



INTEGRITY | WEEK 4 | OCTOBER 22, 2023

Elementary Lesson

All About Soul

Monthly Virtue: Integrity—Choosing to be truthful in whatever you say and do

Bible Story: All About Soul (Think About These Things) • *Philippians 4:8*

Key Question: What do you spend the most time thinking about?

Basic Truth: I am made for a purpose so the Holy Spirit will help me do big things now.

Memory Verse: Anyone who lives without blame walks safely. But anyone who takes a crooked path will get caught. *Proverbs 10:9 (NirV)*

LEADER BIBLE STUDY

God is always good. Since the very beginning, God has been faithful and true. If God makes a promise, God keeps that promise. We are created in God's image . . . and when we live with integrity, we reflect God's integrity. When Jesus lived on earth, He lived a perfect life and showed integrity in ways we can't because of our sin. Jesus makes it possible for us to live as new creations. Through the Holy Spirit, we are being transformed into people of integrity. Who we are in private should match who we are in public. When we trust in God, we can make the wise choice and be truthful in whatever we say and do.

Key Question: What do you spend the most time thinking about? As preteens are growing up, they become more self-aware. We hope that this question will prompt them to discover some things about themselves and how they might trust God to help them live with integrity. We pray that they'll figure out a plan to focus on what's true.

We finish up the month with **Philippians 4:8**, where Paul writes: "Finally, my brothers and sisters, always think about what is true. Think about what is noble, right and pure. Think about what is lovely and worthy of respect. If anything is excellent or worthy of praise, think about those kinds of things." If we want to have integrity in our entire lives, we have to fill our minds with good things in the first place.

Pre-Service Check List

- HUDDLE AS TEAM → You're in this together! Pray together and talk about the activities for the day.
- PLAY MUSIC
- PUT OUT TOYS
- PUT ASIDE DISTRACTIONS → A welcoming environment is important! We want it to be obvious from the moment kids walk in that they belong HERE!
- ENGAGE WITH KIDS

Morning Flow

Doors
Open
9:15/11:00

Large Group
Starts
9:35/11:20

Small Group
Starts
10:05/11:50

LARGE GROUP

COUNTDOWN AND WELCOME (3 Minutes)

(VIDEO: COUNTDOWN, SLIDE: KIDCITY EXPECTATIONS)

LGL: “Welcome everyone! I’m so glad you are able to come hang out with us in KidCity today. My name is [INSERT NAME]. We are going to have a lot of fun today, but before we do let’s go over these announcements/KidCity Expectations.

(5th SUNDAY FUNDAY) “What holiday is coming at the end of this month? That’s right, 5th Sunday Funday! Oh, and it also happens to be Halloween...but that means that you and a friend get to come to church in your costume! If you’re really cool, you and your friend will have coordinating costumes. Like Batman and Robin or Snow White and the Seven Dwarves! Whatever you come up with, please no full-face masks, props, or scary costumes. I get frightened easily! MOST importantly of all, you need to invite your friend to church! That’s what 5th Sunday is all about!

(SLIDE: BAPTISM) *(Said on the fourth weekend of the month only)* “Today are baptisms at Hope. Baptism is a way of telling the world that you love God and have made the decision to follow Him with your life. It’s a big deal! Is there anyone here who is getting baptized today? *(Pause and if someone is, go ahead and give them a high five and get the kids to clap).* Awesome!”

(SLIDE: KIDCITY EXPECTATIONS) “Now, let’s quickly go over our KidCity Expectations (rules) so we can make sure that we make the most of our time today: *(Don’t dwell on these too long, but make sure you review them briefly so we can set everyone up for success.)*

1. Be Kind
2. Be Safe
3. Have Fun

LARGE GROUP GAME (4 Min)

THE EXCHANGE

(2 Small Toy Cars)

I’m so happy to see all of you here today. We have a high-octane thrill ride of a day planned for you here at KidCity. We’re talking about how we should be DRIVEN by our relationship with Jesus. And that means we should be driven by integrity.

(SLIDE: VIRTUE) Integrity is choosing to be truthful in whatever you say and do.

“Integrity is really important, because God made us to live in a truthful way. Often, people only look at what’s on the outside of a person. But God knows that what’s inside matters most! And when we’re truthful on the IN-side, we’ll be able to live like Jesus by showing love and kindness on the OUT-side.

“Are you guys ready to play a game??

