

What Signals Do You Give?

Preparing Your Heart to Teach Session 12:

How would people characterize you? Would they say you are neat or messy? Active or quiet? Nervous or composed? Joyful or sad? Dominant or responsive? How do they know these things about you? What are the cues they see that reveal your inner self?

We all give cues to people that tell them more about what we are like and how we relate. Jesus told his disciples in John 13:35, “By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” Jesus wanted his disciples to know that others are watching, and as they do, they’re picking up cues that tell a lot about who we are.

When you begin to look at the cues you give to others, you may discover that they aren’t representing the real person you want to be. Are you agitated in a discussion showing that you’re not really interested in that person? Or maybe you take irritations out on someone demonstrating that the issue you’re working on is more important than the person involved. The way you dress, give eye contact, and your voice tone and volume all give cues to others.

As you begin to evaluate those subtle signals, ask God to help you adjust them to demonstrate the kind of person he wants you to be.

What Children Learn in Session 12:

Honor and dishonor are demonstrated in subtle ways through cues that many children aren’t even aware of. Using the story of Paul and Silas in prison, children will learn how the things they do and say often tell a lot about who they are on the inside. Children will learn how to evaluate the honor cues they give to others. They learn that character is important and indicates what their heart really looks like.

A Summary of the Video Session 12:

In this session the Network Factor is described, a tool used to change the way families interact. All relationships have predictable patterns. Some are helpful and others are not. Parents are taught to look closely at the patterns in their family and encouraged to target the relationships that need more honor. Triangling happens in relationships when two people in conflict draw another one into the fray. Triangling happens more than many parents realize. Using the Network Factor, parents learn to identify negative relating patterns and replace them with honoring ones. *(parent training video series is optional)*

Read Along in the Book, “Say Goodbye to Whining, Complaining, and Bad Attitudes... In You and Your Kids”:

Pages 65-88 discuss the Network Factor and apply it to family life. You will learn how to pinpoint the dishonoring patterns in relationships and know where to challenge your family to develop honor.

Welcoming Activity

5-10 minutes

Coat of Arms

Photocopy the Activity Sheet for this lesson and have it available for children as they come in. Children should draw pictures in the spaces provided of fun things that happen in their family. Some ideas may be swimming together, going out to eat, a picture of a pet, watching a movie, going to the park, church, camping, or just driving in the car. When children are finished they could cut out the Coat of Arms, write their name in the banner and cut it out, and then paste the two on a new piece of construction paper.



Together Time

15-20 minutes

Use the thoughts and ideas below along with your own thoughts and the Bible to help children see the cues that give out to tell others about themselves.

Introduction:

Talk to children about listening with both eye balls. Many children will think this is funny but looking at someone when they say their words is a way of showing that you're interested. You might say, "How many of you look at your mom or dad when they talk to you? Why? Or Why not?" Attentiveness is one of those qualities that children can learn and practice at home.

Object Lesson:

Just put your finger on your nose. Without using words, try to get another child to do the same. Keep your finger on your nose as you try to get all the children to follow suit. When you have all the children with their fingers on their noses, then say, "We did it! How did you know that I wanted you to put your finger on

your nose? I want you to be watching me the rest of today. I'm going to put my finger on my nose and we'll see if we can get everyone to do it without talking about it.

