

OPENING

A life centered in God will be characterized by integrity, sincerity and simplicity ... its activities and expressions should be ... directed toward the simple, direct purpose of keeping one's communication with God open and unencumbered by that which is unessential.

Faith and Practice, p. 19

Songs:

"Dona Nobis Pacem"

A Hymnal for Friends #34

"'Tis the Gift To Be Simple"

Songs of the Spirit #46

Questions:

1. What does the word "simple" mean? In the song we just sang it has a special meaning; can you figure out what that meaning is?
2. Why do you think Friends try to keep their lives simple or uncluttered? How do you feel when you have too much to do or too much going on at one time?
3. What does it mean to tell the truth? Is it hard to be truthful sometimes? Why? How do you feel when you tell a lie?

LESSON VIII

For the Teacher: Telling the truth is the main concept in this lesson. There is also an emphasis on seeing beauty in simplicity. If you have unfinished projects from previous weeks (journals, mats, pillows), this is the week to finish them up.

Needed:

Materials for activity you choose to go with the story you read - listed in lesson

Paint

Pictures of nature

Brushes

Natural objects

Paper

Opening Song:

Sing "'Tis the Gift to Be Simple," Songs of the Spirit #46. Continue the opening discussion about the meaning of "simple". Ask these questions:

Why is truth-telling "simpler" than lying? Can you think of one thing you like to do which does not cost a lot of money or require a lot of complicated preparation?

Story:

Read the story Sam, Bangs and Moonshine by Evaline Ness; Holt, Rinehart and Winston. After reading the story ask some or all of these questions:

What does Sam's father mean by Moonshine? Do you ever tell fantastic stories? What happened to Thomas? How did Sam feel when Bangs didn't return? Have you ever hurt someone by lying? What's the difference between good and bad moonshine?

Activity Ideas

1. Each child makes two pictures. One is a picture of something real. The second is a picture of moonshine. Younger children can describe their pictures and you can write the description on their papers. Older children can write their own descriptions.
2. Using a flashlight and a globe or ball, show the difference between sunshine and moonshine. Discuss the difference between the two kinds of light.
3. Using clay or playdough make "fantastic" beasts and "real" animals. What are the differences and similarities between the two figures? Be sure to have brightly colored clay since color is an easy way to make things fantastic.

- a. A recipe for cooked playdough (prepare ahead)

2 cups flour	2 teaspoons cream of tartar
1 cup salt	4 cups water
2 tablespoons salad oil	

Mix dry ingredients in an electric skillet or saucepan. Add oil and water and mix well. Then set heat at 350 F and stir constantly with a wooden spoon as it heats. When the mixture gets too heavy to move around, turn it out onto a flat surface and begin to knead as soon as you can touch the dough. Add a few drops of food coloring and mix it through. Keep this mixture covered in the refrigerator after it cools. It will dry in the air, and it may be painted after it is dry.

- b. A recipe for uncooked dough

1 box salt	2 pound sack flour
1/4 cup vegetable oil	water

Mix the salt and flour in a large dishpan or bowl. Add oil and water a little at a time until the mixture is smooth and not sticky. Children can mix this themselves. Store in a plastic container or bag; it will keep about two weeks in the refrigerator. Remove from the refrigerator at least an hour before using.

The animals could be placed in two settings, one real and one fantastic, made out of cardboard boxes with the tops and one side removed.

4. To help children distinguish between good and bad moonshine, have them make up one story that is bad moonshine and one that is good. Talk about the difference.

Alternative Story 1:

To Think that I Saw It on Mulberry Street by Dr. Seuss, Random House.

If your class is mostly first and second graders this story is excellent.

After reading the story, ask these questions:

1. Why does the little boy make up things on his way home?
2. Why doesn't he tell his father what he imagined?
3. Do you know the difference between lying and pretending? Is that difference important?
4. When is telling the truth important?

Activity Idea:

A mural - divide a large piece of brown paper into sections (one per child). Using markers, each child draws something fantastic which he might "see" on Mulberry Street.

Alternative Story 2:

The Emperor's New Clothes, by Hans Christian Anderson - available in many editions.

After reading or telling the story, ask these questions:

1. Why are the tailors able to fool the king?
2. Why doesn't anyone tell the king there is no cloth?
3. What does the word "vanity" mean?

Activity Idea:

Dressing up - have a number of dress-up items available - some fancy, some plain. Include jewelry, hats, Quaker plainclothes, if possible, high heels and so on. Ask some children to dress up "plain" and others to dress up "fancy." Talk about the difference.

Alternative Story 3:

The Ugly Duckling by Hans Christian Anderson - Available in many editions.

After reading or telling the story, ask these questions:

1. How do you think the Ugly Duckling feels at the beginning of the story?
2. Have you ever felt like that?
3. Are there certain things you wear that make you feel very attractive? Have you ever teased someone about what he/she is wearing? Were you ever teased about your clothes? How did you feel?
4. The Ugly Duckling turns into a swan. What makes you feel like an ugly duckling? What makes you feel like a swan?

Activity Idea:

First act out the story. Then ask the children in groups of 4 or 5 to make up short skits in which the same issue - outside appearances versus inside reality - is raised. Present and talk about the skits.

Game

Set up a simple relay game. Divide the class into two teams. Each team member hops (or skips, or jumps) to one end of the room, touches the wall, and runs back. He/she touches the hand of the next child in line. The first team to have all its runners run, wins. Play once. Then tell one team to cheat. Runners do not do the prescribed action or do not touch the wall or the next child's hand, etc. Play a third time and ask the other team to cheat and the first one to follow the rules.

Follow up with these questions:

1. What happens when one team cheats?
2. How did it feel to cheat? To see the other team cheat?
3. Are you ever tempted to cheat? Why?
4. What should you do if you know someone is cheating?

Art Activity:

Tell the children that simplicity has other meanings besides truth telling. We can especially try to enjoy simple things - the beauties of nature in particular. We can make something beautiful with very simple materials. Today we will make a painting using only one color. Even with just one color we can make beautiful pictures.

Supply each child with one paint brush, a piece of paper and one color paint. Using only one color, each child paints a picture. Share these pictures.

Closing:

Have some pictures of beautiful, natural things to show (rainbows, mountains, flowers) or have some natural things (shells, flowers, rocks) to look at. As the children sit quietly, pass these objects or pictures around the circle. End with "Kum Bah Yah!" and a handshake.

Note: Tell your class next week all the children will meet together. Send a note or postcard home to remind children of this special event.