(SLIDE: THE EXCHANGE)

(SLIDE: GAME MUSIC)

HOW TO PLAY:

- **SPLIT UP.** Split your group of about 10-15 kids into two teams. Teams do not have to be even. Have the two teams line up facing each other with teammates standing shoulder to shoulder and with their hands behind their backs. Teams will want to have as little space between players as possible and have the two lines stand at least five feet apart.
- **THE EXCHANGE.** Hand a random player for each team the car. Once both these have the object, allow them to start passing the object up and down the line. The player who has the object can decide which way to pass the object. The players who don't have the object can keep pretending to pass the object to throw off the other team. The whole time each team is passing the object along they will want to watch the other team to keep track of the objects
- **GOTCHA.** After about 30 seconds call out for teams to stop moving. Without moving, allow one team to guess where they think the object is. If the team gets it correct, they get three points. If they are off by one player, they get two points and if they are off by two players, they only receive one point. If the object is further than two players away from where the team guessed, they get no points for that round. Allow the other team to guess and get points then start a new round. The team with the most points wins! Play 2 rounds, depending on time.

That was so fun to watch! Now, let's all jump up on our feet and get ready to sing.

WORSHIP (6-7 Minutes)

(VIDEO: WAVEWALKER, AT THE TOP OF MY LUNGS)

BIBLE STORY (12 Minutes)

(No Supplies)

I have a question I'd love for you to think about today. You don't need to answer this out loud but just think about it for a moment. What is your biggest fear?

“When I was your age, it was not cool to have fears! But if I can be honest, I had lots of fears—and still do. When I was younger, the fears would consume my thoughts and at times affect my behavior.

LGL tells a personal, age-appropriate story about a fear that consumed their thoughts and affected behavior. Use the following as a template. Keep the story under a minute long.

“I was afraid of the dark. Every night I went to bed, I dreaded turning off my room lights because my night light was never bright enough! My family lived in an old house that made all kinds of

noises! The noises were loudest the moment my room lights were turned off. The wind howled. The trees scraped against the roof. Critters seemingly had parties in the attic. The floorboards creaked. The shadows loomed on the walls.

“On one particular night, a storm blew through complete with thunder, lightning, and hail. My imagination was in overdrive. I had convinced myself there was a mob of rowdy monsters trying to tear into my house and take me away to their villainous lair. It was impossible to ignore my thoughts by singing a song, counting sheep, or praying! So, I did the only thing that made sense—I hid under the covers. There was a problem in this moment. My house was entirely too hot to hide under the big covers. As I started to sweat profusely, I couldn’t stop thinking about the massive, nondescript monsters waiting to pounce as soon as I would rip off my covers to get cool. So, I did the only thing that made sense to me at the time. I sweated under the covers until morning and didn’t get any sleep!”

Looking back on this experience, it is such a sad story! There were no monsters or villainous lairs. My fear of the dark mixed with my overactive imagination caused me to stay miserable all night long! My thoughts were completely consumed with a negative, made-up story and made me miserable.

“I’ve got a sneaky suspicion I’m not the only one here who knows this feeling! I’m sure there are at least a few others in the room who can focus on what’s going wrong even though we know it’s making us miserable. Some of you can get upset over not being selected first for the pick-up game at recess. The negative thought rolling through your head is telling you that ‘you’re not good enough.’ Maybe you compare your outfit to what others are wearing. In your head, you can’t shake the feeling of not liking any of the clothes you own. For others, you have people making fun of your size—you’re too tall or short. Your thoughts could be screaming, ‘I wish I was different.’

“It’s important for everyone to understand that how we focus our thoughts can affect our behavior and emotions. And when we choose to focus on negative thoughts, they can make us completely miserable! But what do we do about it? Fear is real. Anger is real. Sadness is real. How can we feel those feelings without letting them control us? How can we trust God to help us deal with them and find hope and joy again? Wow, great questions, questions many of you have probably asked yourselves before.

“Thankfully, the writers of the Bible have a whole lot to say about questions like these. God inspired them to write down some amazing wisdom when it comes to how we can live an honest life with hope. Let’s take a look at some of that wisdom right now!

(VIDEO: BIBLE STORY – 6 MIN)

Paul recognized the importance for followers of Jesus to consume and think about all the good that comes from God!

To become more like Jesus, pay attention to your thoughts. When you start to worry or feel frustrated, you can choose what your mind focuses on. If your thoughts aren’t on the things that Paul listed in Philippians 4:8, you can feel trapped. However, you can replace them with something new or helpful! By focusing your thoughts on God, it can free your mind!

