

What Is Integrity?

Quarter 8 • Lesson 5

Focus on Character Development

- 1. Connecting:** Play a guessing game to figure out what is missing.
- 2. Teaching:** Listen to a story to learn about integrity (2 Kings 12:11–12, 15; Luke 6:31).
- 3. Responding:** Listen to situations and decide how to show integrity.

SUPPLIES

- Bible
- Sticks or rope (4–5 meters)

Optional Supplies:

- Student Pages
- Memory Verse Poster
- Crayons

Before class, use sticks or rope to form a path. Make the path 4–5 meters long so that all of the children can stand on it at the same time. The path will be used as part of the Responding section of this lesson.

Teacher Devotion

*Think carefully about the paths that your feet walk on.
Always choose the right ways.
Proverbs 4:26*

When we try to always do what is right and honours God, we develop integrity. Choosing God's way is not always easy, though. Sometimes doing the right thing can be more difficult than doing what is not. As we get to know God's Word, figuring out which ways are right and which are wrong becomes a little easier.

Think of a time when you needed to make a difficult decision to do what was right. Maybe you resisted making a small compromise you knew was not right. Perhaps you sacrificed something desirable to do the right thing. In the moment, it may have felt like the choice cost you something. But integrity honours God. If you ask, God will help to guide you on the right path.

Family Connection: Encourage families to look for an opportunity this week to talk to their children about who they trust and why they are trustworthy. Are these people honest? Do they help others? These things would show integrity.

LESSON TIME

1. Connecting: Play a guessing game to figure out what is missing.

Greet the children as they come to class. Ask each child to tell you something good about his week.

Let's begin today with a game that will require you to observe what is around you. Look around this space and notice what is here. Now, turn around and close your eyes.

Choose a volunteer. Once the other children have turned around, quietly tell the child to make a small change to the room. He could move an object or place something on a chair or table. Encourage him to do it quietly and then sit down. Tell the rest of the group to turn back around, and see if anyone can name the change. Repeat the activity a few more times, allowing the first child who correctly guesses the change to be the next to move something in the next round.

Teacher Tip: You may allow the children to move the stick or piece of rope from the path you created in the middle of the teaching space. If a child moves part of the path, just ask the child to return it to the path when you finish this activity.

In our activity, some of you were tricked because you did not know how the volunteer changed our space. The volunteer did something that no one saw.

Sometimes we do things when we think nobody is watching. If it is something dishonest or wrong, we may think it does not matter or no one will ever know. But God knows. And He wants us to act the same whether other people are watching us or not. When you choose to do what is right always and everywhere, it is called integrity.

Teacher Tip: You will use this definition for the next 3 lessons. Encourage the students to say it along with you so they memorize it by the end of these lessons.

Living with integrity means that you do what is right and you are honest in what you say and do. When you are honest, people trust you. But more importantly, you please and honour God.

2. Teaching: Listen to a story to learn about integrity (2 Kings 12:11–12, 15; Luke 6:31).

To learn more about integrity, let's listen to a true story from the Bible about a young boy who became a king. This boy, named Joash, was 7 years old when he became the king of Judah.

Allow 2–3 students to answer the following question.

- **If you were king, what is the first thing you would do?**

The Bible says that Joash did what was right in the eyes of the Lord. During that time, people worshipped God in a structure called a temple. Joash noticed that the temple needed some repairs. So, he told the priests to collect all the offerings people brought to God and use all of the money to make repairs to the temple. Listen to what happened next.

Read these verses directly from your Bible.

After they added it all up, they used it to repair the temple. They gave it to the men who had been put in charge of the work. Those men used it to pay the workers. They paid the builders and those who worked with wood. They paid those who cut stones and those who laid them. They bought lumber and blocks of stone. So they used the money to repair the LORD's temple. They also paid all the other costs to make the temple like new again.

2 Kings 12:11–12

Allow 2–3 students to answer the following question.

- **What did the priests use the money for?**

They used the money to repair the temple, pay the workers, pay the builders, buy lumber and blocks of stone, as well as for other costs.

Fixing the temple was a big project! The Bible says the priests obeyed King Joash, and all of the money was used to repair the temple. The priests could have easily used the money for other things because nobody was watching them. Instead, they did exactly what Joash had asked them to do.

The royal secretary and the high priest didn't require a report from those who were in charge of the work.

That's because they were completely honest.

They always paid the workers.

2 Kings 12:15

- **That sounds a lot like our definition of integrity. What is integrity?**

Say the definition of integrity with the children.

Integrity means trying to do what is right always and everywhere. In this true story from the Bible, the priests were honest. Telling the truth and living in a way that is honest is part of integrity. The Bible helps us to know what is right to do.

Do to others as you want them to do to you.

Luke 6:31

When you live with integrity, you do what you would like others to do to you. If you want people to be kind and honest with you, then you should be kind and honest with them. No one was watching the priests to see if they were doing what Joash had said. They always paid the workers because it was the right thing to do.

