says to them, **“You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your hearts. What is highly valued among men is detestable in God’s sight.” (Luke 16:15)**

The Pharisees were so busy making themselves look good in the eyes of man that they had forgotten that what was important in God’s eyes was the attitude of their hearts. Remember – God looks at our hearts. He wants to see that we do things because we love Him and want to please Him.

LET’S LOVE:

We have learned that God looks at our hearts and He wants to see that we love Him. What matters is that we know and love the Lord Jesus.

If we do, then our lives and our character should show it.

Listen to the second part of this verse:

Matthew 22:37-39: Jesus replied, “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ “

Firstly, God wants us to love Him, and secondly, He wants us to love others.

- Who knows the saying, “Actions speak louder than words”?

Everyone say together, **“Actions speak louder than words.”**

Let our actions show that we know and love the Lord Jesus. It is no good to say that we are Christians if the way we live does not show it. Our actions should show that we love God and that we love others.

As we dream about our future and the person we want to be, let us remember that what is on the inside is what counts the most. Most of all, God wants to look into our hearts and see that we love Him, and that because of this we want to please Him in the way that we live.

LET’S PRAY:

Encourage the children to spend a moment praying quietly as they think about their dreams for the future and their drawing and talk to the Lord about it.

Then close in prayer asking the Lord to help us to remember that as we look ahead to the future, what really counts is that we know and love the Lord and that He looks at our hearts and not at the outward things in our lives.

LESSON 18

COMMUNICATION AND LISTENING

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children:

- Understand what good communication involves
- Understand the importance of good, clear communication
- Understand the importance of verbal and non-verbal communication
- Are encouraged to develop better listening skills
- Are encouraged to listen for the Lord's voice

Theme Verses

Ephesians 4:29 says, "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."

James 1:19 says, "My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen and slow to speak."

Deuteronomy 30:20 says, "love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

We have spoken about the importance of building good character in our lives and about having a dream for the future. Another very important part of our lives and our relationships with the people around us is communication.

SUGGESTION: play the game, "Broken telephone" in the games session (before this lesson is taught) as it helps to introduce the topic of communication and the giving and receiving of a message. To play this game, the children must sit in a circle (you can divide them into groups). Think of a short message, e.g. I like to play soccer, it is a lovely day today, I bought some bread at the shop yesterday, etc. Whisper this message into the ear of one of the children and he/she needs to whisper it into the ear of the child next to him/her, and so on. Explain to the children that the whisper must be so soft that no-one else hears it. When the message gets back to the first child – ask them if the

message they received is the same as the message they gave. Ask them to tell the other the children what the original message was and what message they received at the end.

Help the children to understand how important good and clear communication is and how easily our messages can become confused and misunderstood.

For relationships to work and grow we need to be able to communicate well. This applies to our relationships within the home environment as well as with our friends and others we relate to in our daily lives.

We have spoken about communication before but let's refresh a bit on what communication actually is.

WHAT IS COMMUNICATION?

Have 3 children come forward. One will be the person giving the message, another will be the message, and the other will be the person receiving the message. Let the person giving the message put their hands on the person who is the message and say a short sentence. Then let them gently push the person who is the message across to the other person who will receive the message. The person receiving the message can then reach out and pull the person who is the message closer to them. Let them sit down at the front because you are going to use them again later in the lesson.

Communication is when someone gives a message through what they say or do, and another person receives the message, hears the message, listens to it and interprets it. The key to communication is that the person receiving the message interprets and understands the message in the way the person giving the message intended.

SO, WHAT'S SO IMPORTANT ABOUT GOOD, CLEAR COMMUNICATION?

Ask the children why they think good communication is important?

Some suggestions:

- It avoids misunderstanding
- It allows people to get to know and understand you
- It allows you to get to know and understand others
- It can avoid unnecessary hurt or anger
- It helps us to show people that we love and care for them
- It helps us to resolve disagreements

HOW DO WE COMMUNICATE?

We have said that communication is about giving a message and receiving a message. GOOD AND CLEAR COMMUNICATION is about giving the message well and receiving the message well.

GIVING THE MESSAGE WELL – VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION:

In order to give a message well, we need to think about what we say and how we say it.

- Does anyone remember the difference between verbal and non-verbal communication?

Remind the children that we communicate in two ways:

1. **Verbal communication:** what we say (the words we use) and the tone of voice we use (*make sure the children understand what you mean by tone of voice*)
2. **Non-verbal communication:** we also communicate through body language, facial expression, eye contact, posture, gestures, touching and spatial distance.

As you are teaching this you can demonstrate some of these methods

Get the children who acted as the person giving the message, the message and the person receiving the message to stand up again.

Give them a message to give and receive, e.g.

Message: I told you not to do that again! Response: I'm sorry

- Ask them to do it without any use of body language, tone of voice or facial expression the first time.
- Then ask them to do it again using verbal and non-verbal communication.

- Then ask them to do it using inappropriate non-verbal communication e.g. the person saying sorry can laugh while they say.

Ask the group which they think was more effective.

We give a message well when our verbal and non-verbal message matches what we mean. Our non-verbal communication is usually a whole lot more important than our verbal communication.

You may have heard the saying, "It is not what you say, it is how you say it." Sometimes we do have to say things that are not easy for the other person to hear but we always need to say things in love and in a respectful way.

Get a few children to come up and help with a few examples of using verbal and non-verbal communication. Give each of the children one of these examples to demonstrate for the other children. Let another child or one of the volunteers act as the person they are talking to. If necessary encourage them to use appropriate non-verbal communication i.e. correct tone of voice, facial expression, body language. After each example ask the children the following questions:

- Do you think that the verbal and non-verbal message match what the person mean?
- Was the message given in a loving and respectful way?

Examples:

- Telling a teacher that you are sorry you are late
- Telling a friend that you don't want to carry on playing with them and that you need to go home.
- Thanking a friend for helping you with your homework
- Telling someone that you are sorry that they are sick

RECEIVING THE MESSAGE WELL - GOOD LISTENING:

Now we are going to look more at receiving the message and developing good listening skills.

- Who thinks it is important to listen carefully when people are talking to us?
- Why?
- How do you think it makes people feel when they are not listened to properly?
- How do you think it makes people feel when they are listened to carefully?

LET'S ACT:

Choose 1 person to be Crucial.

Choose 6 other children to be Crucial's friends. Position them in 4 different places in the front. Friend 1 and 2 stand together at the first place and then the others on their own.

Tell the children that these 5 children are Crucial's friends. Crucial has something that he really wants to share with a friend – it is worrying him and he really wants to get it off his chest.

Friend 1 and 2:

Friend 1 and 2 are chatting.

Crucial walks up to them and says, "Hey, there is something I really want to tell you."

Friends 1 and 2 look up and greet Crucial and then continue chatting while Crucial continues, "My Mom and Dad had such a fight last night, and I just heard my Mom crying and my Dad left the house slamming the door behind him."

Crucial will say the same thing to each of the groups of friends.

- Do you think Crucial feels that he has been heard
- Does he feel loved and cared for?

Ask these questions after each encounter with a friend.

Friend 3:

Friend 3 is busy with her homework when Crucial comes up to her. She looks up as he starts talking but as he continues talking she starts to carry on her with her homework, looking up now and again to make it look as though she is listening and occasionally saying "hmm" or "yes"

Friend 4:

Friend 4 is kicking a soccer ball around when Crucial comes up to him. He listens half-heartedly to Crucial whilst playing with his soccer ball.

Friend 5:

Friend 5 looks as though he/she is listening but he/she is actually thinking about how much studying there is to do before the exam tomorrow.. Once Crucial is finished, he/she can say something like, "What was that you said, Crucial?"

Friend 6:

Friend 6 starts off listening well but before Crucial is finished he interrupts him and starts telling him all about how his parents also fight and argue.

Now replay the drama's but this time the friends can show that they are listening carefully to what their friend has to say.

Friend 1 and 2 stop talking and turn towards Crucial and listen

Friend 3 stops doing her homework

Friend 4 picks up the soccer ball and holds it at his side while he listens

Friend 5 concentrates on what Crucial is saying

Friend 6 listens until Crucial is finished

After each positive encounter with his friends, ask the class the questions again.

- What have you learned about good listening?
- What are some listening skills that you have learned today?

Write their responses on the board or on paper.

Ideas:

- Use body language and facial expression to show that you are listening
- Concentrate on what the person is saying
- Stop what you are doing
- Don't interrupt the person

20. Which listening skill do you think you need to work at?

Let's show others that we love and care for them by listening carefully.

Earlier, we said that the key to communication is that the person receiving the message interprets and understands the message in the way the person giving the message intended. Well, we will never be able to interpret and understand those messages properly if we don't learn to listen.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

Ephesians 4:29 says, "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."

This verse reminds us once again of how we need to think about what we say to others and to say things in love.

James 1:19 says, "My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen and slow to speak."

It is so important when we communicate to remember how important listening is. Remember to be quick and eager to listen and slow to speak.

It is also very important in our relationship with the Lord to listen carefully for his voice. If we want to hear his voice, we need to take time to be quiet and still before him, to empty our minds of all our busy thoughts and worries, and focus our thoughts on him.

Deuteronomy 30:20 says, "love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him."

LET'S PRAY:

Encourage a few of the children to say a prayer asking the Lord to help them to become better communicators – to think about what they say and how they say it, and to make an effort to listen carefully.

LESSON 19

BEING A FAMILY

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children:

- Understand God's plan for the family
- Understand the roles and responsibilities of various members of the family
- Understand that each member of the family is responsible for his/her attitude and for bringing godly qualities into their family life.
- Are challenged to fulfill their responsibilities in their families, both now and in the future.

Theme Verse

Colossians 3:12-14, "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

Last week we spoke about the importance of communication. We know that good communication is an important part of building good relationships and we also know that this is important in our family lives. Today we are going to talk a bit more about our family life and what is involved in running a family and keeping a family together.

LET'S TALK ABOUT GOD'S REASONS FOR MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

- What do you think was God's purpose for establishing marriage and the family unit?

Ideas: you can write key words down on the blackboard.

Remind them of the following reasons based on Genesis 2:18,24:

"The LORD God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.'" Genesis 2:18

"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh." Genesis 2:24

Friendship – God said that it was not good for man to be alone and so He created woman. We are designed in such a way that we need friendship, and marriage and the family unit provide this. The family unit – the husband and wife form their own family unit, separate from their parents, and this provides the starting point for family life and children.

Love – intimacy, referred to by “one flesh,” suggests couples should develop a deep love for each other and an interest in one another’s lives. Once again this extends from the marriage to the family.

Marriage is core to family life. When a marriage is founded on God’s principles, it provides a solid foundation for the children in that family. Children are the fruit or blessing that comes from a marriage – the Bible says that children are a reward from the Lord (Psalm 127:3). In God’s plan there should not be children if there is no marriage. God wants children to have the benefit of the love, unity and commitment that flow from marriage. When men and women, husbands and wives, mothers and fathers turn from God’s ways – this in turn creates breakdown in the family unit.

To keep a family together we know that there are some important responsibilities and attitudes that need to exist among the different members of the family.

Various members of the family do not all have the same function or responsibilities, but there are some things that each member of the family is responsible for. The Bible gives many instructions and guidelines for families and we are going to talk about some of these things today.

LET’S DISCUSS ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN THE FAMILY:

As we have said, certain members of the family have specific roles and responsibilities to perform in order for the family to function as God intended.

Divide the children into groups to discuss and/or act out one of the following topics:

- The role of the husband
- The role of the wife
- The role of the father
- The role of the mother
- The role of the children

Give each group a chance to give some feedback.

Make sure they include the following biblical points

(there will not be time to go through all the Scripture references during the lesson but make sure that you have read them all in order to prepare for the lesson):

- The husband – leader (head of the home - Ephesians 5:23)
love (Colossians 3:19, Ephesians 5:25)
- The wife - follower (husband is the leader) (Colossians 3:18, Ephesians 5:22)
runs the household
- Parents - teach children about God carefully (Deuteronomy 6:6-9,
Ephesians 6:4, Colossians 3:21)
- Children - respect and obey (Colossians 3:20, Ephesians 6:1)

LET’S IMAGINE:

What happens when various members of the family fail in their role and do not take their responsibilities seriously?

Before we answer this question, listen to this short story:

Once there was a girl named Janet and she hated doing household chores. Everything she was asked to do she refused to do, or did not do properly. When she reached 19 years of age she still could not cook sadza, clean the house, wash or iron the clothes. So when she got married at the age of 24 she lived with her husband for only a month.

Why do you think their marriage lasted such a short time?

This was because her husband was tired of eating burned food, coming home to a dirty home and so much more. Janet learned a very harsh lesson.

We can see from this how important it is to take our responsibilities in the home seriously. This applies to every member of the family for a family to function well.

You can do this part of the lesson as a group or keep the children in their small groups and give each group one of these topics to discuss.

- What happens when various members of the family fail in their role and do not take their responsibilities seriously? What happens:
 - When the father/husband does not lead or love?
 - When the mother/wife does not follow her husband or run the household?
 - When the children do not respect or obey?

Let the children come up with their own ideas.

LET'S DISCUSS OUR ATTITUDES WITHIN THE FAMILY:

- What do you think are some of the attitudes that each member of the family should show?
Ideas: love, respect, co-operation, standing together, communication...

Colossians 3:12-14, "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."

Imagine a family in which each member tried to apply this passage of Scripture.

Read the passage again and emphasise the words that are underlined.

Write down on the board the attitudes that are mentioned in the passage: compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, bearing with one another, forgiveness, love, unity.

Read the passage again and tell the children to think of the family context as you read it again. Surely these are the kinds of attitudes and behaviours that will build a strong and happy family.

- What are some of the blessings that will be enjoyed by members of a family in which each member tries to show these attitudes?
Ideas: a secure home, a peaceful home, a functioning household, knowing you are loved and accepted for who you are, knowing that your family will stand by you when things go wrong, knowing that you have the love and support of your family, knowing that you are part of a team, knowing that each person will do their best to fulfill their role in the family, etc.

It can be difficult to live like this when we are in a difficult family situation, but the Bible tells us to imitate God and live a life of love.

Ephesians 5:1-2, "Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children, and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God."

This passage tells us to imitate Christ – to try to be like Him, and live lives that are characterized by love. When our family life is difficult we still need to be imitators of Christ. This is not always easy, but this passage also makes it clear that Christ's love for us involved sacrifice, it wasn't easy for Him. In the same way, when we sacrifice to be loving in our families, this will also be like a fragrant offering to God. Don't ever forget that Jesus is always there to help us and encourage us – we just need to ask Him and let Him help and guide us. Let's ask the Lord to help us relate to the members of our family in loving ways.

Whatever our family situation now, we can desire to have a Christian family built on God's foundation when we grow up and have a family of our own.

LET'S DRAW:

If there is time, give each child a piece of paper and pen/pencil. Tell them that they can choose what they want to draw or write about – either their family situation now or the family they would like to have in the future. They can either draw a picture or write words that describe their family. Encourage them to include ideas that we have discussed in the lesson in their picture – roles, responsibilities, attitudes, some of the words from the verses, etc.

LET'S PRAY:

Lord, thank you that you that your design for the family is good and that each member of the family has an important role to play to allow the family to function well. Lord, help us to take our responsibility within our family seriously – help us to honour and obey our parents or guardians.

Please help us to bring the qualities you desire into our families - love, compassion, forgiveness, kindness, patience. Thank you for our families, and thank you that no matter what our family situation is now, we can plan to build our future family on your foundation.

LESSON 20

YOUR ATTITUDE IN YOUR FAMILY

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children:

- Are encouraged to take a closer look at their family life
- Discuss things that make family life difficult
- Discuss different feelings and reactions to difficult family situations
- Find encouragement from God's Word as they face difficulties in their family life
- Are encouraged to change what they can
- Are encouraged to live their lives in a way that shows that they love the Lord Jesus, even in difficult situations

Theme Verses

Luke 18:27, "What is impossible with men is possible with God."

Psalms 145:18, "The Lord is near to all who call on him..."

Colossians 3:12-14, "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

Last week we spoke about the family and about some of the things that are necessary in order for a family to function well according to God's plan.

We all know that no family is perfect, but when members of the family contribute to family life with a right attitude – it makes all the difference.

- Who can remember some of the attitudes that make for happier family life? *Ideas: use the verse for ideas.*

Remind the children of this verse from last week's lesson:

Colossians 3:12-14, "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."

Today we are going to talk more about our family lives – about the things that are good and the things that are difficult to live with, the things we can change and the things that we cannot change. We are going to see how the Lord can help us to live positively within difficult family situations.

LET'S DISCUSS:

Divide the children into groups and then give them some time to discuss the following questions:

- Who do you live with?
- Do you enjoy your family life?
- What things about your family make you happy?
- What things about your family make you sad?
- Who do you have the best relationship with in your family?
- Who do you have the most difficult relationship with in your family?

Some of us are very blessed in our family life, and we should be grateful and thank the Lord. Others, however, have a very difficult family situation and it can be difficult to cope and live positively in this situation. Some children land up taking on enormous responsibilities within the home due to difficulties or death within the family. This puts a lot of stress on these children.

Today we are going to look at how we can deal with the difficulties that we experience in our family situation so that we can live positively for Jesus.

LET'S THINK:

- What sort of things make family life difficult?
Write some ideas on the board
Ideas: poverty, fighting, alcohol abuse, illness, absent parent/s, physical or emotional abuse, abandonment, divorce, death of a parent, etc.
- Are there things that you struggle with?
Encourage the children to spend a moment thinking about what they struggle with in their family life.

Today we are going to discuss some of the things that may be difficult in our family lives, and what we can do about it.

LET'S ACT:

What we are going to do now is have a few short dramas that illustrate some situations that make family life difficult. As we discuss them we will think of things we might be able to do to improve the situation.

Below is a list of different situations which can cause difficulties in family life (feel free to add your own) – for each situation you will ask a few children to come up and act it out.

Ask each group of children to come up and prepare a quick drama to illustrate the situation. Remind them that they must act this out in the context of family life.

Each drama must include a child or children the age of the children attending the programme so that the children can apply the discussion questions to their own lives.

Try to have a volunteer available to help them with ideas. You could keep the rest of the children busy by singing a song.

There are questions for discussion as you go through each situation.

Situations:

Alcohol abuse

Bullying by older sibling
Emotional abuse
Poverty

Illness resulting in increased responsibility for the child

You could use any of the ideas they came up with when you asked about things that make family life difficult.

For each situation:

- *Let the group act out their drama*
- *While the group remains at the front, ask the children to imagine they are the child/children in the scenario and ask the following questions:*
 - *How do you think you might feel in a situation like this?*
 - *What do you think you could change about this situation?* *Ideas: help the children to realise that while there are things they cannot change and are not responsible for, e.g. a parent who drinks too much, there are things that they can change, e.g. their own attitude, their responses, their actions.*
- *Now ask the children this next question and once you have a few answers, ask the group at the front to act these responses/reactions into their drama. Have a volunteer help them.*
 - *What would a good reaction look like in this situation? ACT.*
- *Now do the same for this question:*
 - *What would a bad reaction look like in a situation like this? ACT.*

LOOKING INTO THE WORD:

We are not responsible for the actions of other members of our family and we cannot change *them*, but we are responsible for our actions and reactions, and we can change, especially if we ask the Lord to help us.

We can also change the way we feel about ourselves by reminding ourselves of the truths in God's Word. When members of our family do not meet our expectations, we can teach ourselves to expect more from God.

Let's look at what God's Word has to say:

When we feel unloved:

In **Jeremiah 31:3** the Lord says, **"I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness."**

Write on the board: Jesus loves me, and get all the children to say this out loud together.

When we feel uncared for:

1 Peter 5:7 says, **"Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about what happens to you."** (New Living Translation)

Write on the board: Jesus cares for me, and get all the children to say this out loud together.

When I feel afraid or discouraged:

Joshua 1:9, **"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."** And He is with you wherever you are.

Write on the board: The Lord gives me courage, and say it out loud together.

When you feel that you can't go on:

Remember that God is faithful and will never let you down. He is always there, helping you, strengthening you, holding you up – we just have to put our trust in Him.

Deuteronomy 33:27, **"The eternal God is your refuge, and his everlasting arms are under you."** (New Living Translation)

2 Corinthians 12:9, **"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."**

He will give us what we need to get through each day. When we are weak, it gives God the opportunity to show His power in our lives.

Write on the board: Jesus gives me strength, and say it out loud together.

When we feel sad, lonely, afraid, angry...

Psalm 145:18, "The Lord is near to all who call on him..."

Psalm 46:1, "God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble." (New King James Version)

Write on the board: Jesus hears me and He helps me, and say it out loud together.

When we feel that we have no hope:

Remember that God does have a good plan and purpose for your life – it may be hard to believe at times but we need to hold on to this truth.

Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

It is very important to remember, though, that we can only enjoy the full blessing of God's promises and His Word if we believe in Him and have committed our lives to Him.

Write on the board: Jesus gives me hope, and say it out loud together

When times are tough we need to remind ourselves of these truths and use God's word to encourage us.

LET'S CHANGE:

- Who thinks it is easy to bring about change?

Changing the way we think, feel and react is not easy. Most of the time change is difficult to achieve, but putting in the effort can bring about wonderful results. When we choose to work on trying to change something about ourselves, we need to commit to this and put in the effort. It takes determination and perseverance – if we give up too quickly, then we won't get the results that we hope for. The key to success is asking God to help us and to give us His wisdom and strength.

The Bible says in Luke 1:37, **"For nothing is impossible with God."**

And in **Luke 18:27** it says, **"What is impossible with men is possible with God."**

If we really want to bring about change, even if it may seem impossible, then we need to do it **with God**.