"I realize this is not an easy exercise, but God sends us Christians help! When we follow Jesus, God sends the Holy Spirit to help guide us. In fact, we need help from the Holy Spirit to change what's going on inside our heads. The Holy Spirit can help us replace the negative with what's true. That's a BIG thing. Think on this...

(SLIDE: BASIC TRUTH) 'I am made for a purpose so the Holy Spirit can help me do big things now.

"Again, we need God's help to change what's going on inside our heads! Plus, it helps to pay attention to the things you're watching and listening to, which includes music, video games, movies, websites, and even books. These can focus our minds on subjects other than what is TRUE, NOBLE, RIGHT, PURE, LOVELY, WORTHY OF RESPECT, EXCELLENT or WORTHY OF PRAISE!"

Sometimes it can be difficult to discern truth from fiction. It can be difficult to recognize who or what is worthy of respect. It can be hard to recognize what is right from wrong. This is why we believe it is important to spend time in the Bible and spend time with wise voices like your Small Group Leaders! Before we spend time with our leaders on this subject, we want you to answer this one question.

(SLIDE: KEY QUESTION) 'What do you spend the most time thinking about?

Have kids turn and talk to their shoulder partner for 60 seconds. Your KQ slide on Playlister will keep track of time for you. While kids are talking, walk around and listen in to what they are saying and give prompts if needed. Don't try to resolve anything, kids will have a further discussion within their small group time.

Ok friends, come back together in 3, 2, 1....

I heard some great ideas floating around. You are going to have more of a chance to talk about this in small group time, but for now let's pray and dismiss.

"Dear God, thank you for showing us what it means to live with integrity. We know that a huge part of integrity starts with the way we use our thoughts. So please help us focus on what's true. Help us fill our minds with what is noble and good. Help us choose each day to think about you, to grow closer to you, to follow you, and to become more like you. We love you, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

DISMISS TO SMALL GROUPS

SMALL GROUP

Monthly Virtue: Integrity—Choosing to be truthful in whatever you say and do

Bible Story: All About Soul (Think About These Things) • *Philippians 4:8*

Key Question: What do you spend the most time thinking about?

Basic Truth: I am made for a purpose so the Holy Spirit will help me do big things now.

Memory Verse: Anyone who lives without blame walks safely. But anyone who takes a crooked path will get caught. *Proverbs 10:9 (NIRV)*

Kids learn best through play and through conversation. Both are equally important, so be sure to give time to both!

KEY QUESTION (K-5th)

(No Supplies)

Spend some time coming together and talking about the Key Question. There aren't any right or wrong answers but use this time to help kids have a discussion about what they just learned and encourage them to grow in their faith. Try to keep the conversation spiritually based. Why does what we are talking about matter in light of what God has done for us?

Key Question: What do you spend the most time thinking about? (*Answers will vary*)

ASK: (Look up and read Philippians 4:8) What can you do to change what you're thinking about to make it more like what Paul is describing? (Answers will vary: Write down your thoughts so you can process through them, talk about them with someone you trust, don't watch, play, or read things that aren't good for you, etc.)

THINK ON THESE THINGS (K-5th)

(**"Philippians 4:8" Activity Page – precut, Bibles, Painter's Tape**)

What You Do:

- Instruct the kids to get in pairs.
- Give each pair a Bible.
- Invite each pair to look up Philippians 4:8.
- Call on a volunteer to read the verse aloud as the rest of the group follows along in their Bibles.
- Tell kids that Paul reminded us what we need to think about in the verse.
- Set out the two piles of "Philippians 4:8 Words and Antonyms" Activity Page cards on the floor. (One pile is the words from the verse and one pile is antonyms of the words in the verse.)
- Invite the kids to work together to match the word from the verse with its opposite.
- Answers for NIRV:
 - true—lies
 - noble—dishonorable
 - right—wrong
 - pure—impure

- lovely—unlovely
- worthy of respect—disrespectful
- excellent—terrible
- worthy of praise—unworthy
- Tape a circle or square on the floor.
- Instruct the kids to place the cards with words from the verse inside the taped shape and the cards with their antonyms (opposites) outside the shape.
- Say, “This is a picture of what Jesus wants us to focus on! He wants us to think about the things inside the shape, not the things outside of the shape.”
- *If you lead 2nd-5th graders, start on the extension activity.*

What You Say:

“What is a driver supposed to focus on when they’re behind the wheel? *(Invite responses.)* The road! If a driver is distracted by their phone, the radio, other people, or they check out their smile in the mirror, they could run off the road—or worse!

