



Passing on the Faith

St. John's Lutheran Church and School

www.stjohnsarnold.org

Dear Families,

When it comes to character traits you want to teach your child, honesty is most likely at the top of your list. As parents, it is our job to teach our children to be honest with us and others. Without being honest, no relationship your child finds will flourish.

Teaching children about honesty, involves a lot of talking about what honesty really is. Talk to your child about how honesty is being a good friend and dishonesty is hiding things, twisting words to get another into trouble, or taking something without asking. Friendships are built on honesty and trust.

Be open with your child. Take a moment to tell them about a time you told a lie and how it ended poorly for you. As you tell your child your story talk about what you would have done differently and why you thought at the time you were making the best choice. Remind your child that no one is perfect not even you, but that doesn't mean that we should not try to be the best we can.

As parents we must build up our children. We must help them learn and grow without breaking them down. When your child lies to you, and they will, ☹ remain calm. Discuss with your child why honesty and truthfulness are vital to keeping communication open. If you cannot trust your child to be honest with you it becomes impossible to allow them the freedom they want.

Questions to ask your children:

- Has anyone ever promised you something and then didn't keep their promise? How did that make you feel?
 - If someone you are playing a game with cheats, how do you feel? Why is it important to have rules in a game?
 - When you think a friend is lying to you, what could you say to help?
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Upcoming Topic:

February

Generosity

March

Lent

April

Beauty

Sharing your Faith:

A classic game of Go Fish requires honesty from players on whether they have the card asked for. Ask each child how they would feel if one of the other players lied about the cards they had? Then challenge everyone to play without telling the truth. What happens? It does not take long for the point of this game to get across as children struggle to get matches when everyone lies and says they do not have the card. Children quickly learn no one wins when we lie.

For this experiment, you need ice cream, salt, and chocolate syrup. Have your child taste the ice cream. What does it taste like? Now dump salt on the ice cream. What does it taste like now? Last try and cover the salt (lie) with chocolate syrup. What does the ice cream taste like now? Talk to your child about how you cannot make dishonesty go away by trying to cover it up.

You are your child's best and first teacher.

"Honesty is the first chapter of the book of wisdom," wrote Thomas Jefferson. When it comes to small children and honesty, it's not usually hard to find. With older children and teens, the truth sometimes becomes more elusive. Here are a few ideas to help guide your children on the correct honesty path:

Reward the Truth

As parents we are often quick to scold. Sometimes we aren't always so quick to praise. Reward honesty with loads of praise and hugs. It will build self-confidence and reinforce the positive behavior. Plus a child can never get too much love.

The Hard Truth

Correct morals and purity of spirit always trump protecting the feelings of someone who is doing wrong. Wrong is always wrong. For instance, your son's best friend is cheating on tests and your son is fully aware. He has a duty to go to his friend and advise him to quit. He's hurting himself and cheating the others who have honestly studied. If he refuses, then your son would have to tell the teacher about what is going on. That is called the hard truth. Nobody wants to be put in that position. Teach your children to stand strong on the side of truth and doing what is right.

The Apple Doesn't Fall Far From the Tree

As is always the case, you are the role model. You do not want your child to hear you telling a lie or see you perform a dishonest act. Yes, you could enter the national park for free since there is no attendant. But the sign says \$5 dollars. Put your money in the slot and move along. Are these the traits you want to teach your children? Those little eyes and ears are always open.

Do Not Lead the Witness

Though it's tempting to test them, try to avoid asking questions that give your child a chance to be dishonest. You saw your daughter spill red juice on the couch. No need to ask, "Did you just spill your juice on the couch?" This leads her to believe she might have a way out and could possibly pass blame elsewhere. Just tell her to clean it up. This will help her when she has other opportunities to tell the truth.

Your Word Is Gold

The most important character trait a person can possess keeping and following through on promises made. This one thing alone will take a person very far in life. Teach your children to be people who consider their word gold. When they give it, they don't break it.

*Speak with honesty, think with sincerity,
act with integrity.*



Bible References:

Zacchaeus

Luke 19:1-10

Your kids (and you!) probably know the song about Zacchaeus, the wee little man who climbed up in a sycamore tree. But Zacchaeus' story has an important lesson about honesty! Zacchaeus was a tax collector, known for how rich he had become - likely by being dishonest and keeping some tax money for himself. But one day, Jesus came to Zacchaeus' town and Zacchaeus had the chance to meet him. In fact, Jesus went to his house!

What Zacchaeus did next was amazing! He told Jesus that he would give half of his possessions to the poor and that he would pay people back 4 times what he had cheated them. Not only does Zacchaeus see the error of his ways, but he has a total change of heart. He no longer wanted to live a dishonest life, but an honest one - because he came to know and believe in Jesus.

Watch the story:

<https://vimeo.com/57088533>