LET'S DISCUSS:

Divide the children into small groups and try to divide the volunteers among the groups.

Encourage the children to think of something they struggle with in their family life. As they think about this, encourage them to think about what they can change to make that situation easier e.g. their reactions, their actions, their feelings towards family members, their expectations of family members.

Remind them to look at the phrases that are on the blackboard.

Then tell them go around within the group and encourage each child to share this with the others.

Encourage them to be open and honest, and remind the group about the importance of keeping what is shared within the group private and confidential – explain that this means that anything shared in the group does not get discussed with other people.

Of the things they have thought about, encourage them to think of something they struggle with that they could help to change. For example – if you have a difficult relationship with someone in your family because of poor or no communication, then you could work on changing that by trying to improve communication.

Go around the group and allow each child to share one thing they struggle with at home that they think they could change.

Then encourage them to think of a few action-steps that they can do to try and bring about change.

Give the older children paper and pencils. Tell them to divide their page into two. On one side let them write the heading: 'Things I can change' and on the other side the heading: 'Things I cannot change.' You could do this on the board for them to see what you mean, but they must stay in their small groups.

THINGS I CAN CHANGE	THINGS I CANNOT CHANGE WHAT MUST I ACCEPT?

Then on the side: 'Things I can change,' let them write down what they want to change and the action steps they are going to take.

Then go around the group again and let them share the steps they are going to take to try and bring about change. Encourage the volunteers with each group to give feedback and help the children to come up with practical action-steps that they are able to carry out.

Encourage the children to pray for each other as they make an effort to change things that they can in their family.

Please communicate with all the volunteers involved in this lesson that if things are shared that indicate that a child may need help, they must try to meet with that child after the lesson and refer him/her to the right kind of person, if they are willing. Make sure volunteers pray with these children, encourage them and remind them that you are there for them.

LET'S REMEMBER:

To help us to remember these truths let's say together:

When I feel _____, God is there
 When I feel _____, God is there
 When I feel _____, God is there

Repeat this several times, getting different children to call out a word to put into the phrase, for example: When I feel afraid, sad, discouraged, unloved, etc.

Tell the children to use these phrases when they go through difficult times, and to say these truths to themselves again and again.

LET'S SHINE FOR JESUS:

Today we have spoken a lot about dealing with difficulties and challenges in our family life. But let's not forget what we learned last week – that each of us should contribute or add to our family life.

Colossians 3:12-14, "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."

We can shine as little lights for Jesus even in the most difficult family situations – but we can only do this with His help. Let's ask the Lord to help us to live in way that shows the other members in our family that we love Him. God could use you to lead other members of your family to Jesus Christ, and this could bring about lots of positive change in your family life.

LET'S PRAY:

Close in prayer, reminding the children of the truths about God that they have learned during the lesson. Ask the Lord to show them things that they can change in their family life.

Ask the Lord to help the children to be a witness for Him in their homes through the way that they live.

LESSON 21

FRIENDS – STANDING TOGETHER

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children:

- Learn the value of standing together as friends
- Learn that standing together makes it easier to resist negative pressure and be a good influence on others
- Are encouraged to stand together and dare to make a difference

Theme Verses

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 says,

“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work:

If one falls down, his friend can help him up.

But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!

Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.

But how can one keep warm alone?

Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

Hebrews 10:24 says, “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.”

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

Over the last few weeks we have learned about the importance of good communication, we have discussed some issues within our home and family life and now we are going to talk about friends. We have learned a lot about friends and the importance of true and genuine friendships at Nhasi zveMangwana.

LET’S REMEMBER:

Let’s briefly remind ourselves of what we have learned about true and genuine friendship.

- Who can remember some of the qualities of a good friend?

As the children give ideas and as you go through the points below write some key words on the blackboard.

Good friends:

- Build each other up
- Stand up for one another
- Stick together even when times are tough
- Love at all times
- Look out for one another
- Help each other to be the best that they can

These are the friends we should treasure. We have spoken about building character – well, it is the same with good friendships: we have to build them, and this requires effort and love.

STAND TOGETHER AND DARE TO BE DIFFERENT:

We have learned that by standing together we can help each other to resist the negative pressures that we face, and dare to be different. Friends who stand together can help each other to be the best that they can by encouraging each other to stand up for what they believe and for what is right.

- Can anyone remember the Scripture Union **Dare to be Different** rhyme?

Dare to be different, be the first to say no
Dare to be different, show them which way to go
Dare to be different, don't follow the crowd
Dare to be different, stand up and be proud!

Get the children to stand up and go through the rhyme a few times.

Friends who stand together can do even more than resist bad influences, they can exert a good influence on those around them – this is not always easy, but if we dare to be different together it is easier.

STANDING TOGETHER:

We are now going to do a little exercise to show the value of standing together.

- What are some of the negative pressures that we face?

Let the children mention a few. Ideas: lying, cheating, stealing, swearing, etc.

Now ask 3 children to come forward and tell them to clasp each other's arms and form a tight group. Tell the children they are going to represent the negative pressures that we face. Choose one of the examples that the children mentioned for this group to represent, e.g. lying.

Ask another child to come and stand at the front and tell the children that he/she represents one of us as we face the negative pressures in our lives. Then tell the 3 children who represent these negative pressures to come and put pressure on the child by pushing against them and shouting out the pressure you chose, e.g. lie, lie, lie... as they push. Naturally the group of 3 easily push the one child back.

Now ask 2 others to come and join the one child and hook arms together as they stand and face the negative pressure-group. This time as the group of 3 push against the 3 standing together it is more difficult to push them back.

Now ask another 3 or 4 children to come up and hook arms together with the other 3 and to stand together as they face the negative pressure. Now, it is easy for the group to resist.

*Explain to the children that if we build strong groups of friends like the group who are standing together with their arms hooked together, it will be easier for us to resist the negative pressures that we face **AND** for us to be a good influence on those around us.*

Let the children at the front repeat what they have just done but this time tell the group of friends to push back against the negative pressure group shouting out their good influence, e.g. don't tell lies, don't tell lies.....

There is a verse in the Bible that teaches us that it is good to stand together.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 says,

“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work:

If one falls down, his friend can help him up

But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!

Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.

But how can one keep warm alone?

Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.”

LOOKING INTO THE WORD:

When we stand together as a group we can help and encourage one another to live lives that please the Lord and resist the negative pressures that we face.

Hebrews 10:24 says, “And let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds.”

Get the children to stand up and say the verse together a few times because we are going to repeat it together a few times during the lesson.

We are now going to look at some stories from the Bible that teach us about standing together against evil. After each story we will see if we think these groups of friends stood together so that they could **“spur one another on towards love and good deeds.”**

Make sure you tell these stories in a fun and expressive way so that the children stay interested. You could practice telling the stories with another volunteer so that they are a bit like a drama, or you could ask two other volunteers to help and each of you tell one of the stories to add variety.

Daniel and his friends (Daniel 1):

Last year we told you the story about Daniel and his friends.

This is a story about a young man and his friends who stood together and did not forget about God even though they were in a very tough situation. Daniel was a young man who lived in the city of Jerusalem. One day, Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon marched against Jerusalem. Many of the people were carried off to Babylon as prisoners, including Daniel and his friends.

Nebuchadnezzar told one of his court officials to choose some of the young prisoners who could be trained to work in the king’s service. He wanted strong, handsome, clever men who would be able to advise the king and help him to rule the country. Daniel and his friends were chosen along with many other young men. The King told his officials to feed the prisoners with the very best royal food. It was a real feast and Daniel and his friends had never seen anything like it before!

The other prisoners tucked in straight away but Daniel and his friends just stood and watched. There was some food on the table that their God did not allow them to eat, like pork. Daniel and his friends decided to eat only vegetables and drink only water. Now the king’s official was really worried because the king wanted his new employees to be big and strong. The official knew how angry the king could get if people disobeyed him.

Daniel spoke to the prison guard and gave him a challenge. He asked the guard to give him and his friends nothing but vegetables and water for 10 days. On the eleventh day he could test all of the prisoners and see which were stronger – the ones who were eating all the rich food, or Daniel and his friends.

At the end of the 10 days they looked healthier than any of the other prisoners who were eating the royal food. “You win!” he said, “Your diet seems to suit you and you are certainly in better condition than this lot.” So the guard took away the royal food and all of the other prisoners were given the same food that Daniel and his friends had been eating. God also honoured Daniel and his friends and gave them great knowledge and understanding. They entered the King’s service and were his best advisors – they were cleverer than all the wise men and magicians in the kingdom.

- Do you think these friends stood together so that they could **“spur one another on towards love and good deeds”**?
- What was the negative pressure that Daniel and his friends faced?
They were given food to eat that God had told His people not to eat.

- What was the result of Daniel and his friends standing together?
Because they stood together:
 - They were heard and the guard allowed them to eat the foods they chose for the 10 days. Because all four of them decided not to eat the rich food it made their influence stronger – four are more convincing than one!
 - They were united and would surely have encouraged and strengthened each other.
 - They did what was right and God honoured them – they became the best advisors in the kingdom. This means that they were in a position of influence and because there were four of them they were able to influence a much larger group of people in Babylon than if there were just one of them.

Because they were brave enough to dare to be different and stand together for what was right – they resisted the negative pressure they faced AND they were put into a position of influence over the King!

Get the children to stand up and say Hebrews 10:24 together.

Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (Daniel 3):

A few years later in Babylon, King Nebuchadnezzar built a huge golden statue to one of his own gods. It was uncovered in front of all the important people in the land. Daniel was not there but his friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were. As soon as the trumpets sounded, the king ordered everyone to bow down to the statue. Anyone who refused would be thrown into a blazing furnace and burnt to death.

Everyone knelt, except Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

“Get on your knees!” shouted the guards.

“No!” they said, “God forbids that we kneel down to an idol.”

When the king heard of their disobedience he was very angry, “Very well,” he said. “You know what the punishment is.”

He ordered the furnace to be heated up until it was seven times hotter than normal and he had the three friends thrown in. The furnace was so hot that it killed the soldiers who took them there.

After a few minutes, the king looked into the fiery furnace and could not believe his eyes.

“How many did we throw in?” he asked

“Three men, sir,” the guards replied.

“Then who is that with them?”

The guards looked into the furnace and saw a fourth person next to the men.

“It looks like an angel,” said the king. “It is protecting them. Let them out immediately!”

When the three men came out, they were completely unharmed. Their clothes were not even burned.

“Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego!” said the king, and he commanded that everyone respect the Lord God Almighty.

What an amazing story of three friends who stood together in obedience to God.

- Do you think these friends stood together so that they could “**spur one another on towards love and good deeds**”?
- What was the negative pressure that the three friends faced? They were told to kneel down and worship an idol. God told His people that they were to worship Him alone and had forbidden them to worship idols.
- What was the result of these three friends standing together? Because they stood together:
 1. They encouraged each other to be brave and stand up for God. They resisted the pressure to disobey God even though the punishment was very scary.
 2. They stood up for what they believed and as a result God honoured them by sending an angel to look after them.
 3. They dared to be different and as a result they influenced the king, who then praised God and told all the people that they had to respect God.

What a wonderful influence this group of friends, who stood together for what they believed, had on the nation.

Get the children to stand up and say Hebrews 10:24 together.

Saul and his friends (Acts 9)

This is a story in the New Testament about Saul (later known as Paul) and how his friends stood together with him.

Saul had been on his way to Damascus to persecute the Christians there when he had a vision on the road and became a follower of Jesus. After becoming a Christian, Saul didn't waste time, he went to the synagogues (where the Jews worshipped God) and began to preach that Jesus was the Son of God. The people who heard him were amazed. After all, here was a man who had come to Damascus to arrest Christ's followers, who was now teaching about Jesus. Saul knew the Scriptures well and preached powerfully. The Jews who did not believe in Jesus found it hard to answer him back and this made them angry.

The Jewish leaders made a plan to have Saul killed. Guards were placed at all the city gates so that Saul would not be able to leave alive. But word of the plan reached Saul and his friends and they made a plan to help Saul to escape. At night, his friends lowered him down over the city walls in a basket and Saul went off to Jerusalem as fast as he could.

The disciples in Jerusalem did not want to welcome him at first because they were afraid that he had not really changed. But when they were told how boldly Saul had preached in the name of Jesus, they were finally convinced. Saul joined the disciples as they preached the good news about Jesus and Saul (Paul) played a huge role in spreading the gospel and strengthening the church.

In this story we see two groups of friends standing together – Saul's friends in Damascus and also the disciples.

- Do you think these groups stood together so that they could **“spur one another on towards love and good deeds”**?
- What was the negative pressure that Saul and his friends in Damascus were standing up against? The Jewish leaders did not want Saul preaching about Jesus and so they wanted to kill him.
- What was the result of these friends standing together?
Because the friends in Damascus stood together:
 - They encouraged each other to be brave and do what was right. Saul's friends believed in Jesus and knew that Saul needed to stay alive in order to carry on preaching the gospel, so they helped him to escape even though they could have got into a lot of trouble if they had been discovered
 - They enabled Saul to go on and preach about Jesus. He helped to spread the gospel and influenced many people for Jesus. He even wrote some of the books of the Bible.
- What was the result of the disciples standing together?
Because the disciples stood together:
 - They were united in the message they preached and they spread the gospel far and wide. Many people came to believe in Jesus through the ministry of this team of disciples and many churches were planted and strengthened.

Get the children to stand up and say Hebrews 10:24 together.

These are wonderful stories from the Bible that encourage us to stand together as friends and dare to make a difference for the Lord.

LET'S PRAY:

Dear Lord Jesus, thank for the gift of friends. Thank you that we have seen today that if we stand together as friends we can make a difference for you. Help us to stand together as friends and resist the negative pressures that we face. Help us to stand together as friends and be a good influence on those around us. Help us to stand together and dare to make a difference. Help us to encourage and spur one another on towards love and good deeds.

LESSON 22:
**FRIENDS – STANDING TOGETHER TO MAKE A
DIFFERENCE**

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children:

- Learn the value of standing together as friends to resist negative pressure and to be a good influence on those around us
- Understand what kind of friends stand together
- Think of practical ways to resist negative pressures and be a good influence on others
- Learn that the Bible tells us to encourage one another to do what is good and right
- Know that Jesus is there to help them to dare to be different

Theme Verses

Hebrews 10:24 says, “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.”

Psalm 138:3 says, “When I called, you answered me; you made me bold and stout-hearted.”

John 16:33, “In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

Last week we learned that it is easier to Dare to be Different if we stand together as friends. We read from the Bible that “two are better than one”, and the more of us stand together, the easier it is to stand up for God and for what is right.

FRIENDS WHO STOOD TOGETHER:

- Who can remember from last week, the stories of friends in the Bible who stood together? Let's spend a moment remembering who they were and what they stood together against. What were the pressures that they were resisting and what difference did they make?
Write a few key notes on the board as you go through the stories from last week.

STORY 1 (Daniel 1):

Who?	Daniel and his friends.
What they stood against?	They refused to eat the rich, royal food that God had told them not to eat. They could have got into a lot of trouble.
The result?	They did what was right and they were stronger and healthier than the other prisoners at the end of the 10 days. God honoured them by giving them knowledge and understanding, and they became the king's best advisors.

STORY 2 (Daniel 3):

Who?	Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.
What they stood against?	They refused to kneel down and worship an idol, even though they would be thrown into the furnace for disobeying the king. They knew that God had told them to worship him alone and no idols.
The result?	God sent an angel to protect them in the furnace and they were not harmed. As a result the king praised God and told all the people to respect God.

STORY 3 (Acts 9):

Who?	Saul and his friends.
What they stood against?	The Jewish leaders wanted Saul to stop preaching about Jesus and so they planned to kill Saul. His friends helped him to escape.
The result?	Saul escaped unharmed and went on to preach about Jesus and helped to spread the gospel to many, many people. He also wrote some of the books of the Bible.

STANDING TOGETHER:

Last week we played a game to show you how much easier it is to resist negative pressures and be a good influence on those around us when we stand together. Today we are going to play another game to help you to appreciate the value of standing together.

You will need to bring a rope or a strong sheet or blanket for this game.

Ask 4 children to come up and stand in a line on one side of an imaginary line – they will represent those who are putting negative pressure on us i.e. they are the people around us who influence and encourage us to do things that are wrong.

Now ask 2 children to come up and stand on the other side – they will represent people like us who are trying to stand up for the Lord. People who want to resist the negative pressures around us and be a good influence on others.

These 2 groups are going to have a “tug of war”. The groups need to stand in a line, one behind the other, with the two groups facing each other. The two at the front need to take hold of one end of the rope/blanket/sheet. The others behind need to grab hold of the waist of the child in front and be ready to pull.

When you say “GO” both groups need to pull together against the others and try to pull the other group over to their side.

Help the children to understand that this is what it is like when we are faced with negative pressures – these pressures tempt us to do wrong things but we need to fight against them in order to stand up for what is right and be a good influence instead.

With only 2 children resisting the negative influence, they are easily pulled across. Now ask another 4 children to come and join the 2 who are trying to resist the pressure.

Play the game again. This time it is easier for the group to resist the pressure and even be a good influence by pulling the others over to their side.

Now ask another 3 children to come and join the group who are resisting the negative pressure.

Play the game again. It is easy to see that the more of us stand together for what is right, the easier it is to resist the negative pressures around us and be a good influence on those around us.

FRIENDS THAT STAND TOGETHER:

In order to stand together as friends we need to share an honest and deep friendship with each other. This kind of friendship involves good communication, which we spoke about earlier on this year. We need to be open and honest with our friends. We need to share intimately with each other about the things we believe in, about the things we struggle with, and about the things that are important to us. We need to share our goals and dreams for the future.

Friends like this can encourage each other to stand up for what they believe and friends like this can check up on each other. Friends like this discuss things together and make decisions about the way they want to behave and the kind of choices they want to make. These are the kind of friends who can stand together and make a difference.

LET'S DISCUSS/ACT:

We have looked at stories in the Bible about friends who stood together and we saw the pressures that they were resisting.

- What are some of the negative pressures that you face now or may face as you grow up?
Let the children come up with their own ideas. Prompt them if you need to, but only mention pressures that are real in your communities e.g. lying, bullying, excluding certain children in your class, cheating, being rude or disrespectful, swearing, drinking, sleeping around, giving sex for money, stealing...
Write ideas down on the blackboard.

Now divide the children into small groups and tell them to choose one or two of the pressures on the board to discuss in their group – encourage them to choose ones that are real in their lives. Tell the children to come up with ideas in their groups of how they could stand together with their friends to:

- Resist these pressures AND
- To be a good influence instead. Being a good influence means doing or saying things that encourage others not to give into that pressure.

Remember that friends who stand together need to be able to discuss issues, share their beliefs and make decisions on which they will stand together.

Give time for some of the groups to give some feedback. Make sure that when they give their ideas, they must include the two points: how they might resist the pressure AND how they can be a good influence against that pressure.

If you have time you can let each group put their ideas into a short drama.

BE ENCOURAGED:

We as Christians want to do more than just resist the negative pressures around us. We want to stand up for the Lord and be a good influence for Him. As children in Nhasi zveMangwana, we can stand together and make a difference in our classes, our schools, our homes and in our community.

The Bible encourages us to do this.

- Who can remember what Hebrews 10:24 says?

Hebrews 10:24 says, “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.”

Get all the children to stand together and say the verse together.

We need to stand together with our friends and encourage one another to be loving and good in our attitudes and our actions.

- Is it easy to resist all these pressures?
- Is it easy to stand up for the Lord and be a good influence on those around us?

No, it is not. We saw from the stories in the Bible that it wasn't easy for them either – in each story they could have faced serious punishment for what they did. The Bible tells us that things won't always be easy and we will face troubles and difficulties.

John 16:33, “In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

Isn't it wonderful to know that with Jesus' help we can also overcome, we can be strong in Him!

Psalm 138:3 says, “When I called, you answered me; you made me bold and stouthearted.”
Jesus is always with us, ready to give us courage and boldness.

- We learned the Scripture Union **Dare to be Different** rhyme again last week. Can any of you remember it?

Dare to be different, be the first to say no
Dare to be different, show them which way to go
Dare to be different, don't follow the crowd
Dare to be different, stand up and be proud!

Let's all stand up and say it together a few times.

LET'S PRAY:

Lord Jesus, we have learned a lot about how we can stand together with our friends to resist the negative pressures around us and be a good influence on those around us. Help us to build strong friendships so that we can stand together as friends for you. Thank you that you can help us to do this. Thank you that you help us to be bold and strong so that we can dare to be different for you.

LESSON 23

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY – COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children:

- Understand that they have a certain responsibility to reach out in their communities
- Understand that through our actions we can point people to Jesus
- Come up with a practical idea for a community service project that they will carry out as the next lesson
- Plan their community service project

Theme Verse

Matthew 5:14a, 16, “You are the light of the world... let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

Over the next two weeks we are going to do something exciting. At our group we have learned about character, our family life, our friendships and being a good influence, and now we are going to think about our role in our communities.

OUR COMMUNITY:

No matter where we live, we are always part of a community – that community may be small or large. The dictionary describes a community as a group of people living together in one place or area.

- Where is your community?
- What makes up your community?
- What sort of services are available in your community?
Ideas: various shops, clinic, police, library, etc.
- Do you think that we, as Christians, have a responsibility to our community?
- Why?

Let them come up with their own ideas. The next part of the lesson explains this.

OUR ROLE IN OUR COMMUNITY:

There are lots of passages in the Bible which help us to see that we do have a responsibility to our community. We know that we are witnesses for Jesus, and the first place to be a witness for Jesus is right in our homes and community (Acts 1:8.) We are going to look at just a few passages that teach us about our responsibility to reach out into our communities.