- **If you were a priest and you did not know whether to pay the workers, what question could you ask yourself to make sure you made the right decision?**

The children may respond with something like: Would I like to be paid? How would I feel if I was not paid for doing a job?

In the true story from the Bible about repairing the temple, the priests were so honest that no one even needed proof that they were following orders. When you are honest and have integrity, others will trust you. But more importantly, God is honoured and pleased when you do what is right.

Teacher Tip: Some of your students may still be developing a sense of right and wrong. Lying to maintain honour or protect family may seem like the right thing to do and might be a behaviour some children see at home. Some of them may steal food or lie to get what they need. Do not shame these children. Instead, remind them that God tells us what is right and wrong in His Word. He cares about their needs.

- **What is integrity?**

Integrity means trying to do what is right always and everywhere.

- **Why is it good to live with integrity?**

So that other people will trust me. So that God will be pleased and honoured by me.

3. Responding: Listen to situations and decide how to show integrity.

At the beginning of this activity, have the children stand in a line facing forward on the path you created before class. If possible, ask the children to stay on one end of the path so there is space for them to walk forward.

Each day you have opportunities to be like the priests in the Bible story and live with integrity. The Bible tells us to think carefully about the path we walk on. We can walk on the right path, or we can choose to do what is wrong and wander off the path. We can show integrity in our words and in our actions as we do what is pleasing to God. Listen as I read you some situations. At the end of each one, I will ask you to think about whether the child showed integrity. If the child did show integrity, you will take 1 step forward on our path. If the child did not show integrity, you will step sideways off of the path.

Teacher Tip: For larger groups, you may have children stand if the child is showing integrity and stay seated if the child is not showing integrity.

Read each story and have students respond. After each story, pause to allow the children to step forward on the path or to the side of the path.

Situation 1: Benjamin buys something from the market. The merchant gives him too much money back. Before Benjamin can say anything, the merchant is called away. "He will never even know the money is gone," Benjamin thinks. He puts the money in his pocket and walks away.

Allow the children to respond by stepping off the path. Then ask 1–2 children what Benjamin could have done to show integrity. Ask the children to return to their places on the path.

Situation 2: Kai takes a test at school. While he is stuck on a question, he notices that he can see his friend's test. He quickly looks back at his own test so he does not see another student's answers.

The children should take 1 step forward on the path.

Situation 3: When Rachel gets home from school, she sees a note from her mother telling her to do her chores before she plays. Rachel decides to play before she starts her chores because she thinks her mother will not know.

Allow the children to respond by stepping off the path. Then ask 1–2 children what Rachel could have done to show integrity. Ask the children to return to their places on the path.

Situation 4: Amara is working for Mrs. Davis, cleaning houses after school. She sweeps and scrubs floors. Mrs. Davis tells Amara she needs to do an errand while Amara finishes her work. Amara knows Mrs. Davis will not check her work, but she spends extra time scrubbing the floors as clean as possible anyway.

The children should take 1 step forward on the path.

Situation 5: Esther admires a toy at her friend's house. When her friend is not in the room, Esther takes the toy and puts it in her pocket. She thinks that her friend will think the toy is lost.

Allow the children to respond by stepping off the path. Then ask 1–2 children what Esther could have done to show integrity. Ask the children to return to their places on the path.

Situation 6: William's older brother has a uniform for his job. William knows he should not touch his brother's things, but he wants to see what he would look like in his brother's uniform. William decides to wait to ask his brother before he tries on the uniform.

The children should take 1 step forward on the path. Then ask the children turn to face you or return to their normal seats for the memory verse. If you are using the Memory Verse Poster, show it to the students.

Integrity means trying to do what is right always and everywhere. This is not always easy, but it is important because it helps others to trust you and honours God. Our memory verse today talks about doing the right thing. It says:

*Think carefully about the paths that your feet walk on.
Always choose the right ways.*
Proverbs 4:26

Say this verse using the following motions. If you prefer to create your own motions, note these somewhere and refer to them for each of the lessons in this unit.

Think carefully—Place your index finger on your head.

About the paths that your feet walk on—Walk in place.

Always choose the right ways—Point finger straight ahead.

Have the children say the verse with you. Repeat the words 3 times, doing the motions each time.

Optional: If you are using Student Pages, give the children crayons and allow 3 minutes for them to draw what integrity looks like.

Every day you can choose to do things that are honest and right or you can choose to do things that are not honest or right. When you choose to do what is right, others will trust you and you will please God.

End class by saying this blessing, based on Proverbs 4:26, over the children.

Blessing: May you think carefully about the choices you make each day. May you be a person of integrity and always choose the right ways.

Lead the children in singing this quarter's song, if possible.

"My Lighthouse" by Rend Collective: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HA8VtUPgqTc>