



R-E-S-P-E-C-T



During a planning meeting for a holiday program I challenged the group to define the word “respect”. At first it seemed like it would be a simple thing to do. We seemed to have no problem coming up with scenarios where respect was shown but we found it hard to actually put a meaning into words. Here’s what we came up with:

Respect is feeling that something or someone is valuable and worthy of honour while at the same time showing this feeling by actions.

Both feeling and acting are required for respect. Actions without feeling are not respect. The statement “I respect you” is not respect when it is not lived out.

- Respect God. God is worthy of our words and actions.
- Respect others. God created other people so we respect God by respecting others.
- Respect yourself as one who has been created and loved by God.

While studying the bible character, Daniel, we explored the idea of respect. In the story of the Writing on the Wall in [Daniel chapter 5](#) King Belshazzar hosted a drunken party. Instead of normal dishes he served food and wine in the special temple dishes used in worship to God. His disrespect for God ended badly for the king.

During the party a mysterious hand appeared and wrote “Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin”. The king was afraid and eventually Daniel was called in to interpret the words. Daniel told Belshazzar that the king was arrogant and had insulted God. The words meant that Belshazzar’s time was finished. He died that very night.

Here are some of the ideas we used for teaching this lesson:

Attributes of God Boxes:



1. Talk about some of the attributes of God with the children. Each child should choose 2-4 attributes they feel are important to them and write (or draw) them on small white cards. (Below is a list of attributes I found at <http://www.josh.org/video-2/attributes-of-god/>)
 1. Because God is a personal Spirit...I will seek intimate fellowship with Him.
 2. Because God is all-powerful...He can help me with anything.
 3. Because God is ever-present...He is always with me.
 4. Because God knows everything...I will go to Him with all my questions and concerns.
 5. Because God is sovereign...I will joyfully submit to His will.
 6. Because God is holy...I will devote myself to Him in purity, worship, and service.
 7. Because God is absolute truth...I will believe what He says and live accordingly.
 8. Because God is righteous...I will live by His standards.
 9. Because God is just...He will always treat me fairly.
 10. Because God is love...He is unconditionally committed to my well-being.

11. Because God is merciful...He forgives me of my sins when I sincerely confess them.
12. Because God is faithful...I will trust Him to always keep His promises.
13. Because God never changes...My future is secure and eternal.
2. Decorate small boxes and place the cards inside. We used Chinese Take-out boxes but you could use any kind of box or bag.
3. Guided Conversation: As the children are decorating the boxes the teacher can continue conversation about the various attributes of God and how these attributes lead to our respect for him.

Group Wall:



We assigned different letters to children and had them put them together to form the words “MENE MENE TEKEL PARSIN”. No one knew beforehand what the letters were going to spell so the children had to put them together like a puzzle.

Application and Prayer Time:

- Continue the earlier discussion and talk about how we should try to reflect the attributes of God in our personal lives. Guide children in writing their name down the left side of the paper. Beside each letter they should write something about God that starts with that letter (example below).
 - M- Merciful
 - A- Artistic in His beautiful creation
 - R- Righteous
 - Y- Yes is yes and No is No (truthful)
- Encourage the children to circle one attribute that they would like to be better at. Teacher should pray for the children one by one for the item circled.

Group Memory Verse:



The children will learn this verse together through repetition. The challenge is to say the verse again and again even though an increasing number of words are covered up.

“Show proper respect to everyone. Love the community of believers. Have respect for God. Honor the king.” 1 Peter 2:17 New International Reader’s Version (NIRV)

- Print the verse on a paper before class.
- Provide the children with scraps of paper and glue.
- Place the printed verse on the table top and guide children in reading the verse together with you.
- Child glues one of the small bits of paper over a word and then everyone says verse again.
- The paper then passes to the next person so they cover another word. Everyone recites the verse again.
- One at a time cover word(s) and repeat until all words are covered and verse is memorised.

More resources for this story can be found at [Writing on the Wall](#).

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