- **We are to be witnesses for Jesus to the people around us:**

In the book of Matthew Jesus says, **“You are the light of the world... let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.” Matthew 5:14a, 16** Our actions and the way we live can point people to Jesus. We have learned before that “actions speak louder than words.” People need to see by our actions that we love and serve the Lord Jesus.

In the same passage Jesus says, **“You are the salt of the earth.” Matthew 5:13**

- What is salt used for?
Yes, salt is used to make our food taste good. Salt is also used to preserve food so that it does not go bad. In the same way, we should be like salt in our community – our character and our actions should be making a positive difference in the lives of those around us.

- **We are to serve one another just as Jesus came to serve:**

Mark 10:43-44 says, “whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man (Jesus) did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

If Jesus came to earth to serve others then surely we should do the same.

Galatians 5:13b-14 says, “... rather, serve one another in love. The entire law is summed up in a single command: “Love your neighbour as yourself.””

Serving in our community is part of obeying Jesus’ command to love our neighbour. The Bible also says that we should serve one another in love, not just out of a sense of duty.

- **We have a responsibility to care for the environment:**

One of the commands God gave to Adam and Eve was to bring the earth under control. He told them, **“I am putting you in charge of the fish, the birds and the wild animals.” Genesis 1:28 (Good News Bible)**

There are other verses that remind us of the responsibility that God has given us to look after the earth. Caring for the environment in our community is also part of serving our community.

Psalms 115:16 says, “The highest heavens belong to the Lord, but the earth he has given to man.”

Psalms 8:6 says, “You made him (man) ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet.”

- **We need to put our faith into action:**

In James chapter 2 it says, **“What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds?”... “so faith without deeds is dead.” (James 2: 14a, 26b).**

It is quite clear from the Bible that we do have a responsibility to be serving in our community.

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY:

We have also learned about Good Citizenship this year, and that part of being a good citizen is to do your duty. Doing our duty includes being willing to serve in our communities in some way.

- What are some of the ways in which people serve their communities? Ideas: visiting people in hospital or in old-age homes, supporting orphans or child-headed families, being a member of various committees in the community, joining in community projects, working together and supporting community leaders

Today we are going to think of a practical way in which we, at Nhasi zveMangwana, can serve our community. There are lots of small things each one of us can do but we are going to plan something that we can all do together and then we are going to go ahead and do it next week.

- Who can think of some ideas of something we could do to serve our community?
Ideas: visiting a local old age home or the children's ward at the local hospital and presenting a short programme of some songs, maybe a drama and some prayers; cleaning up the area surrounding the local clinic by picking up the litter, sweeping if necessary, etc.

OUR COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT:

As a group decide on an idea that you can practically plan and carry out within a week. You as the volunteers will need to get whatever permission you need. Get the children involved in the planning with questions like the ones below. Write down ideas on the board.

OUR PLAN:

- Where will we be going?
- What will we be doing?
- What do we need to prepare in order to do this? e.g. Some song items, a drama or two, *choose some children who would be willing to pray....*
- Do we need to get permission? Who will do that?
- How will we get there?

AND most importantly

- Why are we doing this?

Use the verses to help them to understand why you are all doing what you are doing.

Encourage the children to choose one of the verses in the lesson as a theme verse for the community project that you are planning. Once you have chosen a verse, go through it a few times with the children. Get them to stand up and say it together and try to think of a few actions to make it easier for them to remember.

LET'S PRAY:

Close in prayer, asking the Lord to help you to carry out your plans well. Ask him to help you to glorify Him through what you are doing and to remember why you are doing what you are doing.

LESSON 24

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY – COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children:

- Carry out their community service project
- Remember why they are serving in this way

Theme Verse

The theme verse will be the one chosen last week as the theme verse for your specific community service project.

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

Today's lesson is about doing our community service project

Gather the children together before you start to pray and remind them of why they are going to serve their community in this way.

LET'S REMEMBER:

- Who can remember why we are doing this community service today?

Remind the children that the reason you are getting together to do a community service is because we know from the Bible that we have a responsibility to serve in our communities and because we want to be a witness for Jesus through our character and our actions.

- Who can remember the theme verse that we chose for our community service project?
Go through the verse a few times together, using the actions you thought of to help the children remember the verse.

You should have chosen one of the following verses as a theme verse:

- **Matthew 5:14 and 16, "You are the light of the world... let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."**

- **Matthew 5:13, “You are the salt of the earth.”**
- **Mark 10:43-44, “whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man (Jesus) did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”**
- **Galatians 5:13-14, “... rather, serve one another in love. The entire law is summed up in a single command: “Love your neighbour as yourself.””**
- **Genesis 1:28, “... bring it (the earth) under control. I am putting you in charge of the fish, the birds and the wild animals.” (Good News Bible)**
- **Psalm 115:16, “The highest heavens belong to the Lord, but the earth he has given to man.”**
- **Psalm 8:6, “You made him (man) ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet.”**
- **James 2:14 and 26, “What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds?”... “so faith without deeds is dead.”**

LET’S PRAY:

Commit your community service to the Lord. Ask Him to help you to glorify Him as you serve Him. Ask Him to help each one of you to serve with an attitude of love. Ask Him to help you to be a blessing to your community.

GO AND SERVE:

Go and serve the Lord with gladness (Psalm 100:2) (New King James)

OUR BODIES ARE GROWING

Lesson Focus

10-12 YEAR OLDS:

The focus of this lesson is that children will have an understanding:

- Of how the body has been wonderfully designed by God
- Of what changes boys can expect as they grow up
- Of what changes girls can expect as they grow up
- Of what boys and girls need to know about each other as they grow up

6-9 YEAR OLDS:

The focus of this lesson is that children understand that:

- We grow up in different ways
- That a girl's body develops so that she can become a mother
- That a boy's body develops so that he can become a father
- We have been wonderfully created by God

Theme Verse

Psalm 139: 13-14, "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well"

- Follow the usual programme

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

These lessons may be hard to teach and you may feel uncomfortable about teaching them, but they are very important as we establish a positive attitude towards sexuality and sex, and we need to teach these things from a godly perspective.

Ask the Lord to give you the boldness and sensitivity: you need to teach these lessons well. Try to keep the tone of the lessons normal, natural, positive and godly. Remember that by teaching these next few lessons we hope to help these children to grow and develop positively and to live within God's standards and desires for our lives.

Important points:

- *If you do not have enough leaders who have **prepared** for the lessons to divide the children into 2 age groups, then teach the lesson as for the younger age group and then re-teach it for both age groups next week.*
- *It is ideal to have a mature man to teach the lesson for the older boys, so please try to make this possible.*

Today we are going to talk about growing up. There are different ways in which we grow up, we all grow up differently and we know that boys and girls grow up differently. Today we are going to talk about our bodies and how wonderfully God has made them.

LET'S BE AMAZED:

Our bodies are truly amazing and today we are going to take some time to appreciate this fact.

- Who can wiggle their pinkie? (smallest finger)
Wiggle your pinkie in front of the children and have them all join you.
- Who can lift their arms up and down?
Have all the children join you in doing this.
- Who can take in a deep breath?
All take in a huge deep breath – doesn't that feel good!
- Who enjoys being able to smell supper cooking?
Everyone breathe in deeply through your nose and imagine you are smelling the supper cooking.
- Who likes to hear someone laughing?
Tell all the children to laugh out loudly – isn't that a lovely sound?
- Do we have to think hard to do any of these things?
No we don't! Aren't our bodies wonderful?

DID YOU KNOW?

Let me tell you about some of the other amazing things your body is doing right now as you are sitting there.

1. Your heart pumps between 6 and 50 litres of blood every minute. *Have a coke bottle (if empty fill it with water) and hold it up for the children to see.* This bottle contains 300ml of liquid. That means that your heart pumps 18 to 150 of these bottles per minute
2. While you are sitting here your heart beats 60-80 times a minute. *Get the children to make a fist with their hand and pretend that it is their heart. Then tell them to flick out their fingers and then make a fist again as though their heart is beating. Then do this altogether with one beat per second – do this for a minute.* This is how fast your heart is beating right now as you sit.
3. When we exercise our heart beat increases. *Tell them all to jump up and sit down as fast as they can 10 times. As they sit down tell them to put their hand on their chest in the middle and just slightly to the left. Let them feel their hearts beating. After a short time they will not be able to feel their heart beating as strongly anymore as their heart rate goes back to normal.*
4. Everybody take in a deep breath. We breathe in anywhere between 15 and 25 times per minute without even thinking about it. You can't even stop yourself from breathing if you try. *Tell all the children to hold their breath and try to stop breathing.*
5. Your ears pick up the sounds around you and then turn those sounds into something your brain can understand, in other words, your ears will tell you that the sound you are hearing is a motor car or a baby crying, the wind blowing or someone sneezing.
Tell the children to sit quietly for 30 seconds and listen.
What are some of the sounds you were hearing?
6. Your eyes make sense of the things and colours you see, and help your brain to make sense of the world around you.
List some of the things you are seeing right now, as we talk – so much of what we see that we don't even notice that we are seeing.
7. While you are sitting here your stomach is busy releasing a strong acid to break down any food you may have eaten. *Have a piece of wood and some water. Hold the piece of wood up for the*

class to see and drip a drop of water onto the piece of wood. Then tell the children that if the drop of water had been a drop of the acid in your stomach it would have eaten right through the wood.

8. Your nervous system, which consists of your brain, spinal cord and nerves, is carrying all sorts of messages to and from your brain telling you what is going on around you, telling your body what to do and so much more.

Everybody jump up and stand with your hands on your head and your eyes shut tight.

Did anyone have to tell their leg muscles what to do in order to jump up?

Did anyone have to tell their leg and back muscles what to do to allow you to stand still?

Did anyone have to tell their elbows to bend in order to put your hands on your head?

Did anyone have to tell their eyelids to close and stay closed?

The answer to all these questions is NO – your nervous system did a wonderful job of sending all those messages and instructions to the right parts of your body.

Today, let's be reminded about how amazing our bodies are and how wonderfully God has created them to be able to function so well.

Now we are going to divide into groups and talk more about our bodies.

Now divide the children into 3 groups:

- **6-8 years old – boys and girls**
- **9-12 years old – girls only**
- **9-12 years old – boys only. It is ideal to have a man to teach this group.**

6-8 YEARS OLD:

- Who thinks our bodies are wonderful?

Isn't it wonderful to learn about all the different parts of our bodies that God has made. And every part of our bodies has a special job to do.

HOW DO WE GROW?

Today we are talking about growing up. There are different ways in which we grow up.

Ask the children what they think it means to grow up in these different ways before you tell them.

We grow physically – we get taller and stronger, and our bodies change

We grow emotionally – we experience new feelings and we learn to cope better with our feelings

We grow mentally -- we learn more and we learn to apply what we learn about

We grow spiritually - we grow in our relationship with the Lord and hopefully become more like Him

We grow socially - we learn to build good friendships and relationships with others

God is so clever. He designed our bodies to grow up in all of these ways.

BOYS AND GIRLS GROW UP DIFFERENTLY:

- Who thinks boys and girls grow up in the same way?
- Who thinks boys and girls grow up differently?

Boys and girls all grow up but there are many things that are different about boys and girls.

Let's think about some of the things that boys and girls like to do as they grow older that are different?

Ideas: girls like to sit around and chat, boys like to play soccer, boys like to be rough, girls like to do handwork, etc

God has made us all so wonderfully and has designed us perfectly. He made each of us special and unique. God made boys to be boys and God made girls to be girls.

Well, boys and girls don't only like to do different things as they grow up, they also look different as they grow up, don't they?

Boys and girls are different in many ways.

A girl's body develops in ways that allow her to become pregnant and have children and be a mother when she is a woman.

A boy's body develops in ways that allow him to be a father when he is a man.

Parenthood is a very special gift from God and children are a blessing from God.

Let the children come up with their own ideas about:

- What characteristics does a good mother have?
- What characteristics does a good father have?
- Do you think you have all these characteristics?
- Do you think a 16-year-old has all these characteristics?

To be a good mother or father is not an easy job and it is best that we wait until we are married and mature enough before we have children. This is the way God designed it to be in the first place – and it is always best to do things God's way.

Who agrees with that?

LOOKING INTO THE WORD:

Well, God certainly has made our bodies wonderfully. All our body parts are special and are created by God. We need to show our bodies respect and take care of them every day.

There is a lovely verse in the Bible about how wonderfully God has made us:

Psalm 139: 13-14, "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well"

Spend some time going over this verse with the children.

Come up with some actions for each phrase and try and make up a tune or a rap to the words in the verse.

Teach the kids the actions and the rap or song and go over it a few times together.

LET'S PRAY:

Close in prayer by thanking the Lord for the wonderful bodies He has given us. Thank Him for all the different parts of our bodies and for the different jobs that they do. Thank the Lord that He has designed our bodies so that we can grow up into healthy adults.

Ask the Lord to help us to look after our bodies and to honour God with our bodies.

9-12 YEARS OLD – BOYS:

LET'S TALK:

Tell the boys that you are going to talk about some of the changes they can expect to take place in their bodies over the next few years. You will also talk briefly about the changes that take place in girls so that they can be sensitive. Encourage them to be natural and mature about this discussion and that they use the opportunity to learn. Don't allow joking and laughter to get out of hand, remember to keep a godly perspective and tone during this time.

Open the discussion by asking:

- What changes have you noticed in yourselves or in older brothers and sisters?

You can write some of their responses on a board, flipchart or paper

Ask them to think about the main changes that they can expect to take place in their bodies over the next few years.

LET'S LEARN - INFORMATION FOR BOYS:

Most boys enter puberty at the age of 13 or 14 years. Girls tend to develop a year or two earlier than boys. Puberty is the time when a boy changes into a man and a girl changes into a woman. This is a time full of physical, emotional, mental and spiritual changes. These changes occur due to hormonal changes in the body.

The main physical changes as boys approach puberty are:

- Growth of underarm hair, pubic hair (hair around the sex organs), hair on the face and hair all over the body
- Broadening of shoulders and strengthening of muscles
- Increase in the size of the penis and testicles
- Deepening of the voice
- Increase in sweating and change in smell
- They may grow tall very quickly and may put on weight
- They may develop pimples on the face

*Go through the chart: **Male reproductive organs***

Identify the various parts of the male reproductive system and briefly explain their function.

- Penis: The penis has the urethra down the centre. The urethra carries urine from the bladder to the outside. The urethra also carries sperm cells to the outside
- Scrotum: The scrotum holds the 2 testicles outside the body where the sperm cells can be kept cooler than they would be inside the body.
- Testicle: A man has 2 testicles and this is where sperm cells are made. Explain that a sperm cell is the male reproductive cell, and that when it joins together with the female reproductive cell a baby is created.

Erections and night-time ejaculations (wet dreams) may also start happening.

- An erection is when the penis spontaneously becomes erect or hard. This is caused by changing hormones and may happen unexpectedly. It only lasts for a short time and although no-one will notice, it can be embarrassing the first few times.
- Wet dreams happen when boys ejaculate or release sperm while they are sleeping. This happens when the reproductive system becomes full of sperm and semen (the fluid that sperm cells live in) and some of the fluid needs to be emptied outside of the body.

Remind the boys about the need for improved hygiene – wash more frequently to avoid body odour, and change clothes and socks regularly. Washing the penis carefully is also important.

What boys need to know about girls:

*Briefly go through the chart: **Female reproductive organs**. Then use the chart to illustrate the explanation of menstruation.*

Some of the changes girls experience are similar to boys, but the main differences are that girls will start to develop breasts and they will start to menstruate.

What is menstruation?

About once a month hormones in the female body cause an egg cell to be released into the uterus (womb). During this time, the lining of the uterus thickens. If the egg cell is fertilized by a sperm cell a baby will be formed. If the egg cell is not fertilized, the lining of the uterus tears away, breaks up and leaves the body through the vagina – this causes bleeding which lasts for 3-5 days.

Menstruation is a sensitive and private matter and girls should be respected. Boys should not talk to girls about menstruation, make fun of them or dig through their bags.

LOOKING INTO THE WORD:

Some of the children might find all of this quite overwhelming, but end off by reminding the children that they have been wonderfully and interestingly created by God.

Psalm 139: 13-14, “For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well”

LET’S PRAY:

Close in prayer using the above ideas.

9-12 YEARS OLD - GIRLS:

LET’S TALK:

Tell the girls that you are going to talk about some of the changes they can expect to take place in their bodies over the next few years. You will also talk briefly about the changes that take place in

boys so that they can be sensitive. Encourage them to be natural and mature about this discussion and that they use the opportunity to learn. Don't allow joking and laughter to get out of hand, remember to keep a godly perspective and tone during this time.

Open the discussion by asking:

- *What changes have you noticed in yourselves or in older brothers and sisters?*

You can write some of their responses on a board, flipchart or paper

Ask them to think about the main changes that they can expect to take place in their bodies over the next few years.

LET'S LEARN – INFORMATION FOR GIRLS:

Most girls enter puberty at the age of 11 to 13 years. Boys tend to develop a year or two later than girls. Puberty is the time when a boy changes into a man and a girl changes into a woman. This is a time full of physical, emotional, mental and spiritual changes. These changes occur due to hormonal changes in the body.

The main physical changes as girls approach puberty are:

- Growth of underarm hair and pubic hair (hair around the sex organs)
- Development of breasts
- Narrowing of the waist and widening of the hips
- Increase in sweating and change of smell
- They may grow tall very quickly and put on weight
- They may develop pimples on the face
- Menstruation is another important change that will take place.

Go through the chart: Female reproductive organs

Identify the various parts of the female reproductive system and briefly explain their function.

- Vagina: This is the opening from the uterus to the outside of a woman's body. Babies are born through the vagina and sperm cells enter a woman's body through the vagina. Menstrual blood comes out of the vagina.
- Uterus: This is also called the womb and this is where babies develop and grow.
- Ovaries: Eggs develop in the ovaries. One egg is released each menstrual cycle into the Fallopian tube, where it is either fertilized by a sperm cell within 24 hours or it dies.
- Fallopian tubes: These tubes carry eggs from the ovaries to the uterus.
- Cervix: this is the end of the uterus which joins with the vagina

What is menstruation?

Go through this with the chart: Female Reproductive Organs, and point out the organs as you teach.

- Girls start menstruating between 9 and 16 years of age
- The females hormones (oestrogen and progesterone) cause an egg cell in the ovaries to ripen and to be ovulated (released) about once a month
- The ripe egg cell moves from the ovaries, through the Fallopian tube into the uterus (womb) and leaves the body
- If the ripe egg cell in the Fallopian tube is fertilized by a sperm cell of a man, a baby will be formed.
- The lining of the uterus thickens as it retains water and blood
- If the egg cell is not fertilised, it dies. The lining of the uterus tears away, breaks up and leaves the body through the vagina – this causes bleeding through the vagina which lasts 3-5 days and which is called menstruation.
- Menstruation does not usually occur regularly at first. Later it becomes a regular cycle of about 28 days.

Managing your period:

Talk to the girls about using sanitary towels, pads or tampons during their periods. Please keep this discussion relevant to what is available/ affordable to the girls in your area. Discuss and explain their use and how they can be disposed of.

Suggest that it can be helpful to keep a diary or make notes so that they can be prepared for their periods.

Discuss the importance of personal hygiene when having their period. Girls should try to bath or shower, or at least wash all around (not inside) the vagina every day.

Explain that some girls may experience premenstrual stress – they may feel irritated and can be bad-tempered. Some girls have menstrual pain that can be relieved by exercising or medication.

Help the girls to accept menstruation as part of being a woman and to feel positive about it. It is a sign of health, and means that pregnancy is a possibility for them in the future.

What girls need to know about boys:

*Briefly go through the chart: **Male reproductive organs.***

Some of the changes are similar but the main differences are that boys will experience deepening of their voices, and their sex organs will increase in size.

ALL AGES:

Gather the children together again and then continue with this last part of the lesson.

LOOKING INTO THE WORD:

Some of the children might find all of this quite overwhelming, but end off by reminding the children that they have been wonderfully and interestingly created by God.

Psalm 139: 13-14, “For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well”

LET’S PRAY:

Close in prayer using these ideas.

