

CHARACTER BUILDING FROM THE BIBLE

Four Character Trait Lessons on-- Respect-- not Disrespect or Ridicule

Lesson 1—Respect your parents or guardians.

Lesson 2—Respect all people.

Lesson 3—Respect God’s name.

Lesson 4—Respect other people’s property.

What is respect?

Respect is both an attitude and a way of talking and acting. Respect is giving honor to someone in word or in deed just because of who they are or the position they hold. It is recognizing and honoring the rights of others.

Disrespect or ridicule is the opposite. It is speaking or acting in a way that dishonors or fails to honor someone or the position they hold. It is failing to recognize and honor or stomping on the rights of others.

To whom should we show respect? We should show much respect to our parents or those who take care of us, to our elders, and to those who hold positions of authority in our lives. This includes people like teachers, community and government leaders, police, pastors, etc.

We should also show respect to everyone because every person is created in the image of God and is deeply loved by Him.

Lesson 1. Show respect for your parents, because Jesus showed respect for his earthly parents.

Lesson aim: Our goal is that at the conclusion of this lesson the children realize the importance of respecting those in authority and to

show increased respect to their parents, elders, and people of authority in their lives.

Introduction to the lesson:

Simon thought he was smarter than his parents because he had learned to read better than they could. As he learned to read more and more, he began to talk about his parents to his friends in a very disrespectful way. He laughed at them and called them old coots and no-nothings (teacher give an example of disrespectful speech that is common where you are). One day he forgot he was with his father and not his friends. When his father asked him to get a sack for him, Simon refused. He began to laugh at his father and call him names. His father did not laugh like his friends had done. His father gave him a beating. As he did, Simon noticed that there were tears in his father's eyes. He realized he had really hurt his father. But he was just doing a little laughing, he reasoned. Was that really so bad?

Transition to the Bible lesson:

What do you think? What was so bad about the way Simon treated his parents? Let's see what the Bible says about respecting our parents.

Bible lesson based on these Scriptures:

- **God commanded children to respect their parents (5th command) (Exodus 20:12)**

Read this verse to your students:

12 "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you
Ex 20:12 (NKJV)

About this verse :

- This was the fifth of the Ten Commandments God gave to Moses.
- God gave these commandments to show His people how He wanted them to live.

Questions to ask :

- Who is speaking ? (God is speaking to Moses.)

- God gives a command and a promise. What is the command ? (Honor your father and mother.)
 - What is the promise ? (God will give them long life in their land.)
 - God uses another word that means the same thing as respect. What is it ? (Honor)
 - Can you think of at least one way of honoring your parents ? (Answers may vary.)
- **Jesus honored his earthly parents. He was subject to them when He was 12 years old. (Luke 2:51-52)**

Read these verses or ask a student to read them:

51 Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. 52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men. Luke 2:51-52 (NKJV)

Ask these questions:

- What does it mean that Jesus was subject to his parents? (He obeyed them.)
 - Where did they live? (Nazareth)
 - Jesus increased in wisdom. What does this mean? (He learned. He developed skills for life.) [Even though He was God and knew everything, He had limited Himself to a human body and became like us, so as a child He learned.]
 - Jesus increased in stature. What does this mean? (He grew physically. He became taller and bigger and stronger.)
 - Jesus grew in favor with God and men. What does this mean? (He did what was right in God's eyes and also in men's eyes.)
 - Would He have had favor in God's eyes and in men's eyes if he had been rebellious and disrespectful to His parents who were caring for Him? (No)
- **Jesus asked His disciple John to care for His mother Mary after His crucifixion (John 19:25-27). (Apparently Joseph had died and Mary needed someone to care for her.)**

Read these verses to the students or ask one of them to read:

25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!" 27 Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home. John 19:25-27 (NKJV)

Ask these questions:

- Who were the three women standing near the cross as Jesus died? (Jesus' mother, His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleopas, and Mary Magdalene.)
- Who was the disciple standing nearby? (the disciple Jesus loved, or John) [This does not mean that Jesus did not love the others, but that John was close to Him in a special way.]