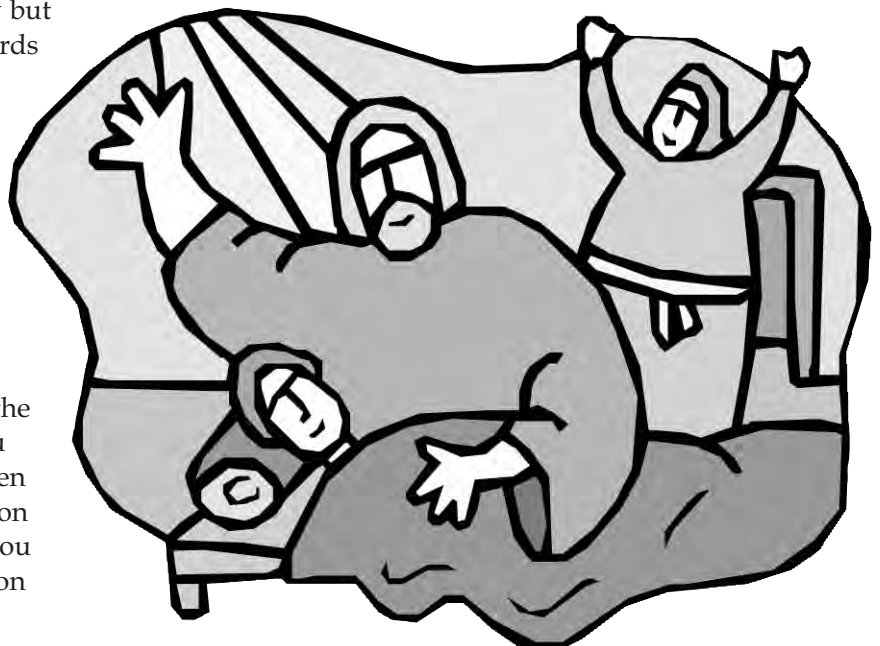
Bible Story with Application:

Read Acts 16:16-36. Use the ideas you learn from the story and the thoughts that follow to tell the Bible story, teaching the children about the signals they give that reveal what kind of a person they really are.

Paul was just trying to help. He healed a little girl who was possessed by a demon. But some of the townspeople didn't like it. They were able to make money off the fact that she was sick. They dragged Paul and Silas to the authorities. They wanted Paul and Silas thrown in jail right away. So that's what happened.

The jailer put Paul and Silas into the prison. It was dark and probably smelled bad. He put chains on their arms and locked the prison doors. Paul and Silas were stuck. I think that jailer had to listen to a lot of complaining and whining from prisoners over the years. I'm sure some prisoners were mad that they were in jail and they took it out on the jailer. But not Paul and Silas. They were different. The jailer could see that they didn't act like everyone else.

Instead of whining and complaining about being



in prison, all the other prisoners were quiet, listening to Paul and Silas singing songs to God. In fact, the way that these two men lived seemed very different to the jailer. He had never in his life seen anything like it. He began asking himself, "Who are these men and who is their God?"

About midnight, while Paul and Silas were still singing, there was an earthquake. How would you like to be inside a prison with your arms chained to a wall behind bars during an earthquake? You'd be stuck. You wouldn't be able to get out. That would be a scary experience, but Paul and Silas trusted God so even when things were scary, they responded differently than others would. The jailer was impressed.

The earthquake shook the ground and the prison doors came loose and the chains came off the prisoners. The jailer was afraid. He knew that if all the prisoners escaped, the authorities would be angry with him and would punish him. He decided to take out his sword and kill himself.

Just then Paul yelled, "Don't hurt yourself. We're all still here." The jailer couldn't believe it. Could it be? Why wouldn't Paul and the other prisoners just run out? But they didn't. Paul and Silas knew that God wanted to do something special in this jailer's heart. That evening the jailer accepted Jesus into his life. He wanted to be different than all the rest of the people he knew and he saw that Paul and Silas were different. The jailer wanted Jesus to change him as well.

The jailer brought Paul and Silas out of the prison to his house where he washed their wounds and took care of them the rest of the night. I wonder what they talked about. I'm sure that the jailer and his family were eager to grow in their relationships with God. Several years later, Paul was in another prison in Rome and he thought about the jailer and others who had become Christians in Philippi so he wrote them a letter and in it he said, "Conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ." (Philippians 1:27)

One of the reasons that the Philippian jailer became a Christian is because he saw that the way Paul and Silas lived was different. They gave off cues that said they didn't act the same as

other people did. They didn't whine or complain about life. They didn't get angry and say mean things the way others did. All of those actions were little messages that told the jailer that these men were different.

What kind of cues do you give that tell what kind of person you are? Are you a whiner or complainer? Do you argue a lot? Are you kind and think of what would make others feel good? Those little messages you give by your actions tell people a lot about the kind of person you are.

Put your finger on your nose and see how long it takes children to see it and respond.

Our Bible verse gives us some ideas of how we can think of others.