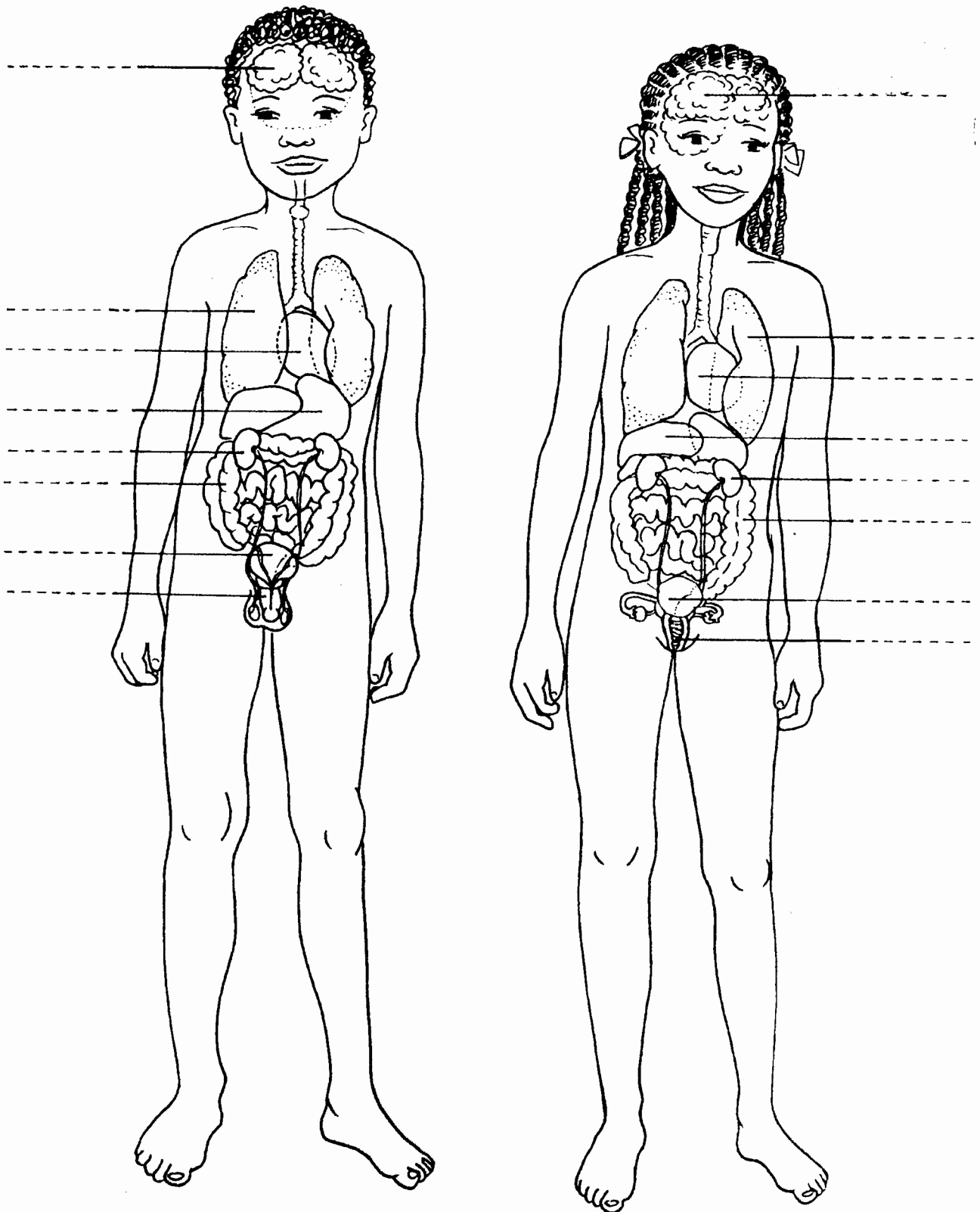
NOTE:

The material for this lesson has been based largely on material from Life Skills and HIV/AIDS Education, Primary School Programme, Published by the HIV/AIDS and STD Directorate, Department of Health, South Africa

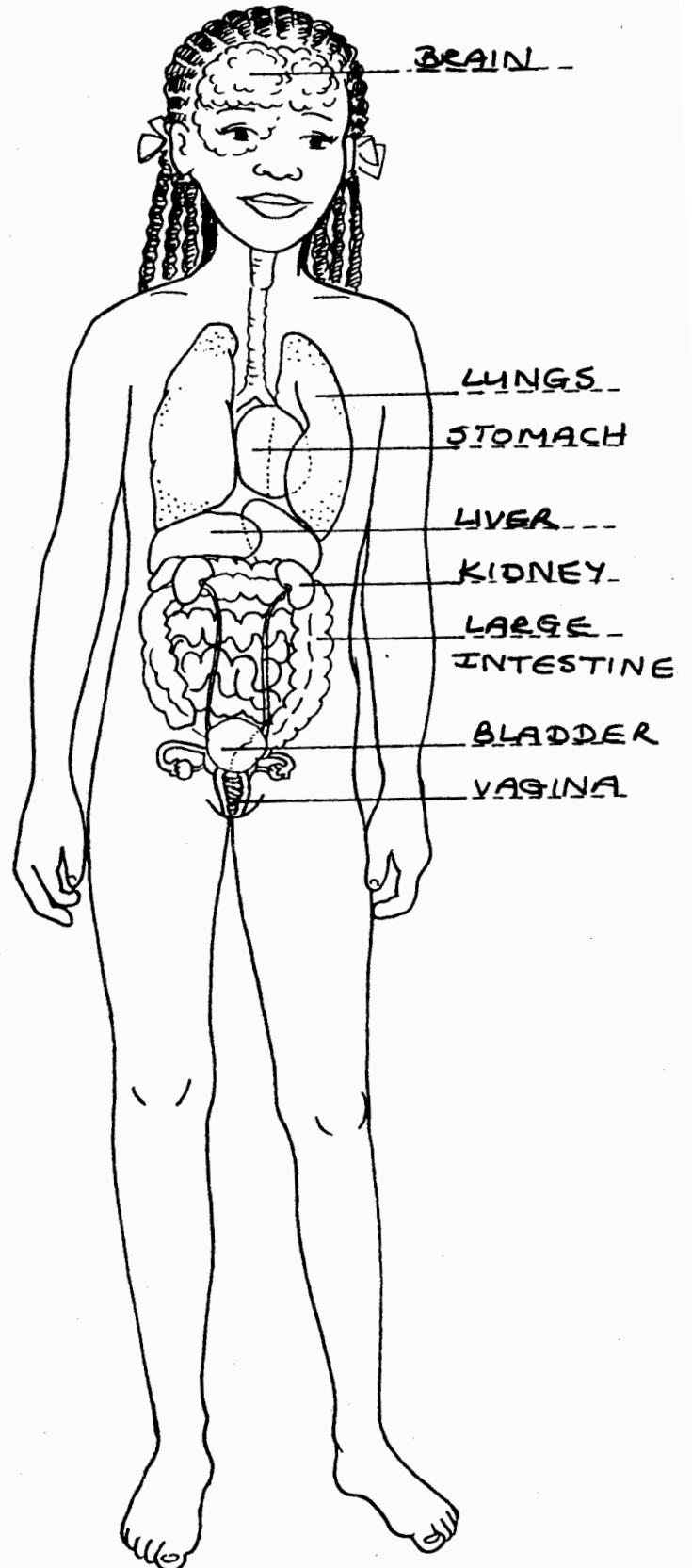
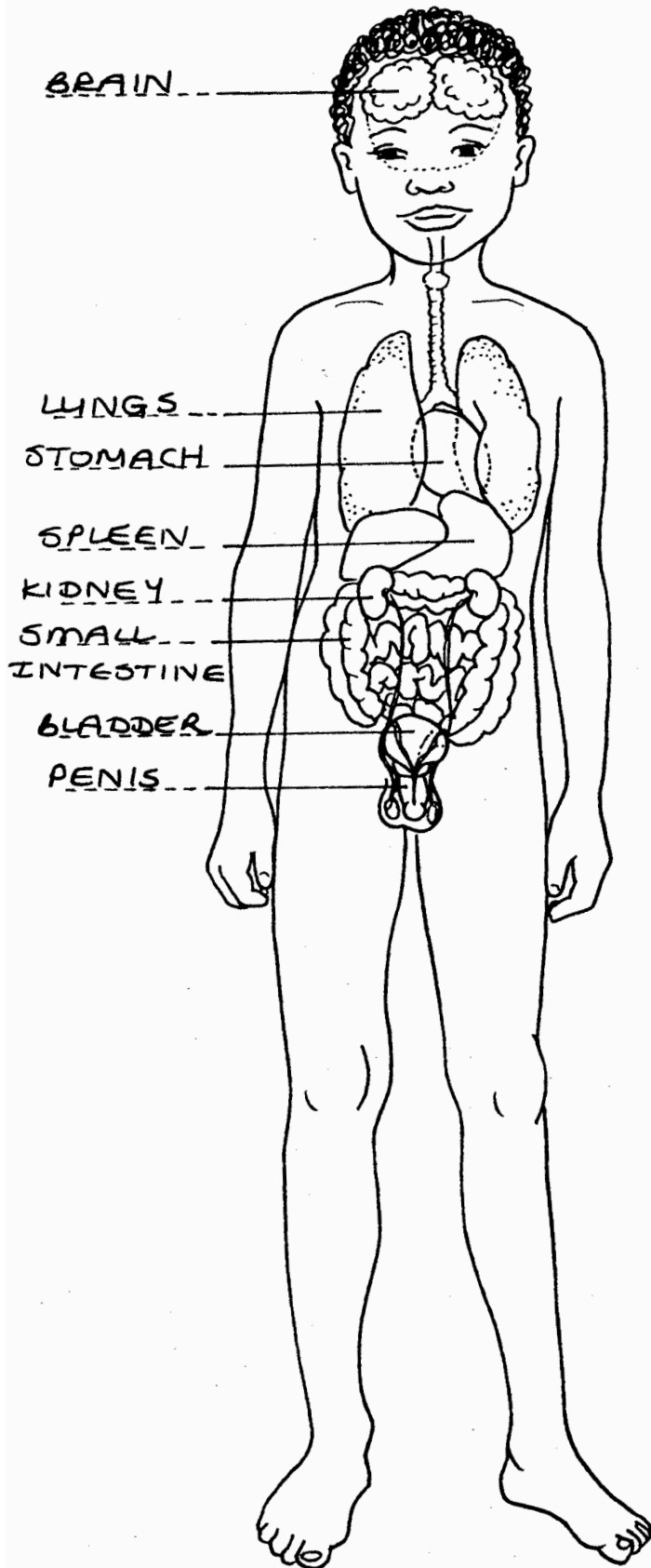
NOTE RE: VISUAL AIDS

- Important organs in the body – A3 page without labels – 1 for older age group and 1 for the younger age group
- Important organs in the body – A4 size with labels (guide for the teachers) – 1 for the older age group and 1 for the younger age group
- Female Reproductive organs – 1 for the older girls group and 1 for the older boys group
- Male Reproductive organs – 1 for the older girls group and 1 for the older boys group

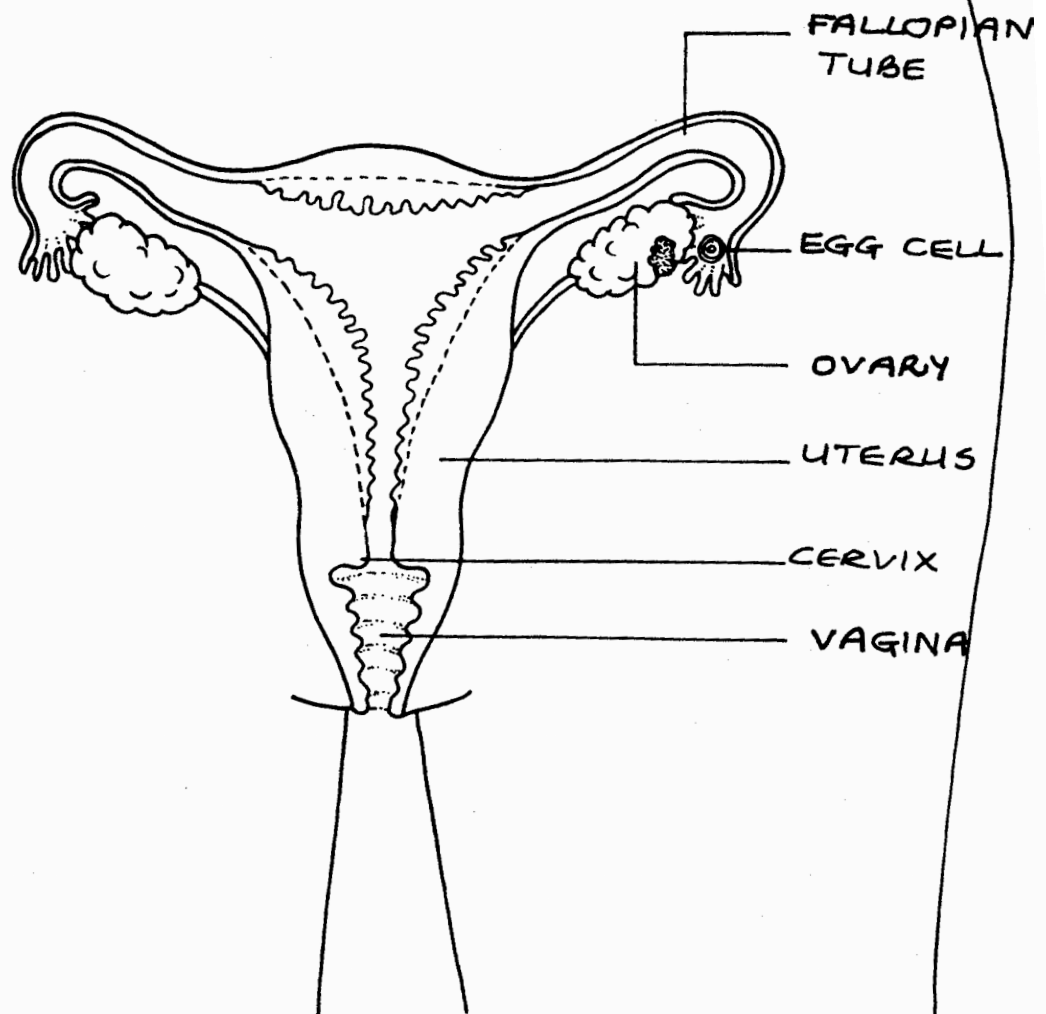
Important organs in the body



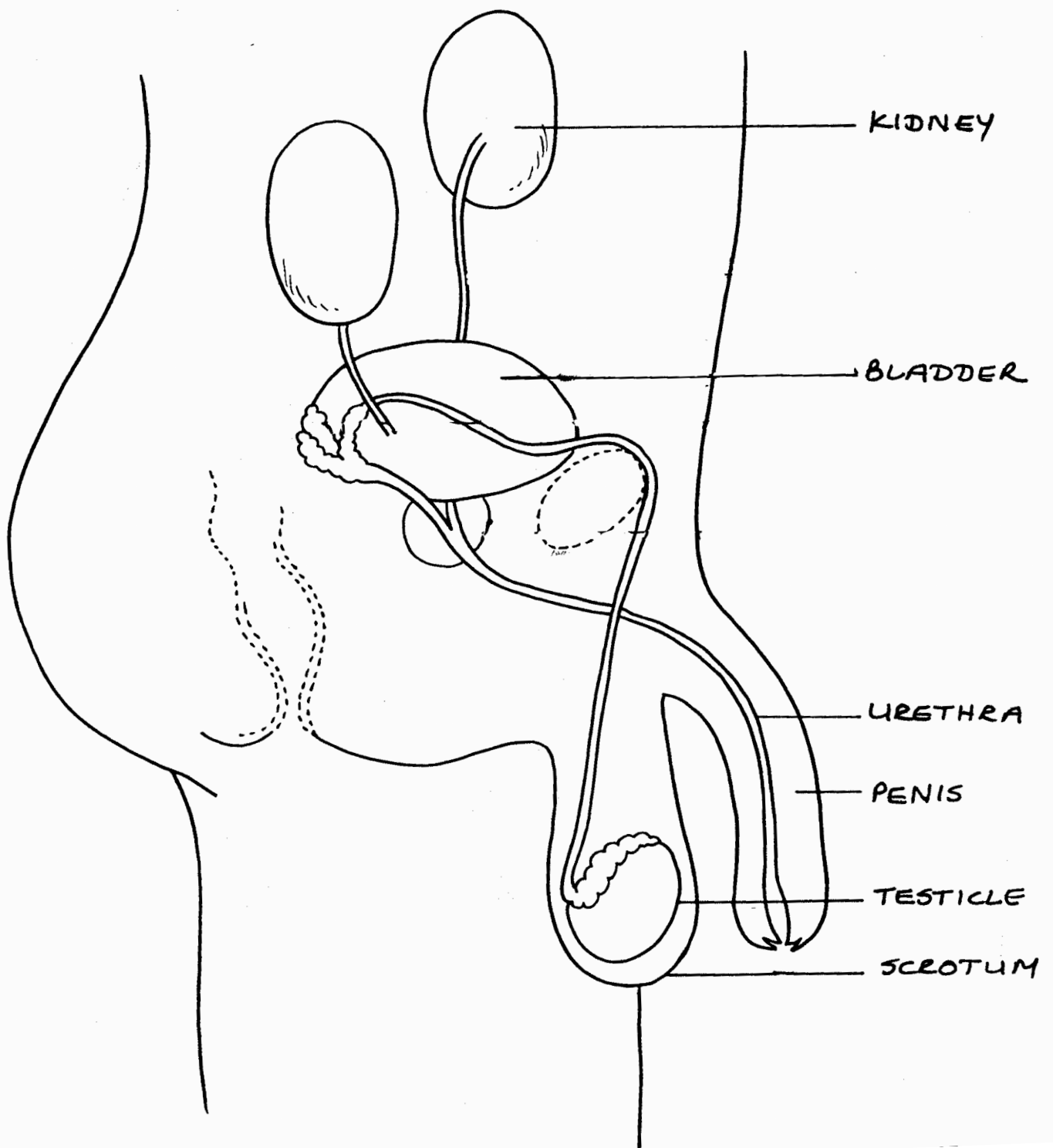
Important organs in the body



Female Reproductive Organs - Front View



Male Reproductive Organs - Side View



LESSON 26

6-9 YEAR OLDS - COMMITMENT

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children:

- Understand more about the marriage relationship
- Learn about commitment
- Are challenged to be more committed in their lives

Theme Verses

Matthew 19:4-6 says, “at the beginning the Creator made them male and female, and said, “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore, what God has joined together, let man not separate.”

1 Samuel 7:3, “commit yourselves to the Lord and serve Him only.”

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

These lessons may be hard to teach and you may feel uncomfortable about teaching them, but they are very important as we establish a positive attitude towards sexuality and sex and we need to teach these things from a godly perspective.

Ask the Lord to give you the boldness and sensitivity you need to teach these lessons well. Try to keep the tone of the lessons normal, natural, positive and godly. Remember that by teaching these next few lessons we hope to help these children to grow and develop positively, and to live within God's standards and desires for our lives.

Important points:

- *If you do not have enough leaders who have **prepared** for the lessons to divide the children into 2 age groups, then teach the lesson as for the younger age group and then re-teach it for both age groups next week.*
- *It is ideal to have a mature man to teach the lesson for the older boys, so please try to make this possible.*

LET'S TALK:

Last week we spoke about growing up and the different ways in which we grow up. We also learned that girls grow up in a way that enables them to be mothers one day and boys grow up in a way that enables them to be fathers one day.

God has designed something very special called marriage.

Who can tell me what marriage is? What does it mean to be married?

The Bible talks about marriage and this is what it says:

“At the beginning the Creator (God) made them male and female, and said, “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore, what God has joined together, let man not separate.” Matthew 19:4-6

When two people get married they enter into a special relationship with one another and that relationship is meant to last for their whole lives.

Marriage has been specially designed by God and God's plan is that people only have children once they are married. God's desire is that children are born into families that have a mother and a father who are married and who have committed to spend their lives together.

“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” So they are no longer two, but one.

The verse talks about the husband being united to his wife, and that the two become one flesh. This is talking about sex and God has designed our bodies in such a way that a husband and wife can enjoy a sexual relationship together. Sex is a special gift from God for married people to express their love for each other, and for them to be able to have children.

“Therefore, what God has joined together, let man not separate.”

Now the verse also says that what God has joined together in marriage, no one must separate. It is God's plan that when two people get married, they commit to remain in this special relationship for the rest of their lives. They should stick together through the good times and the tough times. A married man should not enter into any deep relationship with another woman and a married woman should not enter into a deep relationship with another man. It is God who has joined them together and they must remain faithful to one another if they want to please and honour God in their marriage.

- How many of you know of people who have been married for a long time and are still married?
- Do you think it is possible to stay committed to one person for your whole life? Let the children respond.

Of course it is, because that's the way God planned it.

We must remember that God's plans are always perfect, and He has created marriage like this for our own good. He knows what is best for us.

Marriage is all about commitment. A man and a woman may love each other but if they are not committed to each other and to God it will be difficult to keep that love alive.

LET'S THINK:

- Who knows what the word commitment means?
Get some ideas from the children first.
Commitment is the quality of being dedicated to a person, a cause or an interest or activity
- What are some of the things we are committed to?
Ideas: our friends, sport, doing well at our school work, a task, peace...

- How do we show that we are committed to a person/friend, activity or idea?
- Can any of you think of another relationship in which two people are committed to one another for life?
If we have a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus then that relationship is also a commitment for life. We give our lives to the Lord Jesus and commit to following Him and He loves us and is committed to us for all eternity. Isn't that a wonderful thought?

The Bible challenges us to commit ourselves to God.

In **1 Samuel 7:3** Samuel tells the people who are wanting to turn to God to, **“commit yourselves to the Lord and serve Him only.”**

There are many passages in the Bible that remind us that if we do commit ourselves to God and walk in His ways we will enjoy His many blessings.

This means that God doesn't want us to give our lives to Him and then forget about Him in a few weeks' or months' time when the going gets tough. Following Jesus is a life-time commitment, and although there are times when we may let Him down, He will never let us down and He will always be there for us.

- How do we show that we are committed to God?

LET'S SAY IT:

Divide the children into small groups.

Give each group one of these topics:

- A friend – choose the name of a friend
- A sport – choose a sport
- School work
- God
- marriage

Then tell the children that in their groups they need to come up with a short drama. They must think of a sentence that starts like this:

Being committed to _____ (their topic) means that _____

They must use this sentence to open or close their drama.

Give them an example:

Being committed to my friend Thadi means that I will still be her friend even when she is having a bad day.

Being committed to my soccer means that I won't give up, I will keep practising hard until I play well.

LET'S COMMIT:

- Who thinks commitment is easy?
- Who thinks commitment is a good thing?

There are times when it can be really tough to stay committed but remember that the Lord is always there to help – we just have to ask Him.

Tell the children that you are going to give them a few moments to think quietly about their commitments.