- What did Jesus say to Mary? (Woman, behold your son.) [Woman was a respectful term of address like “Mama”.]
- What did Jesus say to John? (Behold your mother.)
- How do we know that Jesus intended for John to care for His mother Mary after His crucifixion? (John took Mary to his home from that very hour, so it is clear that he understood it in that way.)
- How did Jesus’ words show respect for Mary? (He showed concern for taking care of her. He left a plan for her care after His crucifixion.)
- Why did Jesus show respect and care for Mary? (Because she was His mother.)
- What are some of the things your parents have done for you that make them worthy of respect? (They gave birth and life to you if nothing else. Often times they have also provided shelter, food, medical care, clothing, schooling, counsel, etc. Even if they have failed in many ways, they still gave you life, so they are still worthy of love and respect.)

Jesus respected His parents even though they were common, uneducated people making a humble living.

Read to the students or ask one of them to read:

3 "Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" And they were offended at Him. Mark 6:3 (NKJV)

Ask these questions:

- What was the occupation or the job of Jesus’ foster father, that he also taught to Jesus? (Joseph was a carpenter.)
- Are carpenters usually very rich people living in luxury? (No, they usually make a very modest living.)
- How many brothers did Jesus have who were born after Him? (At least four—James, Joses, Judas, and Simon.)
- How many sisters did He have? (We don’t know, but sisters is in the plural, so there must have been at least two.)
- Joseph made a modest living, and there were at least seven children in the family including Jesus. Do you think Mary and Joseph had a lot to spend on their children? (No, that would not have been possible.)

Main point to make: Even though Jesus lived in a very humble home and his parents were not rich or highly educated, still He showed respect to them.

Life Application for the saved child:

Let the children role play situations in which children were respectful to their parents. Pray together that God will help us all to show greater respect to our parents. Make it clear that if they live with another relative or person, they should respect that person as their parent because he or she is acting as a parent to them. Jesus showed respect to His

earthly mother, Mary, and father, Joseph. Yet Joseph was not His real father. The Bible makes it clear that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit. He was the Son of God in a very special way. Joseph was not His biological father. Joseph just cared for the child Jesus as a foster father, because God told him to do so. If Jesus could respect Joseph as his foster father, then you can and should respect whoever is caring for you and acting to you as a parent, whether they gave birth to you or not.

Invitation for the unsaved child:

When you trust in Jesus as your Saviour, He will begin to change your “wanter” so that more and more, you will want the things that please God. If you have not yet received Jesus, but you are ready to receive Him now, please let me know so that I can pray with you.

Bible Memory Verses:

"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

Ex 20:12 (NKJV)

Lesson 2. Jesus showed respect for everyone.

Lesson Aim: Our goal is that at the conclusion of this lesson, the children realize that everyone is valuable and worthy of respect, and they show increased respect for

Bible lesson based on these Scriptures:

Main point: Jesus showed respect for everyone, even the lowly.

Examples of Him showing respect for everyone:

➤ He touched lepers (Matthew 8:1-3)

Read to the students, or ask one of them to read:

1 When He had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed Him. 2 And behold, a leper came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean." 3 Then Jesus put out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." Immediately his leprosy was cleansed. Matt 8:1-3 (NKJV)

Ask these questions:

- What did the leper do? (He came and worshiped Jesus.)
- Why was this unusual? (Lepers were supposed to stay away from other people so they wouldn't get the disease.)
- What did the leper say? ("Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.")
- What did Jesus do in response? (He put out His hand and touched the leper.)
- Do you think people usually touched lepers? (No way, because lepers had nasty sores that could spread to you. They were considered unclean.)
- Why do you think Jesus touched the leper? (To show kindness, love, respect.)
- What did Jesus say? (I am willing, be cleansed.)
- What happened when Jesus touched the leper and said, "be cleansed"? (Immediately the leprosy was cleansed. He was healed. The leprosy was gone.)
- Do you know any cases where someone is made to feel dirty or less than human because others will not touch him or her? (Trokosi are one example.)
- This man needed cleansing or healing. Do you think he also need Jesus' touch? Why? (Yes, to show that he was worthwhile in God's sight, to give him dignity and respect.)
- Who do you know who is looked down on and outcast by others? How can you show them respect?