“Just like you have to stay focused on the road when you’re behind the wheel, as followers of Jesus, we need to stay focused on what’s true. You can ask yourself, ‘Is this thing I’m thinking about true or is it a lie? Is it helpful? How can I replace that incorrect thought with the right one so I can live with integrity?’ Let’s remember to **[Bottom Line] focus on what’s true** *(Point inside the shape and read all the cards aloud.)*, instead of all these things. *(Point to cards outside the shape and read aloud.)* When we **[Bottom Line] focus on what’s true**, we can walk with integrity.”

[Make It Personal] *(Share one thing you do regularly to help you focus on what’s true. What is one habit you have that helps you focus on what’s true? Share your habit with your few and how it helps you keep your mind focused on true and noble things.)*

THINK ON THESE THINGS: EXTENSION (2nd-5th)

(Blank Paper and Pencils)

What You Do:

- Instruct the kids to sit in a circle.
- One by one, read the scenarios below.
- **For each scenario, ask:**
 - Is this thought true?
 - Is it something we should focus on that is noble, right, pure, lovely, excellent, etc.?
 - Or is this thought something we shouldn’t focus on?
- If the scenario is something the group decides shouldn’t be focused on, ask how they can change that thought to line up with what God tells us is true in the Bible.
- Invite the kids to talk through possible ways to change their thoughts to line up with the truth.
- If they get stuck, there are some suggestions below to get the conversation going.
- Scenarios:
 - The kid who sits next to you keeps kicking your chair. He’s SO annoying. (This is not a thought we should focus on. Instead, we can change it to, “The kid who sits next to you keeps kicking your chair. He probably needs to get out some energy! I hope we can go outside today for recess.”)

- There's a girl on the bus who always sits by herself. I'm going to see if she'll let me sit by her today. (This is a statement that lines up with God's truth.)
- Math is my worst subject. I'm too confused to even try on today's test. (This is not a thought we should focus on. It doesn't line up with what God says is true about us. Instead, we can change it to, "Math is hard for me. I should probably ask the teacher for some extra help so I'm ready for the test.")
- This show has a lot of scary stuff in it. I'll probably be fine to watch it. (This is not a thought we should focus on. Instead, we can change it to, "This show has a lot of scary stuff in it. I should probably pick something else, so I don't have scary images in my head.")
- Give each kid a piece of paper and a pencil. *(If you lead 2nd-3rd grade, do this portion of the lesson as a whole group)*
- Instruct the kids to turn their paper horizontally (landscape-style) and draw a line down the center of the page.
- On the left side at the top of the page, direct the kids to write the word "FALSE" as the title of that section.
- Direct the kids to write "TRUE" as the title on the top of the right-hand side of the page.
- Encourage the kids to come up with a thought of their own that's false about themselves and write it on the left side of the page under the "FALSE" heading.
 - If your kids need help thinking of something, ask 'What are some thoughts that you have about yourself that make you sad or tear you down?'
- Then direct the kids to write what's true on the right side under the "TRUE" heading.
- If time allows, and there are some volunteers, invite the kids to share their thoughts with the group.

Be sensitive to what kids might share during this time. If there are indications of hurt, you must tell a staff person to care for the kid best. If YOU are feeling unsettled about this topic and it brings up something within you, your staff person is here to support you however they can.

What You Say:

"It's important to stop ourselves sometimes and make sure we're focusing on what's true. And the good news is, when we choose to follow Jesus, His Holy Spirit will help us replace unhelpful thoughts with the truth!

"When we remember the truths that God made us, loves us, and is ready to help us, it reminds us that we're not on our own. When we fill our minds with what's right and noble and lovely, we'll be focusing on the right things. And right thoughts lead to right living. This week, when you realize your thoughts aren't true or helpful, stop and ask God to help you change those thoughts as you *[Bottom Line]* focus on what's true."

FINAL ACTIVITY: Biblical Literacy (K-5th)

(Supplies Vary)

What You Do:

Follow the instructions of the "Books of the Bible" activity that is in your bin.

PRAY

Dear God, we know you are a good God who wants good things for us. Help us this week to focus on what's TRUE and NOBLE and RIGHT and PURE and LOVELY and WORTHY OF RESPECT (*ADMIRABLE*) and EXCELLENT and WORTHY OF PRAISE (*PRAISEWORTHY*) so that we can live with integrity. When we get it right and when we get it wrong, thank you for reminding us that you love us, no matter what. We love you, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."