- *Encourage them to ask the Lord to show them an area of their lives in which they need to work on their commitment - it might be a friendship, it might be their relationship with the Lord, it might be their school work.*
- *Encourage them to ask the Lord to show them ways in which they can be more committed in that area of their lives.*
- *Encourage them to ask the Lord to help them.*

LET'S PRAY:

Allow for a time of quiet prayer and then close in prayer.

Thank You, Lord, for creating marriage and for Your perfect design for marriage. Help us to remember how important commitment is in marriage and in our lives. Please help us to be more committed in our lives.

10-12 YEAR OLDS SEX – GOD’S DESIGN

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children:

- Learn about what sex is
- Understand God’s design for sex
- Understand the concepts of abstinence and faithfulness within marriage as part of God’s design
- Are encouraged to desire to please the Lord and make a decision for godly sexual conduct.

Theme Verse

Matthew 19:4-6 says, “at the beginning the Creator made them male and female, and said, “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.”

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

These lessons may be hard to teach and you may feel uncomfortable about teaching them, but they are very important as we establish a positive attitude towards sexuality and sex, and we need to teach these things from a godly perspective.

Ask the Lord to give you the boldness and sensitivity you need to teach these lessons well. Try to keep the tone of the lessons normal, natural, positive and godly. Remember that by teaching these next few lessons we hope to help these children to grow and develop positively, and to live within God’s standards and desires for our lives.

Important points:

- *If you do not have enough leaders who have **prepared** for the lessons to divide the children into **2 age groups** then teach the lesson as for the younger age group and then re-teach it for both age groups next week.*
- *It is ideal to have a mature man to teach the lesson for the older boys, so please try to make this possible.*

LET'S TALK:

Last week we spoke about how wonderfully our bodies have been created by God and we learned about some of the changes we can expect as we grow up.

This brings us to another important topic – sex. Sex is often something we feel uncomfortable talking about but is important to understand enough about sex to know what God intended it for. This can help us to make good decisions in the future – decisions that will be good for us and pleasing and honouring to God.

Use these questions to get some discussion going, to encourage the children to relax and be open.

- Who has heard about sex?
- Who thinks sex is a good thing? Why/ why not?
- Who thinks sex is a bad thing? Why/ Why not?
- Who are the people who have sex?
- Why do people have sex?
- What are the people around us telling us about sex?
- What does the Bible, God's Word, tell us about sex?

LET'S LEARN:

Before we go on, it is important that you know what we are talking about when we talk about sex. Many of you may know already and some of you may have some idea.

When a man and a woman love each other it is natural to want to be close, to hold each other and touch each other. This can lead to sex or sexual intercourse. This means that a man puts his penis into the woman's vagina. The man releases sperm cells from his penis and these sperm cells move up the woman's vagina. If a sperm cell meets the woman's egg cell, they join together and a baby starts to develop.

God created us as sexual beings. There is much more to our sexuality than just sex. Our sexuality is what makes a man a man and a woman a woman. Sexual intercourse is part of our sexuality but only one aspect of it. It is a beautiful gift from God for married people. It brings a husband and a wife closer in their relationship. This is called intimacy and it is good.

LOOKING INTO THE WORD:

Let's look at God's design for sex and then go back to some of the questions we asked at the beginning of the lesson and see what the Bible has to tell us.

As soon as God had finished creating man and woman, the Bible says,

"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh." Genesis 2:24

Matthew 19:4-6 says, "at the beginning the Creator made them male and female, and said, "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore, what God has joined together, let man not separate."

- Is sex a good thing or a bad thing?
Sex is a good thing because God created it and everything God created is good. God designed it as something special and intimate for a husband and wife to share together.
- Who should be having sex?
God created sex to be enjoyed by married people only. The Bible speaks very clearly against people having sex before they are married – this is called fornication in the Bible. The Bible also speaks very clearly that once people are married they should not have sexual relations with someone else – this is called adultery in the Bible (Exodus 20:14)
The Bible often talks about sexual immorality which includes both adultery and fornication (Ephesians 5:3, Galatians 5:19, Colossians 3:5, 1 Thessalonians 4:3).

- Why do people have sex?
God designed sex to unite a husband and wife together in a very intimate way and, therefore, sex is pleasurable.
Sex was also created by God for the purpose of reproduction, so that a husband and a wife can have children together.

God's design for sex:

Abstain from sex until you are married

Be faithful to your marriage partner once you are married.

Abstinence (*make sure they understand what this means*) and **faithfulness** are the two key words to remember.

Teach the children the following saying and repeat it a few times. Make it fun – we are going to use it in several lessons over the next few weeks:

Abstinence before marriage

Faithfulness in marriage

That's the way

That's God's way

I'm gonna do it God's way

LET'S LISTEN:

Tell one of these two stories to the children – tell the one which you think is more relevant for your context – feel free to adapt them.

Tell the children that you are going to read a story that helps us to see how we can be tempted to have sex before marriage and how careful we need to be.

STORY 1

Chipo and Fungai were 15 years old and in love. They had not had sex yet, but they were constantly thinking about it. Many of their friends talked about sex and wanted to experience it. Finally, Fungai told Chipo that since they loved each other, they should have sex. Chipo knew deep in her heart that she didn't want to have sex with Fungai, but she couldn't think of a good reason not to, so she said "yes." They made plans for that Friday night. However, the Tuesday before, they both attended a meeting where the speaker said some things Chipo had never heard before. She left the meeting thinking, "I am special. God loves me and he is concerned about my life and my relationships." That night, Chipo decided to remain abstinent (not to have sex) until she got married. She told Fungai the plans for Friday night were off. Fungai was very disappointed and stopped seeing Chipo.

But Chipo's best friend, Margaret, had a crush on Fungai, and Fungai knew it. Before long Margaret and Fungai began seeing each other and soon started having sex. After a while Fungai and Margaret broke up. When she saw this, Chipo was so glad she had not given in to Fungai's wishes. Both Fungai and Margaret went on to have many other sexual partners.

Thirteen years have passed. During this time, Chipo has worried about her friend Margaret who continues to put herself at risk with many partners. Today Chipo says, "I have dated some wonderful men, but I have kept the promise I made to myself and God, and I'm glad for it. I know that when I marry someday, I will have a precious gift to give my husband and to myself."

In this story, Chipo and Margaret both faced pressures to have sex. Chipo chose God's way, Margaret did not. Chipo made a definite decision to follow God's way and she stuck to it and is glad that she did.

STORY 2

This is the story of a young girl who shares her heart:

I am having a tough time making up my mind about something and I was hoping you could help. Here is what's going on. I am dating this guy and I really like him. It is the first time I have had a proper boyfriend, and he is really important to me. We have been going out for almost three months and I think that I am really in love. He's a little old (19 years old) and I am a little young (I'll be 14 in a month), but he is really nice.

The problem is that he is really putting on the pressure to have sex. He keeps trying to get me alone and then he starts putting a move on me. I keep telling him to stop, but he says that if I loved him, I would have sex with him. I am afraid of what might happen with AIDS and all. He tells me that all his friends are having sex, but I don't know a single friend of mine that has gone all the way.

He has spent a lot of money on me and takes me out to eat and stuff. He says it's time for me to pay him back, and that if I really loved him I would be willing to meet his needs.

I know that if my parents found out I had sex they would kill me. They don't even know that I'm going out with someone. And besides I don't really want to yet. But I am afraid he will leave me.

I don't think I want it to start out this way, but I don't want to lose him. I am so confused.

We could help by reminding her of God's perfect design for sex and for marriage. If sex is what is needed to keep love in a relationship, then it isn't love. When we live according to God's ways, that's when we will experience His blessing. And He will give us the strength and the courage we need to live in His ways.

There are many temptations out there to have sex, but remember that God created and designed sex and so He knows best when it comes to sex. People around us might be trying to tell us something different, but God knows best and if we want the best for our lives, then we really should do things God's way.

MAKE A DECISION:

We need to remember that God, who created sex, knows best how it should be enjoyed. It is important to make decisions when we are not in the heat of the moment and under pressure. We need to make decisions about the way we want to live our lives in moments when we have time to think things through, when we see what is right and true.

Each of you needs to make a decision about how you are going to conduct yourself sexually as you get older. Now is the time to be thinking things through and choosing to behave in a way that will be pleasing to God. Remember, that although these decisions can be hard to stick to, God is always there to give us help if we ask for it. When people choose to conduct themselves sexually in ways that are not pleasing to God, they always land up hurting someone – others and themselves, for example feeling used, guilt, anger, regret, rape and abuse, contracting a sexually transmitted infection, unwanted pregnancies.

LET'S PRAY:

Thank you Lord for the beautiful gift of sex that you have given to be enjoyed by a husband and wife. Lord, your Word tells us clearly that sex is something to be shared by married people only. Help us to desire to please you and to choose to honour and please you in the way we conduct ourselves sexually as we get older.

6-9 YEAR OLDS - THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children:

- Understand the Lordship of Christ in our lives
- Understand the importance of obedience to our Lord in every aspect of our lives
- Are challenged to make Jesus the Lord of every area of their lives

Theme Verses

"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ."

2 Peter 3:18

"For nothing is impossible with God." Luke 1:37

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

LET'S TALK:

Over the last few weeks we have been talking about growing up, we have spoken about marriage and we have spoken about mothers and fathers. We want to grow up into adults who are pleasing to the Lord. Today we are going to talk about how making Jesus the Lord of our lives affects our behaviour and the decisions we make.

- What are some of the things God has commanded us not to do?
Write their ideas on the board
Ideas: Do not steal, do not lie, do not murder, do not worship idols, do not serve other gods, do not use the Lord's name in vain, do not commit adultery, do not be sexually immoral.
- Do we think that certain circumstances or the way we feel at a certain time change what God expects of us?
- Does what God says in the Bible only apply to certain people and certain situations?

Now we have agreed that what the Bible says does not change according to our circumstances or our feelings. So why do you think people try to come up with excuses when they don't want to obey God's commands?

- What are some of the things people say to try and make their wrong actions seem okay?
Ideas:

- God's ways are too difficult
- I couldn't help it
- My friends forced me to do it
- No-one was looking
- Just once doesn't matter, I won't do it again
- As long as no-one finds out
- As long as nobody gets hurt
- I'm poor and I need the money or food
- It's fun, so why not?
- Everyone is doing it
- Who is saying these kinds of things?
- Is this what God desires from us?
- Whose opinion and approval really matters?

Remember that God sees everything we do, even the things we do in secret. He wants us to live in His ways, but He is very loving and He will forgive us when we make mistakes - if we are sorry.

God's commands for our lives are for our good. He knows what we are like and knows the way in which we should live in order to get the best out of life and please Him.

God never asks us to do something that is impossible. It may be difficult but never impossible. He is always ready to help us to obey and give us the strength to stand firm. All we have to do is ask Him and trust Him to help us.

The Bible says, **"nothing is impossible with God."** Luke 1:37

WHO IS THE LORD OF YOUR LIFE?

The Bible talks about Jesus being our Lord and Saviour.

"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ." 2 Peter 3:18

When we accept the Lord Jesus into our lives we accept Him as our Lord and Saviour. What does this mean?

To accept the Lord as **Saviour** means that we acknowledge that we are sinners and that we need to be saved from our sins in order to be acceptable to God. It is Jesus who has made the way open for us to be acceptable to God by dying on the cross and paying the price for our sins.

To accept Christ as **Lord** means that we put Jesus on the throne of our lives and we submit to Him. This means that we are willing to obey His commands and allow Him to control every part of our lives. If Christ is the Lord of our lives it means that if we are doing something that is not honouring to God - we need to stop doing that, ask Him to forgive us and ask Him to help us to move on to activities that will honour Him. This is not always easy, but the Lord Jesus has assured us that He will always be with us, He will strengthen and enable us to live lives that are honouring to Him.

LET'S ACT:

Divide the children into small groups and tell them to come up with a short drama about a king and his subjects (the people who live in His kingdom). The King is a loving King – he loves his people and the people love their King.

Their drama can be about something the King might ask his subjects to do and how they will respond.

Jesus is like that King if we have asked Him to be our Lord. He loves us and we love Him. He sits on the throne in our lives and our desire is to please Him and do what He asks.

LET'S ACT:

THE JESUS DRAMA

This drama needs 2 people – 1 to be a scholar – Rumbi (or any other name), the other to be Jesus. There is another copy of the drama at the back of the lesson so that you can both have the script.

Opening scene: Rumbi has just got back from school, she is tired and just wants to relax.

There is a knock at the door. She says to herself, "Oh, who's coming to see me now, just as I've got home. I just want to rest."

Rumbi ignores the knock

There is knocking at the door again

Rumbi ignores the knocking

Knocking again Rumbi says, "Oh all right, I'm coming"
 She opens the door, "Oh Jesus.... Please come in... I wasn't expecting you, come in, here's a chair, would you like some tea? Would you like some coffee?"
 No answer, Jesus just looks at Rumbi.
 "Well, okay... let's have tea." She starts making her way to the kitchen, "Please sit down, I'm just going to the kitchen."
 Jesus gets up and follows Rumbi.
 Rumbi takes Jesus back to his seat and says, "Please Jesus, sit here and wait, I'll just be in the kitchen making the tea."
 Rumbi goes off again and Jesus gets up and follows.
 Rumbi says, "Well, okay, just let me get the tea ready."
 The tea is made and Rumbi takes it back into the lounge and asks, "Please sit down Jesus, sit, here is your tea."
 The phone rings and Rumbi goes to answer. Jesus follows her.
 Rumbi answers, "Hi, How are you? Just hold on a minute..." She says to Jesus, "Please Jesus, just sit down, I'm just on the phone to a friend, I won't be long."
 Jesus sits down.
 Rumbi carries on talking to her friend on the phone and then she says in a whisper to her friend, "yes, I would love to come to the party with you, but you'll never guess who's visiting me, it's Jesus.....Yes, the Jesus from heaven..... Anyway, I'll sort something out and I'll see you in 10 minutes."
 Rumbi goes back to Jesus to try and explain that she needs to go out.
 She says, "Jesus, I just need to go out for a while. Please just make yourself at home, there's the TV, here's the control, put your feet up... I'm just going out with a friend, I will be back later."
 As Rumbi walks out the door, Jesus follows.
 She says, "No, No, please Jesus, just go back to your chair and sit down. I won't be too long."
 Jesus follows her again. Rumbi says quite firmly, "No Jesus, I am going out, you are staying here."
 She goes to the door and Jesus follows again.
 Now Rumbi takes one of Jesus' hands and holds it up as though He were on the cross, she acts as though she is hitting a nail into his hand, and shouts, "Jesus."
 She then takes his other hand and does the same thing, shouting, "Jesus."
 Jesus acts as though he is on the cross and lays his head to one side as though he has died.
 Rumbi gets on her knees in front of Jesus.
 Jesus then looks up and says, "Why, why don't you let me into every part of your life, Rumbi. I love you."

This drama helps to illustrate the fact that many of us don't like to let Jesus into every part of our lives.

LET'S DRAW:

Ask the children to help you to list some of the different area of their lives and write them on the board.

Ideas: family life, friendships, school work, dreams and desires, goals, behaviour, sports, etc.

Now give each child a piece of paper and tell them to divide their page into 4 blocks. Tell them to think of 6 different areas of their life – use the ideas on the board. Each block on their paper represents an area of their life. Tell them to draw a picture in each block that shows something about that area of their life e.g. for family life they could draw all the members of their family.

Allow them some time to do this. Once they have finished, tell them that we are now going to remind ourselves to make Jesus Lord over every area of our lives. Tell them to add a picture of Jesus or the name of Jesus to each picture they have drawn if they are truly willing to make Him Lord of that area of their life.

As they do this ask them to think about the following questions:

- What does it mean to you to make Jesus Lord of each of these areas of your life?
- Are there other areas in your life, which aren't in your picture, that you haven't given over to the Lord?

If Jesus is Lord of our lives, He should have access to every area of our lives and we should be able to share every part of our lives with Him and be willing to obey and follow Him in every area of our lives.

Sometimes it can be hard to allow the Lord into every part of our lives, and we may feel worried or afraid. But remember that Jesus loves us, He wants the best for us and we can trust Him.

LET'S PRAY:

Encourage the children to make Jesus the Lord of their lives - He is the best person that we could put in charge of our lives.

Encourage the children to give over each room of their lives to Jesus and allow Him control over every part of their lives.

As we make Jesus the Lord of every part of our lives, ask Him to help you to want to obey Him and please Him.

THE JESUS DRAMA

Opening scene: Rumbi has just got back from school, she is tired and just wants to relax.

There is a knock at the door. She says to herself, "Oh, who's coming to see me now, just as I've got home. I just want to rest."

Rumbi ignores the knock

There is knocking at the door again

Rumbi ignores the knocking

Knocking again Rumbi says, "Oh all right, I'm coming"

She opens the door, "Oh Jesus.... Please come in... I wasn't expecting you, come in, here's a chair, would you like some tea? Would you like some coffee?"

No answer, Jesus just looks at Rumbi.

"Well, okay... let's have tea." She starts making her way to the kitchen, "Please sit down, I'm just going to the kitchen."

Jesus gets up and follows Rumbi.

Rumbi takes Jesus back to his seat and says, "Please Jesus, sit here and wait, I'll just be in the kitchen making the tea."

Rumbi goes off again and Jesus gets up and follows.

Rumbi says, "Well, okay, just let me get the tea ready."

The tea is made and Rumbi takes it back into the lounge and asks, "Please sit down Jesus, sit, here is your tea."

The phone rings and Rumbi goes to answer. Jesus follows her.

Rumbi answers, "Hi, How are you? Just hold on a minute..." She says to Jesus, "Please Jesus, just sit down, I'm just on the phone to a friend, I won't be long."

Jesus sits down.

Rumbi carries on talking to her friend on the phone and then she says in a whisper to her friend, "yes, I would love to come to the party with you, but you'll never guess who's visiting me, it's Jesus.....Yes, the Jesus from heaven..... Anyway, I'll sort something out and I'll see you in 10 minutes."

Rumbi goes back to Jesus to try and explain that she needs to go out.

She says, "Jesus, I just need to go out for a while. Please just make yourself at home, there's the TV, here's the control, put your feet up... I'm just going out with a friend, I will be back later."

As Rumbi walks out the door, Jesus follows.

She says, "No, No, please Jesus, just go back to your chair and sit down. I won't be too long."

Jesus follows her again. Rumbi says quite firmly, "No Jesus, I am going out, you are staying here."

She goes to the door and Jesus follows again.

Now Rumbi takes one of Jesus' hands and holds it up as though He were on the cross, she acts as though she is hitting a nail into his hand, and shouts, "Jesus."

She then takes his other hand and does the same thing, shouting, "Jesus."

Jesus acts as though he is on the cross and lays his head to one side as though he has died.

Rumbi gets on her knees in front of Jesus.

Jesus then looks up and says, "Why, why don't you let me into every part of your life, Rumbi. I love you."

LESSON 27

10-12 YEAR OLDS – SEX: THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children:

- Understand the Lordship of Christ in our lives
- Understand the importance of obedience to our Lord in every aspect, including our sexuality
- Are challenged to make Jesus the Lord of every area of their lives

Theme Verses

“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” 2 Peter 3:18

“For nothing is impossible with God.” Luke 1:37

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

These lessons may be hard to teach and you may feel uncomfortable about teaching them, but they are very important as we establish a positive attitude towards sexuality and sex and we need to teach these things from a godly perspective.

Ask the Lord to give you the boldness and sensitivity you need to teach these lessons well. Try to keep the tone of the lessons normal, natural, positive and godly. Remember that by teaching these next few lessons we hope to help these children to grow and develop positively, and to live within God's standards and desires for our lives.

Important points:

- If you do not have enough leaders who have **prepared** for the lessons to divide the children into **2 age groups**, then teach the lesson as for the younger age group and then re-teach it for both age groups next week.
- It is ideal to have a mature man to teach the lesson for the older boys, so please try to make this possible.

LET'S TALK:

Over the last few weeks we have been talking about growing up, about the changes that will take place in our bodies, we have spoken about marriage and we have spoken about sex and what God intended it to be. Today we are going to carry on talking about some of these things and how making Jesus the Lord of our lives affects our behaviour and the decisions we make.

- What are some of the things God has commanded us not to do?
Write their ideas on the board Ideas: Do not steal, do not lie, do not murder, do not worship idols, do not serve other gods, do not use the Lord's name in vain
- Do we think that certain circumstances or the way we feel at a certain time change what God expects of us?
- Does what God says in the Bible only apply to certain people and certain situations?
- What does the Bible say about sex?
We have already learned that the Bible says that we must not commit adultery and warns against sexual immorality. Well, what does that mean? It means no sex before marriage (abstinence) and it means that a husband and wife must remain faithful to one another and not have any sexual relations with anyone else. (Matthew 19:18, Ephesians 5:3, Galatians 5:19, Colossians 3:5, 1 Thessalonians 4:3)

Now we have agreed that what the Bible says does not change according to our circumstances or our feelings. So why do you think people are so ready to come up with excuses when it comes to sex?

- What are some of the things people say to try and make sexual immorality seem okay?
Ideas:
 - To sleep around is cool
 - As long as no-one finds out
 - As long as you don't fall pregnant – it's okay
 - I'm poor and I need the money
 - It's the only way that he/ she will know that I love them
 - It's fun, so why not?
 - Everyone is doing it
- Who is saying these kinds of things?
- Is this what God desires from us?
- Whose opinion and approval really matters?
- Do we want to be "cool" in God's eyes or in the eyes of those who are trying to pressurize us to behave in this way?

Remember that God sees everything we do, even the things we do in secret.