➤ **He healed those controlled by demons (Luke 9:37-42)**

➤ **Read to the students, as students act out the parts:**

37 Now it happened on the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, that a great multitude met Him. 38 Suddenly a man from the multitude cried out, saying, "Teacher, I implore You, look on my son, for he is my only child. 39 "And behold, a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly cries out; it convulses him so that he foams at the mouth, and it departs from him with great difficulty, bruising him. 40 "So I implored Your disciples to cast it out, but they could not." 41 Then Jesus answered and said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here." 42 And as he was still coming, the demon threw him down and convulsed him. Then Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the child, and gave him back to his father. Luke 9:37-42 (NKJV)

Ask these questions:

- What was the problem the man was having with his son? (An evil spirit would seize him and cause him to convulse and foam at the mouth and even bruise him.)
- What happened while they were bringing the boy to Jesus? (The demon threw him down on the ground and convulsed him or made him shake uncontrollably.)
- What did Jesus do for the boy? (Rebuked the unclean spirit and healed him.)
- Do people usually show much respect for someone who is controlled by demons?
- How did Jesus treat the boy differently?

➤ **He forgave a prostitute (John 8:3-11)**

➤ **Read to your students as your students act out what they hear:**

3 Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, 4 they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. 5 "Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?" 6 This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear. 7 So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first." 8 And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. 9 Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. 10 When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?" 11 She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more." John 8:1-11 (NKJV)

Ask these questions:

- Who was brought to Jesus? (A woman caught in the act of adultery)
- What did they want Jesus to do and why? (They wanted Him to kill her by stoning or tell them to do so, because the law of Moses commanded a sentence of death for the crime of adultery.)
- What was Jesus' answer? (, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.")
- Why did they all go away instead of stoning her? (They had all sinned too.)
- In the end, did Jesus condemn her? (No. He told her to go and sin no more.)
- Do people usually show any respect to a prostitute? (No, she is considered dirty and sinful.)
- How did Jesus treat her differently? (He forgave her sins and gave her another chance.)

➤ **He called a hated tax-collector to be His disciple. (Matthew 9:9-10)**

Read to your students:

9 As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him. 10 Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, that behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. Matt 9:9-10 (NKJV)

Ask these questions:

- What was Matthew's job? (He was a tax collector.)
- What did Jesus ask Matthew to do? (Jesus invited him to follow Him, that is, to become His disciple.)
- Did Matthew obey? (Yes, he got up and followed Jesus.)
- Was Matthew the only tax collector Jesus associated with? (No, He and His disciples sat down and talked with many others.)
- Tax collectors had a reputation for taking too much money for taxes and using force to do it. How do you think people felt about them? (People feared and hated them and basically had nothing to do with them.)
- How did Jesus treat Matthew and the other tax collectors differently? (He also called them to become His disciples. He associated with them—sat with them and talked with them. He treated them like human beings.)

➤ **He blessed the children (Matthew 19:13-15)**

Read to your students:

13 Then little children were brought to Him that He might put His hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuked them. 14 But Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." 15 And He laid His hands on them and departed from there. Matt 19:13-15 (NKJV)

Ask questions like these:

- Who did they bring to Jesus? (Little children.)
- What did they want Jesus to do for them? (Put His hands on them and pray—sort of like blessing them.)
- Who rebuked those who were bringing the children? (Jesus' disciples)
- Why do you think the disciples did that? What might have been going through their minds? (Maybe something like, 'Jesus is too busy, too big, too important to waste His time on children.')
- What did Jesus say about it? (He said the opposite. 'Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them.')
- What did Jesus do in the end? (He laid His hands on the little children.)
- Why do you suppose Jesus took time out of His busy ministry to bless the little children? (It must be that He considered the children important, too.)

Conclusion/Life Application for the Saved Child: Wow! Jesus showed respect for lepers, for those controlled by demons, for prostitutes, for tax-collectors, and for little children. He treated them so much differently than others treated them. He treated them like human beings worthy of respect. If the Creator of the world showed respect for everyone, who do we think we are to show disrespect for anyone?

Jesus showed respect to others and only He can give you power to show respect consistently. This power comes through His Holy Spirit when you invite Him to come into your life.

Invitation for the Unsaved student:

If you have not yet invited Jesus into your life, are you ready to do so right now? If you are, please meet me outside after class. I would love to pray with you.

Bible Memory Verse:

**Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.
1 Peter 2:17 (NKJV)**

This is an interesting verse because it calls on us to honor the king (or those in authority, like government leaders and also chiefs and traditional rulers). But BEFORE that, it calls on us to honor ALL PEOPLE. Respect is not only to be shown to rulers. It is to be shown to everyone.

When Jesus comes in, He changes our attitude of disrespect toward others to one of respect, because we come to understand that God values and loves each one of us.

