

This Counts at Home, Too?



Years ago I taught a Bible story to a group of children and we began to discuss the concept of kindness. I wanted the children to understand what kindness really was and how they could practice kindness.

One young boy excitedly gave example after example of ways to show kindness. "We could take food to someone who was hungry." "Carrying groceries for an elderly person at the grocery store would be kindness." "We could say kind words."

After he listed a few examples of kindness I asked, "And how could you show kindness to your sister?"

There was a long pause and then, with a horrified expression on his face, he asked, "You mean, this counts at home, too?"

If ever there was an example of "the truth hit home" then this was one!

We must share the Bible with children. There is nothing that we could say that would have more eternal impact than the words God speaks. But we cannot be satisfied with only conveying a set of facts or teaching memory verses. God's word is meant to be lived! Children need to learn and understand ways to live out the things they have learnt in every part of their lives.

One helpful way to help children explore ways to live out their faith is to use a simple method I call [Things Matter](#). Simple items (things) from around your house can be used to draw out conversation about everyday applications of God's Word.

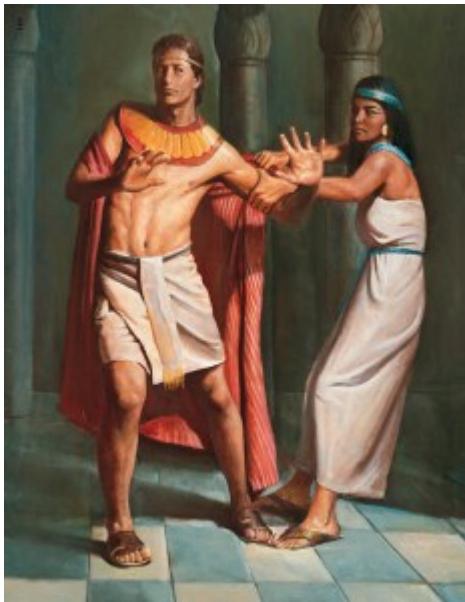
[Click here for instructions and a 2 1/2 minute "how to" video.](#) In the video I use two Bible stories as examples: [Sodom and Gomorrah](#) and the [Building of the Tabernacle](#).

Obey God's message! Don't fool yourselves by just listening to it. If you hear the message and don't obey it, you are like people who stare at themselves in a mirror and forget what they look like as soon as they leave. But you must never stop looking at the perfect law that sets you free. God will bless you in everything you do, if you listen and obey, and don't just hear and forget. James 1:22-25, CEV

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Doing Right Because It is Right



In Egypt, Joseph became a slave to a man named Potipher. Potipher's wife lied about Joseph so he went to prison.

While in prison Joseph interpreted the dreams of two prisoners (the former cupbearer and baker of King Pharaoh). The cupbearer was set free from prison and returned to the Pharaoh's service.

When the Pharaoh had a dream that no one could interpret, the cupbearer suggested he call for Joseph. Joseph interpreted the dreams and Pharaoh was so impressed that he put Joseph in charge of all of Egypt.

Read more about Joseph and learn how to teach the story to children here: [Joseph in Egypt](#) and in [Genesis 39:1-41:57](#).

Joseph was a man of integrity. He chose to live for God even though he was far from his family and living in Egypt, a land far from his home.

Children need to learn about integrity. Integrity is doing the right thing because you know it is the right thing to do. This means choosing to act or choosing not to act in a certain way even if there is no reward or recognition. Integrity is choosing to do the right thing even if no one is watching.

To help children apply integrity to their everyday life try the following idea.

Situation Cards

Write situations on cards. Each child should draw a card and act out the situation on the card. The other children can guess what the child is acting out and explain how this relates to integrity. Here are some examples of what you might write on the cards:

- Integrity is seeing rubbish/trash on the floor and picking it up and putting it in the bin without being asked.
- Integrity is saying good things about someone when others are gossiping about them.
- Integrity is choosing not to watch a movie that you are not allowed to watch even when you are at a friend's house and your parents would never know.
- Integrity is telling the teacher that you were playing by her desk and broke her vase while she was out of the room.

- Integrity is telling the truth even if it means you will get in trouble.
- Integrity is finding money on the floor at the library and reporting it to the librarian rather than putting it into your pocket.
- Integrity is replacing someone else's property that you broke.
- Integrity is studying for the test and writing your own answers instead of copying someone else's work.

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