It is so important to get our thinking straight now and not wait until we are in a difficult situation.

- Can anyone remember the saying we learned last week about abstinence and faithfulness?
Abstinence before marriage
Faithfulness in marriage
That's the way
That's God's way
I'm gonna do it God's way

WHO IS THE LORD OF YOUR LIFE?

The Bible talks about Jesus being our Lord and Saviour.

"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." 2 Peter 3:18

When we accept the Lord Jesus into our lives we accept Him as our Lord and Saviour.

- What does this mean?

To accept the Lord as **Saviour** means that we acknowledge that we are sinners and that we need to be saved from our sins in order to be acceptable to God. It is Jesus who has made the way open for us to be acceptable to God by dying on the cross and paying the price for our sins.

To accept Christ as **Lord** means that we put Jesus on the throne of our lives and we submit to Him. This means that we are willing to obey His commands and allow Him to control every part of our lives.

If Christ is the Lord of our lives it means that if we are doing something that is not honouring to God - we need to stop doing that, ask Him to forgive us and ask Him to help us to move on to activities that will honour Him. This is not always easy, but the Lord Jesus has assured us that He will always be with us, He will strengthen and enable us to live lives that are honouring to Him.

Encourage children who have not accepted Jesus as Lord and Saviour of their lives to come and talk to you afterwards if they would like to know more.

LET'S ACT:

THE JESUS DRAMA

Some of you may remember this drama from last year, but we are going to do it again because it really helps us to understand more about making Jesus the Lord of our lives.

This drama needs 2 people – 1 to be a scholar – Rumbi (or any other name), the other to be Jesus. There is another copy of the drama at the back of the lesson so that you can both have the script.

Opening scene: Rumbi has just got back from school, she is tired and just wants to relax.

There is a knock at the door. She says to herself, "Oh, who's coming to see me now, just as I've got home. I just want to rest."

Rumbi ignores the knock.

There is knocking at the door again.

Rumbi ignores the knocking.

Knocking again Rumbi says, "Oh all right, I'm coming"

She opens the door, "Oh Jesus.... Please come in... I wasn't expecting you, come in, here's a chair, would you like some tea? Would you like some coffee?"

No answer, Jesus just looks at Rumbi.

"Well, okay... let's have tea." She starts making her way to the kitchen, "Please sit down, I'm just going to the kitchen."

Jesus gets up and follows Rumbi.

Rumbi takes Jesus back to his seat and says, "Please Jesus, sit here and wait, I'll just be in the kitchen making the tea."

Rumbi goes off again and Jesus gets up and follows.

Rumbi says, "Well, okay, just let me get the tea ready."

The tea is made and Rumbi takes it back into the lounge and asks, "Please sit down Jesus, sit, here is your tea."

The phone rings and Rumbi goes to answer. Jesus follows her.

Rumbi answers, "Hi, How are you? Just hold on a minute..." She says to Jesus, "Please Jesus, just sit down, I'm just on the phone to a friend, I won't be long."

Jesus sits down.

Rumbi carries on talking to her friend on the phone and then she says in a whisper to her friend, "yes, I would love to come to the party with you, but you'll never guess who's visiting me, it's Jesus.....Yes, the Jesus from heaven..... Anyway, I'll sort something out and I'll see you in 10 minutes."

Rumbi goes back to Jesus to try and explain that she needs to go out.

She says, "Jesus, I just need to go out for a while. Please just make yourself at home, there's the TV, here's the control, put your feet up... I'm just going out with a friend, I will be back later."

As Rumbi walks out the door, Jesus follows.

She says, "No, No, please Jesus, just go back to your chair and sit down. I won't be too long."

Jesus follows her again. Rumbi says quite firmly, "No Jesus, I am going out, you are staying here."

She goes to the door and Jesus follows again.

Now Rumbi takes one of Jesus' hands and holds it up as though He were on the cross, she acts as though she is hitting a nail into his hand, and shouts, "Jesus."

She then takes his other hand and does the same thing, shouting, "Jesus."

Jesus acts as though he is on the cross and lays his head to one side as though he has died.

Rumbi gets on her knees in front of Jesus.

Jesus then looks up and says, "Why, why don't you let me into every part of your life, Rumbi. I love you."

This drama helps to illustrate the fact that many of us don't like to let Jesus into every part of our lives.

LET'S DRAW:

Ask the children to help you to list some of the different area of their lives and write them on the board.

Ideas: family life, friendships, school work, dreams and desires, goals, behaviour, sports, etc.

Now give each child a piece of paper and tell them to divide their page into 6 blocks. Tell them to think of 6 different areas of their life – use the ideas on the board. Each block on their paper represents an area of their life. Tell them to draw a picture in each block that shows something about that area of their life e.g. for family life they could draw all the members of their family.

Allow them some time to do this. Once they have finished, tell them that we are now going to remind ourselves to make Jesus Lord over every area of our lives. Tell them to add a picture of Jesus or the name of Jesus to each picture they have drawn if they are truly willing to make Him Lord of that area of their life.

As they do this ask them to think about the following questions:

- What does it mean to you to make Jesus Lord of each of these areas of your life?
- Which areas are more difficult to give over to the Lord and why?
- Are there other areas in your life, which aren't in your picture, that you haven't given over to the Lord?

Suggest that they say a quiet prayer asking Jesus to help them to make Him Lord of every part of their lives.

If Jesus is Lord of our lives, He should have access to every area of our lives and we should be able to share every part of our lives with Him and be willing to obey and follow Him in every area of our lives.

Sometimes it can be hard to allow the Lord into every part of our lives and we may feel worried or afraid. But remember that Jesus loves us, He wants the best for us and we can trust Him.

LORD OF OUR SEXUALITY:

We should want to honour God in our sexual behaviour. We should take pride in our virginity (a virgin is someone, boy or girl, who has not had sex) because it is pleasing to God. We should encourage those around us to do the same. Imagine you and a group of friends could stand together against these pressures and give a different message to those around you – that it's virginity that is cool!!

God never asks us to do something that is impossible. It may be difficult but never impossible. He is always ready to help us to obey and give us the strength to stand firm. All we have to do is ask Him and trust Him to help us.

The Bible says that **“nothing is impossible with God,” Luke 1:37**

As you grow and develop you will find that you experience sexual desires and urges, there will also be plenty of people around you encouraging you to follow your desires. We need to be prepared. When sexual pressures come, we need to be ready to resist and say no! Remind yourself of who is Lord of your life.

LET'S PRAY:

Encourage the children to make Jesus the Lord of their lives - He is the best person that we could put in charge of our lives.

Encourage the children to give over every area of their lives to Jesus and allow Him control over every part of our lives.

As we make Jesus the Lord of every part of our lives, ask Him to help you to want to obey Him and please Him.

THE JESUS DRAMA

Opening scene: Rumbi has just got back from school, she is tired and just wants to relax.

There is a knock at the door. She says to herself, "Oh, who's coming to see me now, just as I've got home. I just want to rest."

Rumbi ignores the knock

There is knocking at the door again

Rumbi ignores the knocking

Knocking again Rumbi says, "Oh all right, I'm coming"

She opens the door, "Oh Jesus.... Please come in... I wasn't expecting you, come in, here's a chair, would you like some tea? Would you like some coffee?"

No answer, Jesus just looks at Rumbi.

"Well, okay... let's have tea." She starts making her way to the kitchen, "Please sit down, I'm just going to the kitchen."

Jesus gets up and follows Rumbi.

Rumbi takes Jesus back to his seat and says, "Please Jesus, sit here and wait, I'll just be in the kitchen making the tea."

Rumbi goes off again and Jesus gets up and follows.

Rumbi says, "Well, okay, just let me get the tea ready."

The tea is made and Rumbi takes it back into the lounge and asks, "Please sit down Jesus, sit, here is your tea."

The phone rings and Rumbi goes to answer. Jesus follows her.

Rumbi answers, "Hi, How are you? Just hold on a minute..." She says to Jesus, "Please Jesus, just sit down, I'm just on the phone to a friend, I won't be long."

Jesus sits down.

Rumbi carries on talking to her friend on the phone and then she says in a whisper to her friend, "yes, I would love to come to the party with you, but you'll never guess who's visiting me, it's Jesus.....Yes, the Jesus from heaven..... Anyway, I'll sort something out and I'll see you in 10 minutes."

Rumbi goes back to Jesus to try and explain that she needs to go out.

She says, "Jesus, I just need to go out for a while. Please just make yourself at home, there's the TV, here's the control, put your feet up... I'm just going out with a friend, I will be back later."

As Rumbi walks out the door, Jesus follows.

She says, "No, No, please Jesus, just go back to your chair and sit down. I won't be too long."

Jesus follows her again. Rumbi says quite firmly, "No Jesus, I am going out, you are staying here."

She goes to the door and Jesus follows again.

Now Rumbi takes one of Jesus' hands and holds it up as though He were on the cross, she acts as though she is hitting a nail into his hand, and shouts, "Jesus."

She then takes his other hand and does the same thing, shouting, "Jesus."

Jesus acts as though he is on the cross and lays his head to one side as though he has died.

Rumbi gets on her knees in front of Jesus.

Jesus then looks up and says, "Why, why don't you let me into every part of your life, Rumbi. I love you."

LESSON 28

SAYING NO!

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children:

- Learn about temptation and saying NO
- Learn how to say NO positively using the “say NO sandwich”
- Know that the Lord is there to help them to be bold and to think of ways to resist temptation and say NO

Theme Verses

1 Corinthians 10:13, “No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.”

Psalm 138:3, “When I called, you answered me; you made me bold and stout-hearted.”

Joshua 1:9, “Be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” (New Living Translation)

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

We have been learning about God’s design for sex and about making Jesus the Lord of our lives. But it is impossible for us to stay within God’s boundaries and obey Him if we are not able to say no. We need to learn to be able to say a confident ‘NO’ to temptation if we want to honour the Lord with our lives.

- What are some of the temptations we face that we need to say “NO” to?
Ideas: cheating, bullying, stealing, avoiding doing our chores at home, having sex before marriage, playing with friends when we should be doing our homework, etc.
- Who finds it easy to say NO? Most of us find it difficult to say NO, and it is something that most of us need to learn in life. Often we want to please others and it is often easier to give in to temptation than to resist it.

LET’S TALK:

*Have two or three of the volunteers share about a time when they said NO but found it difficult, OR about a time when they knew they should have said NO but didn't.
Then ask a few of the children to share about an experience they have had when they said NO.*

DECIDING TO SAY 'NO':

In order to be able to say NO, we need to learn to think before we make a decision.
Before you make a decision, STOP, and ask yourself a few questions like:

- Will I be hurt or harmed? Or, Will I gain or benefit?
- Will some one else be harmed or hurt if I do this?
- Is it wrong to do? Will I be sorry afterwards?
- What will my parents or teacher say, feel and do if I do this?
- What would Jesus do in a situation like this?

Once you have answered a few of these questions you will know whether you should say NO. Saying NO can be difficult, so we are going to teach you a good way to say NO. Hopefully some of you will remember about the **"Say NO sandwich."**

SAYING "NO" POSITIVELY

To help you to say 'No' we are going to learn about, **"Say NO sandwiches"**
(This is another wonderful idea from Scripture Union).

- Can any of you remember something about the say NO sandwich?

*Remind the children that a sandwich consists of two pieces of bread with something in the middle.
Try to have a sandwich with you to show the kids.*

The jam/cheese/meat/peanut butter on our sandwich is going to be like our NO. But we are going to learn to sandwich our NO between two positives, i.e. the two pieces of bread. In this way we can learn to say NO without losing our friends or getting into trouble.

There are 3 steps:

- Say something positive, e.g. "I am glad you're my friend."
- Say NO and mean it, e.g. "I'm NOT going there today."
- Suggest doing something else instead, e.g. "Let's go and play soccer"

Can you see how we sandwiched our NO in between two positives?

To help the children to remember teach them the 3 steps using their hands:

- Put one hand out with the palm facing upwards – this is the first piece of bread for our sandwich and this represents a positive (when we say something positive). *As they put their hand out, they must say, "a positive"*
- For step 2 – use the other hand to pretend to put something on the first piece of bread – the filling for our sandwich. This represents our "NO." *As they pretend to put the filling on they must say, "a NO"*
- Now use the same hand and put it on top of the 'filling' and the other hand – this is the other piece of bread for our sandwich and represents the other positive, e.g. suggesting something else to do. *As they put this hand on the other they must say, "a positive"*

These 3 actions and phrases are an easy way to help the children to remember how to make a "say NO sandwich"

Get all the children to stand and go through it again together

Saying 'No' takes boldness and courage, but we are encouraged in the Bible that the Lord will be with us and He will help us.

Psalm 138:3, "When I called, you answered me; you made be bold and stout-hearted."

Joshua 1:9, "be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." (New Living Translation)

The Lord will give us the courage we need and He will help us to be bold when we are feeling weak.

We might think that in some situations it is impossible to say NO. But remember last week we learned that **"nothing is impossible with God."** **Luke 1:37**

1 Corinthians 10:13 says that, **“No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.”**

This verse reminds us that we will never be faced with a temptation that we can't resist with God's help. We need to ask Him to help us to resist temptation and to think of a way out. Often the way out the Lord shows us will give us the ideas we need to make a positive “say NO” sandwich.

LET'S ACT:

Divide the children into groups and tell them to prepare a short drama that gives an example of making a careful decision and saying a positive 'No' using a “say NO sandwich.”

Give them the following examples but encourage them to think of their own examples:

- Can I copy your homework?
- Do you want to come to a party tonight? Don't tell your parents.
- Let's gang up together against that silly boy in our class.
- Let's go find some cigarettes.
- Let's play a trick on the teacher or on that old man.
- Let's take my brothers car and drive it around the block.
- Let's see if we can get into the movies without paying.
- Let's get that tape you want in the shop (without paying)

Give them time to prepare their short dramas and then allow as many groups as you can to present their dramas to the others.

Divide the group into the older and younger children i.e. 6-9 year olds and 10-12 year olds and then add the following ideas to the list of examples for the older children:

- Are your parents home? No? Let's go there where we can be alone.
- Resisting an abuse type situation.
- Friends putting on pressure, “Hey, it's cool to have sex!”
- Your boyfriend or girlfriend says, “Come on, let's have sex. Everyone else is doing it” or “If you love me you will have sex with me.”

It is very important that the older children are encouraged to think about these kinds of scenarios and how they can say “No”. Remember that we learned that when friends stand together as a group it is so much easier to say NO.

LET'S BE BOLD ENOUGH TO SAY NO!

1 Corinthians 10:31 says, **“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”**

This verse reminds us that whatever we do, we should always try to please the Lord and honour Him. Let's not forget that Jesus is always with us to help us by giving us courage and boldness, and by helping us to think of ways to resist the temptation. He can help us to make some really good “say NO sandwiches.”

LET'S PRAY:

Ask the Lord to help us to say NO in a positive way so that we will live in a way that is pleasing to Him. Ask the Lord to help us to make wise and careful decisions and to be bold and brave enough to say “No”. Ask the Lord to give us friends who will stand together with us and help us to say NO.

Thank the Lord that He is always with us, to help us and to give us the courage and boldness we need to live in a way that is pleasing to Him.

LESSON 29

VIRGIN PRIDE

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children:

- Are reminded of God's design for sex
- Are reminded what it means to make Jesus Lord of their lives
- Are reminded of the importance of following God's plan for sex
- Are encouraged to take pride in being sexually pure and being a virgin
- Are given practical examples of how young people stay sexually pure
- Are challenged to make a promise to God to remain sexually pure until they marry

Theme Verses

1 Thessalonians 4:3-5, "God wants you to be holy, so you should keep clear of all sexual sin. Then each of you will control your body and live in holiness and honour – not in lustful passions as the pagans do in their ignorance of God and His ways." (New Living Translation)

Luke 1:37, "Nothing is impossible with God."

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

We have been learning about saying 'NO' and about God's design for sex. Our sexuality – what makes boys like boys and girls like girls – is a precious gift from God. Our sexuality is something we need to take pride in, and something we need to keep pure and holy.

WHY SHOULD WE ABSTAIN FROM SEX AND BE SEXUALLY PURE?

- Who can tell us about God's design for sex?
Let them respond in their own words but there are 2 main points: abstain from sex until marriage and remain faithful to your marriage partner once you are married.
- Who can tell us what it means to make Jesus the Lord of our life?
Let them respond in their own words. To accept Christ as Lord means that we put Jesus on the throne of our lives and we submit to Him. This means that we are willing to obey His commands and allow Him to control every part of our lives.

- Can anyone remember the saying we have learned about Abstinence and Faithfulness?
Abstinence before marriage
Faithfulness in marriage
That's the way
That's God's way
I'm gonna do it God's way
Get all the children to stand up and say this together – by now they should know it quite well.

These lessons have helped us to realise that God's plan and desire for us is to abstain from sex before marriage. This means that we shouldn't have sex with anyone until we get married. We face many pressures in our lives, and we have spoken about how important it is that we learn to say NO. One of the biggest pressures that you will face as you grow up is the pressure to have sex with people you meet and date.

- Why do people have sex before marriage?
- What are the risks of having sex before marriage and having sex with a number of different people?
 Ideas: unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS
- How are we told we can prevent these things?
 Ideas: by not having sex, by using a condom

There is a lovely verse in the Bible that teaches us about God's plans for sex.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-4 says that **"God wants you to be holy, so you should keep clear of all sexual sin. Then each of you will control your body and live in holiness and honour – not in lustful passions as the pagans do in their ignorance of God and His ways."** (New Living Translation)

To make the verse more personal, get the children to repeat the verse after you, phrase by phrase, in the following way:

**"God wants ME to be holy,
 so I should keep clear of all sexual sin.
 Then I will control my body,
 and live in holiness and honour –
 not in lustful passions as the pagans do
 in their ignorance of God and His ways."**
1 Thessalonians 4:3-4 (New Living Translation)

God's plan for sex is for your own good. God loves you and He wants the best for you and that is why He has put certain boundaries in place for sex. God's way is the answer, not condoms. We have been made to believe that if we use a condom we are having "safe" or "protected" sex. This is not true. Condoms have to be correctly used for them to be effective and this does not always happen. Condoms, even if correctly used, DO NOT protect us from all sexually transmitted diseases. None of us want to put ourselves at risk of getting a sexually transmitted disease.

Our sexuality is a precious gift from God and we should be proud to follow God's way.

- Who knows what it means to be a virgin?
 A virgin is someone who has not had sex.

We want each of you children in our group to be proud of being a virgin. This is not something to be ashamed of – as the world often makes us feel. Quite the opposite – if we are Christians we should be proud to be a virgin, proud to be following God's way.

HOW CAN WE ABSTAIN?

We are going to read to you what some Christian youth have said about abstinence. (These testimonies come from the article *Abstinence – the Christian Thing*; p.32-34; J. Sebastian; Christian Living Today, March 2007)

After each story, ask the following question and write the answers on the board – the answers will often be the same.

- *What helped that person to abstain and resist having sex before marriage?*

Nomonde, 14 years old

I think it's the best idea to wait, because we are still young. Some young people say, "Maybe tomorrow you die, so have sex today," but I don't agree. I know people my age who have fallen pregnant and I won't follow that way. We must follow God's idea to wait till we are married. I know it's difficult, but I will ask God to help. God helps me say, "No, I want to wait."

Alutha, 15 years old

I want to wait till I'm married before I have a child. I'm too young now. My mother always tells me I am too young and must wait until I am married. I think it's better to wait until I am married to one person, because so many people die of HIV/AIDS.

Cailin, 16 years old

The temptation is great when you are dating, but the members of my church and my family keep me accountable as they ask me direct questions about my relationship. I find that sometimes people laugh but I know that you have to ask God to cleanse your mind and strengthen you not to give in to temptation, which is the worst thing the devil will throw at you. What helps is setting boundaries with a person before you become friends.

Charelle, 16 years old

I made a really good decision by taking the pledge to remain abstinent – it's wonderful how God changed my life over the past two years. I understand that God wants me to remain pure until marriage and that's what I'm going to continue to do as these two years have been the best time of my life.

Earl, 24 years old

Abstinence to me means abstaining completely from sex and all those things that will lead you to falling into sexual sin. I would encourage girls to draw the line when it comes to sex because otherwise they are giving away something so fragile and special, something they can't get back. It's hectic, but fortunately I have a good family and friends around me. When I fall into temptation to go too far, I pick myself up with God's Word or someone is there to help pick me up. I go to church and fill my mind with the things of God. It truly helps.

Gena, 22 years

As human beings it's hard to abstain, but as Christians we have God's strength to keep us from falling. My boyfriend and I have been dating for a year and because we are both committed to our promise to not have sex, and can talk about our feelings, it makes it easier.

Ncedisa, 15 years

If I don't wait for sex until I am married I could get pregnant or a sexually transmitted disease. They tell us all about it at school. I would have to have an honest talk with my boyfriend about why I don't want to have sex. If he doesn't agree, I'll walk away from it. Waiting is part of God's commandments to us. We help each other, our friends, to wait.

Thembi, 17 years

These days there are so many diseases. If you get married, it's just your husband you are sleeping with. The Bible says it's good to wait. Friends can influence and pressurize, but I make my own decision.

The words you should have on your blackboard will be something like this:

What helped each of these people to abstain?