###

Lesson 3. God wants us to show respect for the property of others.

Respect for the property of others is honoring their right to own and use the things they worked for or received from their families.

Disrespect for the property of others is an attitude that seeks to get for yourself in a dishonest manner the things that others worked for or received from their families. It often results in stealing.

Introduction to the Bible lesson:

Eric had worked hard to plant papayas around his house. He carried water for them every day. At last he saw blossoms. Soon they would turn into papayas. He planned to feed them first to his mother who was sick. One morning he went out to see his papayas. They were all gone! Eric found out that children of the village had stolen them. They ate some, gave some to the dogs, and played football with others until they broke open. Eric felt sick. All his hard work was gone. How would he help his sick mother now?

Transition to the Bible lesson:

Those children did not know that God wants us to respect other people's property—that is, the things that belong to other people. But what DOES the Bible say about this? Let's look at some Scriptures together.

Bible Lesson based on these Scriptures:

John's instructions to soldiers who were repenting included not cheating people. (Cheating is taking something that belongs to someone else and treating it as if it were your own.) **(Luke 3:7-14)**

Read to your students:

7 Then he said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him... bear fruits worthy of repentance... 12 Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" 13 And he said to them, "Collect no more than what is appointed for you."

Luke 3:7-13 (NKJV)

Ask these questions:

- Who was baptizing people? (John the Baptist, the one who came before Jesus to get the people ready for His coming)
- What do you think John meant by “fruits worthy of repentance”? (Do things that show your repentance is real. Stop doing the wrong things you repented of and start doing right things.)
- When the tax collectors came to be baptized, what did John tell them to do? (Collect only rightful taxes and don’t add any extra. Don’t add any corruption. This was a way they could show true repentance.)
- When the tax collectors asked for more than the rightful taxes, how was this stealing? (They were asking for money that people did not rightfully owe and then keeping it themselves just to make themselves rich.)

Zaccheus’ conversion results in him returning things he had stolen Luke 19:2-8

Read slowly to your students while they act out what they hear:

2 Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. 3 And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was of short stature. 4 So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. 5 And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house." 6 So he made haste and came down, and received Him joyfully. 7 But when they saw it, they all complained, saying, "He has gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner." 8 Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold." 9 And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; 10 "for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Luke 19:1-10 (NKJV)

Ask these questions:

- What was Zachhaeus’ job? (He was a chief tax collector. He was a boss over the other tax collectors.)
- Zacchaeus was rich. Do you think he got rich honestly? (No. Tax collectors got rich by stealing from people.)
- Why couldn’t Zacchaeus see Jesus? (He was short, and many people were all around Jesus.)
- What unusual thing did Jesus do? (He called Zacchaeus by name although He had never met him, and He said He had to stay at his house.)
- How did Zacchaeus receive Jesus? (Joyfully)
- What did Zacchaeus decide to do that showed that he had really repented of his stealing? (He decided to give away half his riches to the poor and to give back what he had stolen four times as much as he stole.)
- What did Jesus say that showed Zacchaeus was really saved? (Today salvation has come to this house”.

- If you stole before you were saved, what would Zaccheus example show you that you should do now? (Stop stealing and if possible, give back what you stole.)

Life Application for the Saved Child:

Think about the story we told at the beginning of the lesson about Eric. Discuss these questions: When the boys took the papaya from Eric's trees, was this stealing? Why? How did their actions affect Eric and his mother? How much do you think the boys thought about the consequences of their actions before they took the papaya? How could they make this right? (Students will likely say the boys should say they are sorry. This is a good start, but what else should they do? Shouldn't they try to repay Eric and his mother for the papaya in some way? Help the students think of several ways they could do this.)

Think about a time when you did not respect someone's property. Ask God to help you do better and change your behavior.

Invitation for the Unsaved Child:

Stealing is wrong, but even if you don't steal, you have still done other things that are wrong. We have all sinned, and we all need a Saviour. Jesus is the Saviour who gave the perfect sacrifice for our sins. We know God accepted His sacrifice of Himself, because God raised Him from the dead. Do you know Jesus as your Saviour? If you are still struggling with the answer to this question, I would love to pray with you. When you see me, just say, "I want to take Jesus."

Bible Memory Verses (from the Ten Commandments):

You shall not steal.

Ex 20:15 (NKJV)

"You shall not covet ...anything that is your neighbor's."