Bible Verse:

1 Thessalonians 5:11 says, "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing."

Prayer:

Lord, help us see how the small things we do show people what we're really like. Teach us how to make the small things count so others can see you through our lives. Amen.

Session 12

Craft and Activity Time

15-20 minutes

Encouraging Words Chain

Supplies Needed:

- Construction paper
- Tape
- Pens
- Scissors

Instructions:

Have each child cut 5-10 strips of construction paper of different colors about one inch wide and eight inches long. Have them write on the chain pieces words of encouragement like "Thank you," "Please," "I'm sorry," "Can I help you," "I like your shirt," "This is a great dinner," "I love you," "You are fun to be with," etc. With younger children, you could let them put encouragement stickers on. (Encouragement stickers may be found in any teacher store or school supply store. They say things like "good job" "well done" etc.) Tape or staple the ends together, interlocking them into a chain. Encourage children to take the

chain home and hang it up somewhere as a reminder to say encouraging things to others.

Remind children that kids in the Honor Club encourage others.

Activity Group Puzzle

For Older Children: Photocopy the puzzle verse at the end of this lesson onto cardstock. One puzzle for every 3 or 4 students. Cut the puzzle up into 8-12 pieces depending on the age of the children and put the pieces into an envelope. Divide the children into groups of three or four and give each group an envelope of puzzle pieces. Encourage the children to work as a team to put the puzzle together. Once assembled, have several children read the verse. Discuss how this verse applies to family life.

For Younger Children: Play the Simon Says game replacing "Simon" with "Mommy." Teacher says, "Mommy says turn around." If I don't say "Mommy says," then don't do it. One of the keys to obedience is to listen carefully.

End the game time by putting your finger on your nose and enjoy watching children see and respond.



Game

15-20 minutes

Choose a child to be "it." The rest of the class has to make this person laugh and the person who is "it" tries to not laugh. Children can make noise, tell jokes, make faces, anything. The only thing they can't do is touch the person — so no tick-

ling! As you play, watch to see if you can guess when this person is about to loose it. Talk about what signals come before the laughter. Then take turns being "it."

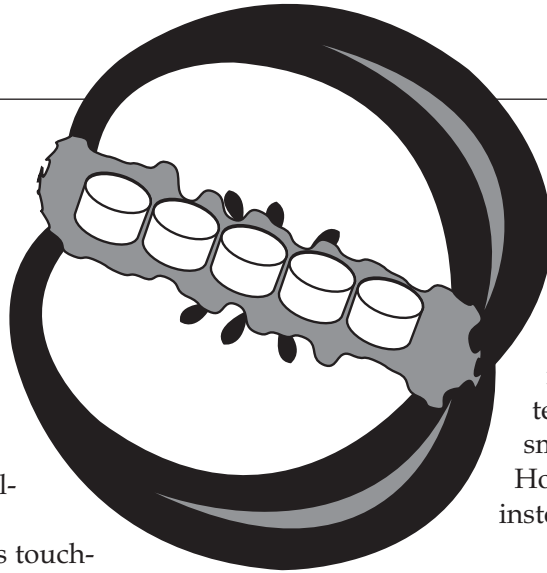
Review the Bible story and talk about encouraging others.

Snack

5-10 minutes

Apple Faces

Give children sliced red apples, cake frosting, and mini-marshmallows. Each child can arrange two apple slices touch-



ing each other with the peels to the outside (the lips). Next, put a narrow spread of frosting overlapping both apples on the place where they meet (the gums). Then put mini-marshmallows along the frosting (the teeth). Children can make and eat the smiley faces. Talk about how the Kids Honor Club focuses on being happy instead of whining and complaining.



Review and Close

5-10 minutes

Ask for a few volunteers to act out some emotions. See who can act the maddest and at the same time say, "I love you." Now look excited like you just opened a present and say, "I'm mad

at you." Is that hard? The point? Sometimes we try to say something nice but we say it in such a grumpy way that it doesn't come out very nice. Attitude is so important. If you can have the right attitude, you'll be able to talk about even the most difficult things.

**Therefore
encourage one
another and
build each
other up, just
as in fact you
are doing.**

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Welcoming Activity Coat of Arms