The Word of God

God's help

Friends and family

Setting boundaries

Talking openly

Commitment to their promise

Being able to say NO

- Who can remember how to make a “say NO sandwich”?
Once they have answered, let them all go through the actions of making the say NO sandwich that you learned last week:

To help the children to remember teach them the 3 steps using their hands:

- Put one hand out with the palm facing upwards – this is the first piece of bread for our sandwich and this represents a positive (when we say something positive). As they put there hand out, they must say, “a positive”
- For step 2 – use the other hand to pretend to put something on the first piece of bread – the filling for our sandwich. This represents our “No”. As they pretend to put the filling on they must say, “a NO”
- Now use the same hand and put it on top of the ‘filling’ and the other hand – this is the other piece of bread for our sandwich and represents the other positive e.g. suggesting something else to do. As they put this hand on the other they must say, “a positive”

These 3 actions and phrases are an easy way to help the children to remember how to make a “say NO sandwich”

Look at the list on the blackboard - all these things help us to abstain, and it encourages us to stand together with our friends and be proud to be a virgin. If abstinence is God’s way then we know that He will be there to help us to obey Him. In our own strength it can seem impossible but with God’s help, we can do it. Remember the verse, **“nothing is impossible with God.” Luke 1:37**

Get the children to stand up and say this verse together a few times.

Remember also that the Lord will never allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able to resist, He will always help us to find a way to resist the temptation – we just need to stand firm and ask for His help and strength.

1 Corinthians 10:13 says, **“No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.”**

LET’S MAKE A PROMISE:

For those of you who really want to follow God’s way and obey Him by abstaining from sex until you get married, we are going to give you a chance to make a promise to God and to yourself. *Hand out a small piece of paper to all the children but tell them they must only make a promise if they are completely serious about it.*

It is important to tell the children that if some of them have had sex already or have been abused, it does not mean that they cannot take part. Jesus is always willing to give us a second chance. Encourage them to confess what has happened to the Lord and ask Him to cleanse them and forgive them for whatever may have happened. They can ask the Lord to help them to make a new start

Give the children some time to write a promise to God that they will not have sex until they are married. You could write on the board an example of what they might write on their paper:

I _____ (name) make a promise to God today that I will not have sex with anyone until I am married. Lord Jesus, help me to keep this promise.

Sign _____ Date _____

Tell them to keep this paper in a very special place as a reminder of the promise they have made to God. They could even keep this to give to the person they marry one day.

Ask the children who have made the promise to come forward and allow the other children to leave. Get them to stand in a circle and join hands as a symbol of standing together and supporting each other as they make this promise.

Remind them that a promise is not something to take lightly – it is a serious commitment before God. We know that may be a difficult promise to keep and some of them may fall into temptation. If this happens and we want to renew our promise to God – we can. He is a loving God and will forgive us if we confess our sins to Him and ask Him to help us to make a fresh start.

LET’S PRAY:

Close in prayer as they stand together with hands joined. Thank the Lord for these children who want to obey Him and follow His plan for sex in their lives. Ask the Lord to help them to keep their promise,

to strengthen them when temptation comes their way and to help them to resist. Ask the Lord to provide people who will encourage them to keep this promise.

Give opportunity for children to talk to volunteers after the lesson if they have any questions. Be prepared to counsel children who may already have had sex or may have been abused. Guide them to the right help if necessary.

LESSON 30

HOW HIV/AIDS AFFECTS YOU

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children:

- Learn about how HIV/AIDS affects the whole person
- Learn about how HIV/AIDS affects people physically
- Think about how HIV/AIDS affects people socially, spiritually, emotionally and mentally
- Are encouraged to reach out in love and compassion to those affected by HIV/AIDS
- Are encouraged to keep themselves sexually pure

Theme Verses

Proverbs 3:13, "Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding."

Colossians 3:12 & 14a, "Since God chose you to be the holy people whom he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience...And the most important piece of clothing you must wear is love."

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

We have talked a lot about God's design for sex and the importance of abstinence before marriage and faithfulness in marriage.

One of the reasons we teach you about sex and the importance of following God's plan for sex is because of the huge risks that one takes when one engages in sexual relationships with other people before you get married and commit to one person for the rest of your life.

- What are some of the risks that people take when they get involved in sexual relationships with other people?
Ideas: they stand the risk of becoming infected with HIV or other sexually transmitted diseases, a young girl may become pregnant, people can lose their sense of dignity and their self-respect, people may experience guilt and sadness, people often feel hurt and used when relationships like this don't last, etc.

Today we are going to talk a bit about HIV/AIDS. You have already learned a lot about HIV/AIDS, and today we are going to discuss how HIV/AIDS affects those who are infected.

You may ask yourself, 'Why should I think about how HIV/AIDS affects people?'

- Do any of you have any ideas about why we should think about this?

Ideas: so that we can reach out with understanding, love and compassion to those who are affected by HIV; when we understand how much HIV affects the lives of those infected we should be challenged to do all that we can to stay HIV-free and to encourage our friends and family members to do the same.

The Bible says in **Proverbs 3:13**, “**Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding.**”

As we discuss this today we will see how HIV/AIDS affects people's lives in every way – physically, socially, emotionally, spiritually and mentally. All these parts of our lives affect each other, and they all work together to make us who we are.

LET'S LEARN:

We will start by reminding you of how HIV/AIDS affects us physically and to do this we are going to use an umbrella to help us to understand.

THE UMBRELLA ILLUSTRATION

Bring an umbrella so that you can demonstrate this well to the children.

Use the umbrella illustrations included at the back of the lesson.

We can compare the body's immune system to an umbrella to help us to understand what happens when a person is infected with the HIV virus.

The immune system – the umbrella – protects us from infections.

Stage 1 – HIV-negative

The person has a healthy immune system which is able to fight off infections successfully.

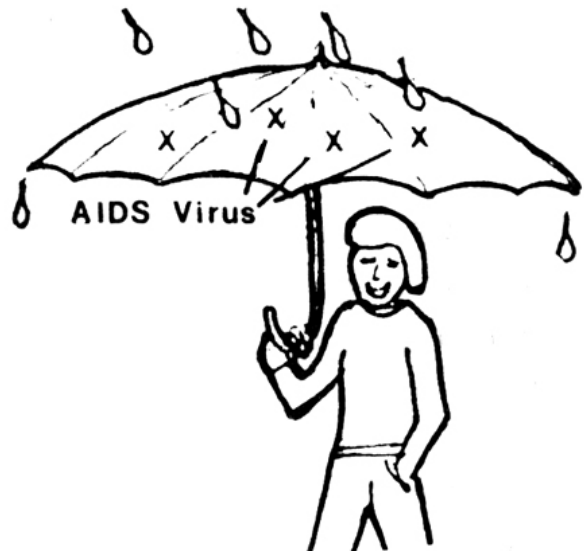
Your body can be compared to an umbrella. Germs are like the rain. Just as an umbrella stops you from feeling wet, so your body's immune system (defence system) stops you from becoming sick.



Stage 2 – HIV-positive

The person becomes infected with the virus. The person usually feels quite normal and is able to fight off most infections – although it may take the body a bit longer to do this. Most of the time they feel well. The person is HIV positive and can pass the virus on to other people.

In the picture, the person is HIV positive. The virus is shown as a patch on top of the umbrella. The umbrella is still working well. No rain can get through and the person carrying the umbrella is not getting wet. In the same way, this person does not feel sick. However, as the HIV spreads in the body, it weakens the immune system and they will start getting sick. The umbrella starts to get small holes in it, which gradually get bigger, and the person starts to get a bit wet.



Stage 3 – AIDS

The time it takes for the disease to progress from the time of infection to full-blown AIDS and death differs from one person to another. Most people will die within 5-10 years after infection. The virus gradually causes more and more damage to the body's immune system, the body is not able to fight off sicknesses so well, and the person will start to feel sick from time to time.

The virus causes more and more damage to the umbrella, the holes get bigger and bigger, and it starts to let more and more water through. A person with AIDS has a life-threatening disease. Just as a person with a damaged umbrella feels wet, so a person with AIDS feels sick and will gradually become more and more sick. Because the body can't fight off disease any more, all sorts of different infections can attack the body.



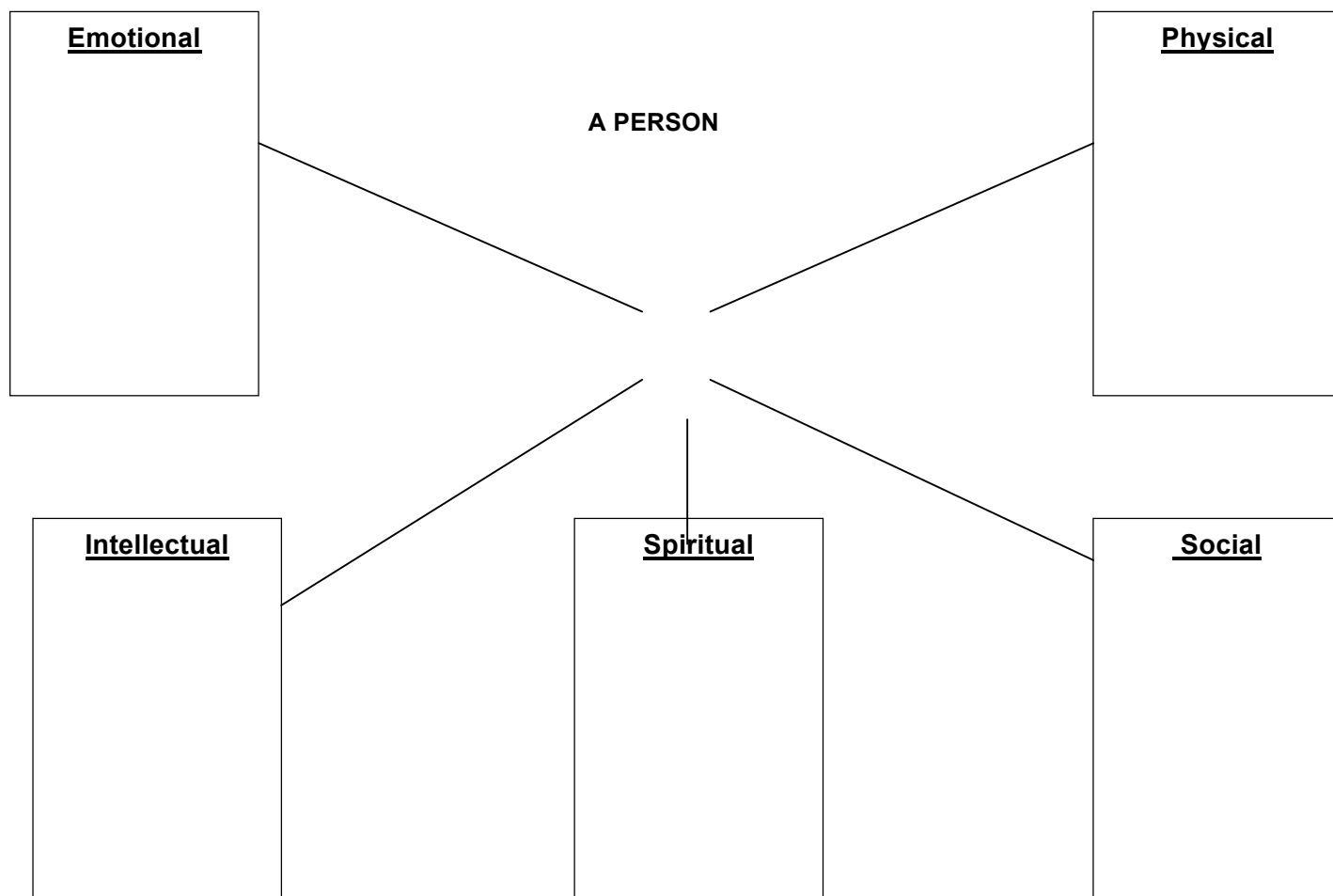
- Who knows some of the signs that show that a person may have HIV/AIDS?
Allow the children to respond before mentioning some of the signs listed.
Fever
Mouth, throat and chest infections
Pneumonia
Sexually transmitted infections
Tuberculosis
Ongoing diarrhea
Headaches, fits and other mental conditions
Cancer
Extreme tiredness and weakness

Loss of memory and concentration
Severe weight-loss

Because a person with AIDS can suffer from any number of different diseases, they are usually said to have died from the main disease they were suffering from. For example it may be said that someone died from pneumonia or cancer or TB. So we don't actually hear of people dying of AIDS, BUT don't let this confuse you.

LET'S TALK ABOUT HOW HIV/AIDS AFFECTS THE WHOLE PERSON:

Draw a picture of a person in the middle of the blackboard or on a big piece of paper and then make a diagram like the one below. Tell the children that this is a diagram which shows the different areas in our lives that make us who we are. As you discuss the different ways in which people are affected by HIV/AIDS, write a few key words in each section.



HIV/AIDS affects people:

Physically:

Key words to write down could be: poor health, tiredness, weakness, illness, early death.

We have discussed the effects of HIV/AIDS on our physical bodies, but what about the other ways in which HIV/AIDS affects people?

Socially:

- How do you think HIV/AIDS affects our relationships?
What is the result of this?

Ideas: people may be stigmatized if they reveal their status, people may isolate themselves because of shame and fear, people may be rejected, etc. This can result in loneliness, anger or shame at a time when people most need the love and support of their friends and family.

Spiritually:

- How do you think HIV/AIDS affects our relationship with God and other Christians?
Ideas: because of shame, guilt, lack of forgiveness, anger, etc. people may feel distanced from God, they may feel that God will not forgive them or accept them. Others will draw closer to God and find hope in Him. Sadly, many Christians are judgmental towards those with HIV/AIDS and do not respond in love and compassion but in condemnation and rejection.

It is so important that Christians and the church teach accurately about God's love and His desire that each one of us should come to Him. God is loving and forgiving towards us, He understands our pain and suffering. In the same way, we as Christians should reach out in love and compassion to those who are affected by HIV/AIDS.

Emotionally:

- How do you think HIV/AIDS affects people's emotions?
Ideas: there are so many ways in which this affects people's feelings – they may feel sad, depressed, hurt, desperate, rejected, angry, guilty, shame, hopeless, unloved, a sense of loss, bitter etc.

Mentally:

- How do you think HIV/AIDS affects our minds, our thinking and our decisions?
Ideas: people may begin to believe that they are worthless and that there is no hope for them – this in turn will prevent them from living positively, making the most of their lives and making positive decisions. The disease itself can cause weakening and loss of mental abilities which is difficult for the person, especially if they are trying to keep a job, and it is also difficult for family members.

LOOKING INTO THE WORD:

Now that we have gained a better understanding of the huge impact that HIV/AIDS has on a person's life we should feel challenged to reach out in love and compassion to those who are suffering as a result of HIV/AIDS – those infected and their families and friends. It should also challenge us to keep ourselves sexually pure to prevent us from being infected with HIV.

Colossians 3:12 & 14a, "Since God chose you to be the holy people whom he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience...And the most important piece of clothing you must wear is love." (New Living)

Now tell the children that you are going to read the verse again and that they are going to pretend that they are clothing themselves with the things in this verse. With each quality that we are told to clothe ourselves with – let the children repeat the word after you and pretend to put it on like an item of clothing.

Let's not forget the kind of spiritual clothing we are meant to be putting on in our daily lives.

LET'S PRAY:

Thank you Lord for the wisdom and understanding we have gained today. As we understand more about how HIV/AIDS affects people's lives, help us to reach out in love and compassion – just as you would. Help us to continue to want to live our lives in a way that is pleasing to you, to love and care for those around us and to keep ourselves sexually pure.

LESSON 31
HIV FOR REAL

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children:

- Are exposed to the reality of HIV/AIDS in people's lives
- Are challenged to respond appropriately to those living with HIV/AIDS
- Are challenged to live their lives in a way that will prevent them from becoming infected with HIV

Theme Verse

Proverbs 3:13, "Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding."

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

We want to help the children to understand that HIV/AIDS is a reality that affects people's lives significantly.

For this lesson we would like you to try and find someone in your community who is HIV-positive, who would be willing to come and talk to the children and share their story. Explain that the purpose of the talk is to help the children to understand and accept the reality of HIV/AIDS and to learn more about how it affects people's lives. Ask them to make the effort to be child-friendly in the way they share, and to speak loudly and clearly so that the children can hear. Give them an idea of how long they can share for – if they go on for too long the children will lose interest. Offer to pray with them before the lesson and thank them in front of the children for being willing to share with them.

Introduce the person to the children and explain to them why this person has come to visit the group. Remind the children that the reason for a talk like this is to give us more wisdom and understanding about HIV and how it affects people's lives. Remind them that it is God's desire that we respond in love and compassion towards people who are suffering or hurting in any way. Their response to this should be to listen with a right attitude.

Remind the children of this verse from last week:

Proverbs 3:13, “Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding.”

Let us be grateful for the opportunity that _____ is giving us to learn more about how HIV/AIDS affects people’s lives, that we may grow in wisdom and understanding.

Now ask the person with HIV/AIDS to speak to the children. When he/she has finished, thank him/her.

LET’S PRAY:

Close in prayer, thanking the Lord for what has been shared and for what the children have been able to learn. Thank the Lord for the person who was willing to come and share with the children. Thank the Lord for the opportunity this person gave the children to grow in wisdom and understanding. Pray for the person.

OR

If you are unable to find someone to come and share, then use a few of the following stories for the lesson. Try to let a different volunteer present each story in order to add some variety to the lesson.

Choose stories you think are most appropriate for your group and use the stories to stimulate some discussion on some of the issues that are mentioned under discussion points. Discuss issues that you feel are relevant to the stories you read.

As you discuss different attitudes and responses, keep pointing the children back to the truths we have taught and the real truths about prevention – a godly lifestyle, holy living, abstinence before marriage, faithfulness in marriage, etc.

Close in prayer using the guidelines mentioned above.

STORIES:

The following stories come from a book called ‘Journeys of Faith’ and are true stories about people living with HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa.

LINDA – HIV/AIDS educator:

“When I learned that I was HIV-positive the first thought that came to my mind was, ‘if people know I have HIV, how are they going to treat me?’ Because they knew me as a person who was always preaching, always singing the gospel.”

A born-again Christian, 25 year-old Linda Sambata was diagnosed HIV-positive three years ago. She could hardly believe that the diagnosis applied to her.

“I thought being HIV-positive was for people like gays or people overseas. I didn’t know anyone who was HIV-positive, and I wasn’t involved in any HIV/AIDS work.”

Linda joined a support group in the township, near Cape Town, where she also lived and attended church. This gave her the courage to disclose her HIV-status to her pastor and also to a friend in the congregation. Her pastor agreed that she could hold an HIV/AIDS workshop in church.

“I put up some posters and I talked about HIV/AIDS, sex and condoms, and about having an HIV test. I didn’t disclose my own HIV status. But the church elders and older women were angry with me. They said AIDS was a punishment from God, and I shouldn’t be talking about such things in church. This upset me so much that I broke down and cried in front of them.”

A few weeks later Linda disclosed her HIV-positive status on television.

“That was the first time I had gone public. I was fed up with hiding this HIV thing, and I just felt I had so much strength to go public. Next Sunday in church the same people who objected when I held the workshop treated me as though I was something disgusting. So I decided to stop going to that church, although I had been in it all my life.”

When Linda was invited to speak at the Full Gospel Church in her township she was given a completely different reception.

"They were saying that Christians should not condemn people who are HIV-positive, who are children of God and are welcome in this church. I felt relieved because even if I can get medicines and food, my soul still needs the Word of God. So I became a member of this church and they treat me as one of their own children."

Linda now works for the Treatment Action Campaign where she carries out campaigning and educational work with local churches. She says:

"I would like the churches to invite us to hold workshops on HIV/AIDS, on treatment, on nutrition, on positive living – all those things. But we can't talk about HIV without talking about sex, and that is still very difficult in most of our churches. I would also like churches to care for people with HIV, to open up a platform for people with HIV to disclose their status, and to give young people a chance to present their ideas about dealing with HIV/AIDS. I believe that it's only the churches that can make a real difference in this struggle against HIV."

Discussion points:

- Linda's knowledge about HIV at the time of her diagnosis: she thought HIV was only for gays (homosexuals) or people overseas. We all need to know the truth about HIV, how it is spread and how we can prevent infection. HIV is real and can affect any one of us.
- The attitude and response of the church to HIV/AIDS and people who are HIV-positive
- The role of Christians
- People's ideas about prevention
- Attitudes to sex
- What helps people to be able to live positively with HIV?
- People who are HIV-positive can still live a meaningful life. How?

SIMON –a volunteer:

Simon is popular, cheerful and enthusiastic at the AIDS centre where he works as a volunteer. Yet less than two years ago 30 year-old Simon was still in jail, living with the knowledge that he was HIV-positive.

"I was imprisoned for four years for a robbery that I didn't do. While I was in jail AIDS attacked me (*this is probably the time when Simon's HIV developed into AIDS*). I had diarrhea and sores on my body, and I was feeling very weak. I had a blood test and afterwards the nurse told me I had AIDS, just like that. When I got that news I felt mad. I thought I was going to die soon, so I decided that I had to make a plan, although I didn't know what."

Simon drew some strength from the visits of evangelical Christians while he was in jail.

"There were those born-again people and they would pray with me. I realized that God was giving me the chance to believe that AIDS was not the end for me. I decided to ask Jesus to come into my life. I was still afraid of AIDS but God was giving me a chance to have hope."

"When I got out of prison I went and told my mother about having AIDS. She suggested I should come to the Centre, which I did, and I met the counsellors here. It was here that I learned the difference between HIV and AIDS, and that gave me even more hope."

"I'm now living positively with HIV. I get most of my meals at the Centre. I accept the virus. I'm not afraid of the future now because I'm not alone. There are people here who love and take care of me. OK, I was wrong to take all those girlfriends when I was younger, but that's in the past and there's no point worrying about it now."

"I'm not worried about not having a girlfriend at the moment. With my previous girlfriend, we always used condoms, and I would again in the future, if I had another girlfriend. I've cut down on my drinking – maybe one bottle of beer a week."