Ex 20:17 (NKJV)

(Coveting is wanting something God did not give you so much that you would even do wrong to get it. This evil desire is what causes us to steal.)

Lesson 4. God wants us to respect His name.

Remember, respect is both an attitude and a way of talking and acting. Respect is giving honor to someone in word or in deed just because of who they are or the position they hold.

Respect for God and for His name, then, is an attitude of reverence and honor for God, and a way of using His name that gives Him honor because of the position He holds as our Creator.

Disrespect or ridicule is speaking or acting in a way that dishonors or fails to honor someone or the position they hold.

Disrespect for God, then, is speaking or acting in any way that dishonors God as our Creator. This could be by using His name carelessly, using it as a curse word, or joking around about God in a way that shows no respect for Him.

Introduction to the Bible lesson:

Ask the children how they have heard people disrespect God's name. Get several ideas.

Transition to the Bible lesson:

All around us, we hear people disrespect God's name. Is it really a big deal? What does the Bible say about respecting God's name?

Bible Lesson based on these Scriptures:

➤ **Third of the Ten commandments (Exodus 20:7)**

Read to your students or ask one of them to read:

7 "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain. Ex 20:7 (NKJV)

- What is forbidden in this commandment? (Taking God's name in vain)
- If we do take God's name in vain, will we be innocent or guilty before God? (guilty)
- Why do you think God's name is so special? (He made us, He saved us, He is worthy of love and respect. He is the only God.)
- How would we use the Lord's name in vain? (Swearing, use His name carelessly or for curses, saying His name when we don't really mean it, using His name in any way that dishonors Him)

Jesus beginning the Lord's prayer (Matthew 6:9)

Read to your students or ask one of them to read:

"In this manner, therefore, pray:

Our Father in heaven,

Hallowed be Your name.

10 Your kingdom come.

Your will be done

On earth as it is in heaven. Matt 6:9-10 (NKJV)

Ask these questions:

- How does Jesus say we should begin our prayers? (Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.)
- Who is the only one Jesus taught us to pray to? (Our Father in heaven)
- What does "hallowed" mean? "hallowed by thy name"? (Honored or respected. We are to begin our prayers by respecting or honoring God's name.)
- What are we to pray for first? (For His Kingdom to come on earth as it is in heaven.)
- Do you remember to honor God's name every time you pray, even before you ask for anything?

Jesus said He did always what honors the Father (John 8:29)

Read to your students or ask one of them to read:

29 "And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him." John 8:29 (NKJV)

Ask this question:

- How did Jesus honor the Father's name? (By doing always those things that pleased Him.)

Jesus knows whether we honor Him in our hearts (Matthew 15:8)

Read this verse or ask a student to read it:

8 "These people draw near to Me with their mouth,

And honor Me with their lips,
But their heart is far from Me. Matt 15:8 (NKJV)

Ask these questions:

- What problem was Jesus talking about? (People who say words like they are honoring Him, but their hearts are far away from Him)
- God wants us to honor Him with our words. But is that enough? (No, we need to honor Him with our whole hearts as well.)
- What about this verse shows that God knows our hearts? (He saw that what they were saying with their mouths was not the same as the thoughts of their hearts.)

Life application for the saved child:

Discuss: How can you honor God's name more? What do you need to stop doing? What do you need to start doing? (Pray together for God's help.)

Invitation to the Unsaved Student:

Of course, you will want to honor God's name more when you realize what He has done for you. He died to pay the punishment for all your sins. He can take them all away and make your heart clean. He can forgive you and give you a new life. If you have not yet let Jesus give you His new life, why not do it today? I would love to pray with you after class. Just let me know of your desire.

Bible Memory Verses:

"You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain. Ex 20:7 (NKJV)

**"You are worthy, O Lord,
To receive glory and honor and power;
For You created all things,
And by Your will they exist and were created."
Rev 4:11 (NKJV)**

Review game:

**Play “hangman” using the four things we have learned to respect—
Our parents, Everyone, People’s things, God’s name.
Place lines on the blackboard to correspond with one of these and
have the children guess letters to put in the blanks to complete the
word.**

Memory verse review:

**Write one or two words of each memory verse on a card and give
one to each student in random order. Have them try to figure out
the correct order and stand at the front in correct order. You can
play with two or more teams. The first team to get their verse
correct wins.**

###