Discussion points:

- Attitudes towards HIV/AIDS

- The role of Christians
- People's ideas about prevention
- Attitudes to sex
- Attitudes to drinking – when people drink too much they become less self-controlled and they may do things that they would not do if they were sober (thinking straight) eg. having sex with someone
- What helps people to be able to live positively with HIV?
- People who are HIV-positive can still live a meaningful life. How?

NESTER – mother and volunteer:

Nester Mbatha's small house is perched on a steep hillside in Natal, South Africa. On one side of the house are four graves – simple mounds of earth covered with thorny branches as protection against scavenging dogs.

"This one," she says, "is my youngest son – he was only 14 months old when he died. This one is my fourth child. This one is my husband, and this one," she adds, after a pause, "is the child my husband had with another woman."

All three children, and Nester's husband, died of AIDS. Nester, who is in her mid-thirties, has known she is HIV-positive for five years. She left her husband as soon as she received the HIV-positive diagnosis from the clinic:

"I went to stay with my sister, and I took my children with me. I left my husband because he brought HIV/AIDS into our family. Often he would stay out late, spending money on alcohol and girlfriends."

After her husband died Nester and two of her sons moved back into the family home. She is now at an advanced stage of HIV infection. A nurse from the Hillcrest AIDS Centre visits her regularly. The Centre also provides her with a weekly parcel of food, medicines to boost her immune system and treatment for opportunistic infections. The local government health centre, however, refuses to give her medical treatment.

"They say they can't afford to treat people like me, who are at an advanced stage of HIV/AIDS. They only give treatment to patients in the early or intermediate stages of the disease."

Nester earns some money by making badges out of coloured beads, which the Centre buys from her. The Centre is also helping Nester to obtain a government disability grant, and to claim benefits from an employer who dismissed her because of her HIV-positive status. Despite her poverty and fragile health, she feels a responsibility to help other people:

"I've announced my own HIV-positive status in church, and afterwards people came up and hugged me. They were happy because I was open. But the churches aren't doing much to help people with HIV."

Nester also chairs a support group – about 30 people, mostly HIV-positive, who meet weekly in a nearby village to exchange information and give one another mutual support. She is also a volunteer in a home-based HIV/AIDS care project. She visits three HIV-positive women to give them emotional and social support:

"I encourage them not to drink alcohol, not to smoke and to avoid sex. Why should a woman with HIV want a man in her life? I certainly didn't want one. He would only order me around, and he would ruin my children's future."

Discussion points:

- The effect of HIV/AIDS on family life
- Attitudes towards men – was Nester's attitude to her husband and towards men right? What could men do to prevent this kind of attitude?
- The attitude and response of the church to HIV/AIDS and people who are HIV-positive
- People's ideas about prevention
- Attitudes to sex and drinking
- What helps people to be able to live positively with HIV?
- People who are HIV-positive can still live a meaningful life. How?

MARIA – support group member:

Maria has been attending a support group for one year, since it started. Aged only 28, she is on a disability pension. The heavy labour at the leather factory where she used to work left her with back problems, and the harsh chemicals used in treating the animal hides damaged her lungs. But she is lively, vivacious, and a constant source of advice and encouragement for the other members of the group.

Maria was diagnosed HIV-positive five years ago at a government hospital in Cape Town: "I was treated for HIV when I was pregnant. I got my boyfriend to come with me to the hospital, where the doctor explained the situation. My boyfriend accused me of infecting him, but that wasn't true because I hadn't been sleeping around. He left me and gave me no help at all with my baby – no money, no clothes, nothing at all.

"I told my parents and my sister, and also two friends, that I had HIV. They felt very sorry for me and gave me a lot of love and care. My mother and sister prepared good food for me, and the doctor got me AZT when it was time to give birth, so my son is not HIV-positive. He's three and a half now."

"I used to attend a local church but I don't any more. The pastor there believed that you can't be a born-again Christian and have HIV. Two of my friends from the church used to keep telling me not to take any medicines, just to trust in Jesus to heal me. I couldn't accept that. I want to have Jesus and keep taking medicines. So I don't go to church any more, but I pray every morning for my family, for my son, for the doctors and for everyone living with HIV/AIDS."

"I've had a lot of illnesses but I'm still in good spirits. I've had TB twice, and oral thrush – I'm still taking medication for that. I had a skin rash, but that's cleared up since I've been using a cream."

Discussion points:

- The effect of HIV/AIDS on relationships and family life
- What helps people to be able to live positively with HIV?
- The attitude and response of the church to HIV/AIDS and people who are HIV-positive
- People who are HIV-positive can still live a meaningful life. How?

BENHOFF – church elder and volunteer:

"Often the family members need to be educated in how to look after someone with HIV/AIDS," says Benhoff Makina. Aged 33, married, and an elder in his local Catholic Church, Benhoff is a volunteer with Catholic AIDS Action:

"There's a young man I visit – at first I used to bring his medicines, feed him and even bathe him because his family wouldn't help him. It wasn't just that they were afraid of getting HIV from him. They were also angry with him for contracting HIV. They would tell him it was his problem because he had gone looking for it. The poor man felt totally abandoned."

"I spent a lot of time talking with the family about HIV but also about spiritual matters like love, acceptance and forgiveness. It took two or three months before the other family members fully accepted him, but now they do. The change has been amazing. They now bathe him, feed him, fetch his medicines and spend time talking with him and encouraging him."

"One thing that makes it easier for me to do this work is that I speak the local language and so many people I visit have told me they are happy to talk in their own language. Another thing they appreciate is the spiritual aspect. Whenever I visit a family, I ask if they want me to pray and read the Bible, and they always do. As a church elder I have had a lot of practice in giving people spiritual support.

"But we have a lot of problems with traditional and cultural matters. Alcohol abuse is common and it makes people less responsible for their behaviour. And many young people, especially men, don't even accept that AIDS is real. Some say 'We don't care about AIDS. It's very difficult for these young men to wait until marriage before having sex. "

Discussion points:

- Attitudes to HIV/AIDS
- The role of Christians

- The effect of HIV/AIDS on family life
- People's ideas about prevention
- Attitudes to sex and drinking
- What helps people to be able to live positively with HIV?
- People who are HIV-positive can still live a meaningful life. How?

Stories taken from *Journeys of Faith, Church-based responses to HIV and AIDS in three Southern African countries*; G. Byamugisha, L. Y. Steinitz, G. Williams and P. Zondi; Cluster Publications; Pietermaritzburg, South.Africa.; 2002.

LESSON 32

AIDS IN THE OPEN

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children:

- Understand the need to talk about HIV/AIDS openly, honestly and with the right attitude
- Understand why people don't like to talk about the reality of HIV/AIDS
- Understand the importance of accepting the reality of HIV/AIDS
- Appreciate the danger of taking risks
- Are encouraged to allow the reality of HIV/AIDS to challenge them to avoid risky behaviours and live according to God's plans instead.

Theme Verses

Ephesians 4:29 says, "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."

1 Thessalonians 4:3-4, "God wants you to be holy, so you should keep clear of all sexual sin. Then each of you will control your body and live in holiness and honour – not in lustful passion as the pagans do, in their ignorance of God and His ways." (New Living Translation)

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

We have been talking about HIV/AIDS again over the last few weeks and we hope that by now you know a whole lot more about HIV/AIDS than you did before you started coming to Nhasi zveMangwana.

BUT – it is one thing for us and others to know about HIV/AIDS, it is another thing to be able to start talking freely and openly about it.

- How many of you find that you learn about HIV/AIDS at school and in our group but you don't really hear anyone talking about it anywhere else?
People you know who are still young get sick and die, but no-one ever mentions AIDS. You know that HIV/AIDS causes early death but you never hear of anyone dying because of AIDS. If this is your experience it must be very confusing and it must make it hard to believe all that you are being taught if you don't see it in reality.
So, what is the real cause of this confusion?

- Is it that what you are being taught is not actually true? OR
Is it that people are afraid and embarrassed to talk openly about HIV/AIDS?
- Why do you think people don't like to talk about HIV/AIDS?
- Why do some people try to pretend that HIV/AIDS does not really exist? Ideas: people are afraid of being rejected and stigmatized, people may feel embarrassed, people may feel angry or guilty, people don't want to face the truth, etc.
- Why don't we hear of people dying of HIV/AIDS?
Ideas: the reasons are the same as above.
- What do these people die of?
Ideas: tuberculosis, cancer, pneumonia, malaria, flu, etc.

We have learned that because AIDS is a syndrome – people may die from a variety of different illnesses, but the reason these people get these illnesses and can't recover from them is because they have AIDS.

- Have any of you ever known anyone who died because they had AIDS? *Note how few children are probably able to put up there hands. If there are children who respond, ask them if they would be willing to talk about it. If they are, encourage them to tell you what they knew – was the person young or old, did they have young children, what happened to them and how did they die, and how did the children know that it was because of HIV/AIDS? If the reason they know the person had AIDS was due to positive and open communication, tell the children how valuable that is, and how we want to encourage that kind of communication.*
- Why should we talk about and accept the reality of HIV/AIDS and be more open about it?
Ideas:
 - It helps us to see the value of being self-controlled and behaving in ways that will prevent us from getting HIV/AIDS.
 - It enables us to offer compassion and support.
 - It motivates us to do all we can not to get HIV and to support our friends in doing the same.
Write a few key words down on the blackboard.
- What can we do to help get AIDS into the open?
Ideas:
 - We can talk about it with family and friends.
 - We can teach about it and talk about at Church and Sunday School.
 - We can stand together with our friends as we choose to abstain from sex and live a lifestyle that will protect us from getting HIV/AIDS.
 - We can talk about and promote virgin pride and God's plan for sex.

LOOKING INTO THE WORD:

Much as we want to talk more openly about HIV/AIDS, we need to remember WHY. *Once again show the children the key words you wrote on the blackboard giving the reasons why we should talk about and accept the reality of HIV/AIDS.*

This is not about gossiping or exposing people or families to being stigmatized. No – it is about building each other up. It is about encouraging people to see the reality of what HIV/AIDS is about and to challenge them to live lives that will prevent them from becoming infected. It is about encouraging one another to be compassionate and supportive of families and individuals who are suffering as a result of HIV/AIDS.

Ephesians 4:29 says, “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.”

Ephesians 4:15 talks about, **“speaking the truth in love”**

LET'S FACE THE REALITY:

HIV/AIDS is real and the effect it has on the lives of those infected, their families and friends is enormous. The more we accept the reality of HIV/AIDS in our heads and our hearts the more we will be challenged and determined to be self-controlled in our behaviour, to make wise choices and to live lives that will help us to stay HIV-free.

This means that we should not be taking risks when it comes to HIV/AIDS, but rather asking the Lord to help us to live in ways that are pleasing to Him.

Remember **1 Thessalonians 4:3-4**, **“God wants you to be holy, so you should keep clear of all sexual sin. Then each of you will control your body and live in holiness and honour – not in lustful passion as the pagans do, in their ignorance of God and His ways.”** (New Living Translation)

ICARUS AND THE WAX WINGS:

The story you are going to hear is a famous Greek myth and it helps us too realize the danger of taking unwise risks.

Icarus and his father, Daedalus, had been cruelly imprisoned in a tower by King Minos. Daedalus was a skillful builder and inventor, and it was the king’s command that Daedalus invent many wonderful things for his pleasure.

Daedalus determined that he and Icarus would escape the tower by flying away. Doing his very best, he set to work constructing a pair of wings. Little by little, he gathered a great pile of feathers of all sizes. He joined them together with thread, and moulded them with wax. Finally, he had two great wings, like those of the seagulls. He tied them to his shoulders and waving his arms, rose into the air, gliding and soaring on the currents of air.

Next he built a second pair of wings for Icarus and taught him how to ride the air currents, climbing in circles, and hanging in the winds. They practiced together until Icarus was ready.

Finally the day came when the winds were just right. Father and son strapped on their wings and prepared to fly.

“Remember all I’ve told you,” Daedalus said. “Above all, remember you must not fly too high. If you do, the heat of the sun will melt the wax and your wings will fall apart. Stay close to me, and you’ll be fine.”

Up they rose, the boy and his father. At first, the flight seemed terrible to both Daedalus and Icarus, but gradually they got used to riding among the clouds, and they lost their fear. Icarus felt the wind fill his wings and lift him higher and higher, and began to sense a freedom he had never known before. He looked down with great excitement at all the islands they passed, and their people, and at the broad blue sea spread out beneath him, dotted with the white sails of ships. He flew higher and higher, forgetting his father’s warning. He forgot everything in the world but the joy of flying.

“Come back!” Daedalus called frantically. “You’re flying too high! Remember the sun! Come down! Come down!”

But Icarus thought of nothing but his own excitement. He longed to fly as close as he could to the heavens. Nearer and nearer he came to the sun, and slowly his wings began to soften. One by one the feathers began to fall and scatter in the air, and suddenly the wax melted completely. Icarus felt himself falling. He fluttered his arms as fast as he could, but no feathers were left to hold the air. He cried out for his father, but it was too late – with a scream he fell from his height and plunged into the sea, disappearing beneath the waves forever.

This story helps us to see the danger of taking risks that we have been warned against. We might think that we are able to control ourselves and stop before we go too far but we will most likely land up hurting ourselves or others.

Rather let us live wisely and ask the Lord to give us the wisdom and self-control we need as we seek to live our lives right.

Let's not take risks. Let's accept the reality of HIV/AIDS and not behave in ways that will put us at risk of becoming infected. Taking risks is dangerous and it is stupid to think that we will not get hurt. The more aware we are of the reality of HIV/AIDS the more determined we should be to protect ourselves and our friends from becoming infected. Let's rather be wise and live God's way, according to His plan, and in that way we can help to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Let's talk about HIV/AIDS
Let's be open about HIV/AIDS
Let's get real about HIV/AIDS
Let's not take risks but rather
Let's be wise and
Let's live God's way.

LET'S DO:

If there is time, divide the children into groups and give each group a piece of paper and pen/crayons to make a poster.

Tell the children to discuss ideas that will encourage people, families and friends to be more open about HIV/AIDS and accept the reality of it. Then tell them to use their ideas to make a poster that encourages people to accept the reality of HIV/AIDS and to live their lives wisely.

Allow each group to show their poster to the others and/or put the posters up in the front so that all the children can look at them after the lesson.

Ask for a few volunteers who will help you to put the posters up in your community.

LET'S PRAY:

Close in prayer asking the Lord to help the children to accept and see the reality of HIV/AIDS in their lives. Pray that the Lord will challenge them to live their lives according to His ways and not to take risks that will put them in danger of becoming infected with HIV/AIDS. Thank the Lord that His ways are good and that He wants the best for us.

LESSON 33
MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Lesson Focus

The focus of this lesson is that children:

- Are reminded that Jesus came to give life and that they gain a deeper understanding of what this means
- Are encouraged to experience and enjoy the life that Jesus gives
- Understand the importance of building their lives on Jesus
- Understand the importance of walking in His ways
- Are encouraged to make a difference for Jesus by letting their light shine for Him

Theme Verses

John 10:10, “I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full”

Matthew 7:24-27, “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.

Proverbs 3:5-6 says, “Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will direct your paths.” (New Living Translation)

Matthew 5:14a & 16, “You are the light of the world... let your light shine before men,

- Sport
- Game
- Welcome and Songs
- Lesson
- Activity/Game
- Songs/Prayer/Close

LOOKING INTO OUR LESSON

We have learned so much about life and about living our lives in a meaningful and purposeful way, in a way that is pleasing to Jesus, our Lord and Saviour. We want our group to make an impact on our communities through the lives of each one of you who come along each week. But we can only make a true difference when we allow Christ to make a difference in our lives. So today we will look at how we can allow Christ to make a difference in our lives so that we can then make a difference in the lives of those around us.

JESUS BRINGS LIFE:

The gospel of John teaches us a lot about what it meant for Jesus to come into the world:

John 1:9 says, “The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.”

John 1:4, “In him was life, and that life was the light of men.”

- What does it mean when it says that Jesus brings light and life to men?
- How does He give this life?

John 3:16, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

Jesus came to bring life to all those who believe in Him and accept Him as their Lord and Saviour.

- Do you think that the life that Jesus brings is only meaningful when we die?

We often think of eternal life as something we will experience when we die. If we have accepted the Lord as Saviour then we will spend eternity alive with Him.

But – the good news is that Jesus meant for us to experience the life that He gives here on earth as well. Knowing Jesus brings new meaning, purpose and joy into our lives. Listen to what Jesus says in

John 10:10:

“I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full”

ENJOYING THE LIFE THAT JESUS BRINGS:

So, how can we enjoy and experience this life in our every day living?

The Bible teaches us so many things about knowing and following the Lord Jesus, and all of these things help us experience this life. It says in **Psalms 119:105, “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.”**

Today we are going to look at two passages that teach us about how we can enjoy this life.

BUILDING OUR LIVES HIS WAY:

To learn about building our lives His way we are going to look at the story of the wise and foolish builders, found in **Matthew 7:24-27:**

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

If you know it, sing the song about the wise and foolish builders.

- What does it mean to build your house on the rock?
- Ideas: Jesus is the rock, and when we build our lives on Him by following in His ways and obeying His teaching then we build on the rock.
- Which sounds easier – building on the rock or building on the sand?
- Ideas: building on sand is much easier than building on rock. *If possible bring a small spade or shovel, even a spoon, to the lesson and demonstrate the difference between digging into rock and sand. Tell the children that to build a house you start by digging the foundations – so building on the rock means digging into the rock and building on the sand means digging into the sand. Take the group outside to a sandy patch and let a few of the children try and dig a small hole. Then take them to a rock or bring a stone or rock with you if necessary and let a few of the children try to dig a small hole in the rock. From this we can see that building on the rock is harder work than building on the sand.*
- So, why build on the rock if it is harder?
- Ideas: Because a house built on rock will last and stand firm in the midst of storm, but a house built on sand will not, and the house will need to be rebuilt several times.
- Why is building our lives on the rock – on Jesus – more difficult? What makes it difficult for us to hear Jesus’ teachings and put them into practice, as the passage says?
Ideas: Building our lives on Jesus is all about doing things His way and not our own way. Jesus calls us to leave our sinful ways and follow His good and perfect way – this requires effort and we need His help to do this. But we also know that Jesus is always there for us, always willing to help us, encourage us and give us the strength we need to follow in His ways.

- Who wants to build their life on a foundation that is solid and secure? A foundation that will keep us from falling when we face difficulties and storms in life?
- What happens to people who do not build their lives on the firm foundation of Jesus when troubles come along? *Encourage the children to think of people they know who do not stand firm when trials and difficulties come their way.* Ideas: people may turn to alcohol, they are unable to keep their jobs and keep their marriages or families together, they fail to live positively, they make bad decisions, they may be unproductive and lazy, they look for the quick way out and don't put enough effort into things, they don't strive for the best in life but accept second best, they don't do things with the right motives; they may turn to theft, violence or sexual immorality, etc.
- Who thinks it is worth putting in the effort to build their lives on the Lord Jesus Christ? When we do this we will start to experience more and more the life that Jesus desires for us and we can be assured that when tough times come, the Lord Jesus will help us to stand firm.

WALKING IN HIS WAYS:

If we want to experience the life that Jesus gives then we need to trust Him completely with our lives. This is not always easy and often we do not understand the way God works or why He allows certain things. But listen to this beautiful Scripture:

Proverbs 3:5-6 says, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will direct your paths" (New Living Translation.)

If we trust in the Lord, and desire to do His will and follow in His ways then He WILL direct and guide us through life. What a privilege to know that through all the uncertainties of life we have the Lord as our guide.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE:

When we build our lives on the solid foundation of Jesus Christ, when we trust Him completely and desire to do His will, when He is the one directing and guiding us, THEN we will enjoy more and more the fullness of life that Jesus desires for us. THEN others will start to see the difference in our lives. The light and life that Christ brings into our life will shine in us, and others will see.

Matthew 5:14a &16 says, "You are the light of the world... let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."

Let us shine brightly as we allow the light and life of Christ into our lives – when He makes a difference in our lives then we will make a difference. Let's ask the Lord to help us make a difference for Him in the lives of those around us, always.

LET'S SHINE FOR JESUS:

Try to bring as many candles as you can to the lesson. If you can, ask some of the volunteers and children to bring candles to the lesson. Make sure you bring matches as well.

If you are able to be inside then do this part of the lesson inside where it is darker, otherwise encourage the children to imagine this part of the lesson taking place in a dark place.

We learned from the passage in Matthew 5 that Jesus wants us to let our light shine before men. Let's see what happens when we do this.

Ask one child to come forward – give him/her a candle to hold and light it. Encourage the children to notice the light that it gives and to think about the difference one candle can make at night when there is no light.

Now remind the children that when we are part of a group like ours or a church, we do not need to stand alone. We as Christians can stand together and let our lights shine for Jesus.

Ask another two or three children to come and stand with the first child. Give them candles and light them. Encourage the children to notice the difference in the light of these candles.

Now ask another group of children to come up (depending on the number of candles you have available) and notice again how much more light there is as more and more of us stand together.

In the same way, when we as Christians stand together and let the light of our lives shine for Jesus, we can shine His light into the lives of those around us, into our schools and our communities. We CAN make a difference for Him and we can make a difference in their lives.

LET'S PRAY:

Lord, thank you that you came to give life, and not just eternal life when we die, but life in our everyday lives. Lord Jesus, help us to experience and enjoy this life that you bring. Help us to build our lives on you, to walk in your ways and to trust you completely with our lives. As we experience the life that you give, help us to shine your light into the lives of those around us and to make a difference for you. Help us to stand together and shine for you and make a difference in our community.