

Lesson
26

Choosing the Right Gives Me a Happy Feeling

Purpose To help each child understand that doing what is right makes us happy while doing what is wrong makes us unhappy.

Preparation

1. Prayerfully study Luke 15:11–24.
2. Prepare to sing or say the words to “Smiles” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 267) and “Choose the Right Way” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 160). The words to these songs are included at the back of the manual.
3. Materials needed:
 - a. A Bible.
 - b. A small stone or bean for each child.
 - c. The smiling/frowning face from lesson 22.
 - d. A pencil or crayon for each child.
 - e. A large paper circle for each child.
 - f. Picture 2-46, The Prodigal Son (Gospel Art Picture Kit 220; 62155).
4. Make the necessary preparations for any enrichment activities you want to use.

Note: Remember that children younger than eight years old are not yet accountable and do not need to repent of sin. Encourage the children to do what is right, but do not make them feel guilty for things they have done.

Suggested Lesson Development

Invite a child to give the opening prayer.

Follow up with the children if you encouraged them to do something during the week.

Doing Wrong Makes Us Uncomfortable

Attention activity

Have a child remove a shoe and place a small stone or bean inside it. Have the child replace the shoe and take a few steps around the room. Ask the child to tell the other children how his or her foot feels.

Point out that when things are not right, we feel uncomfortable and unhappy, and we think a lot about what is wrong.

Ask the child to remove the object and walk around the room again. Let the child tell the class how much better his or her foot feels.

Give a stone or bean to each child, and let those who want to participate put the stones or beans in their shoes. Have them stand and take a few steps to feel how uncomfortable the object is. Gather up the stones or beans and have the children stand again to see how good their feet feel when the object is gone.

Compare the stone or bean to a wrong action. When we have done something wrong, we are uncomfortable and unhappy. But when we are sorry for doing

wrong and try to correct our wrong choice, it is like taking the stone or bean out of our shoe: the uncomfortable feeling leaves and we can be happy again.

Explain that today's lesson is going to be about replacing uncomfortable feelings with happy feelings.

We Can Replace Unhappy Feelings with Happy Feelings

- How do you feel when you do something wrong?

Story and discussion

Tell in your own words the following story about a girl who did something wrong and felt unhappy. Ask the children to listen to find out what she did to replace her unhappy feeling with a happy feeling.

Angela's friend Maria had a wonderful set of play food with tiny fruits and vegetables. Angela loved to play with this food and wished it were hers. One day when Maria was not looking, Angela placed a handful of the tiny fruits and vegetables in her pocket. Angela took this food home without telling anyone about it.

- Do you think Angela had fun playing with the toy food she had taken?

Angela could not play with the toy food openly because she did not want her mother to know she had taken it. She hid the fruits and vegetables under her bed, and she had to crawl under the bed when she wanted to play with them. Angela felt unhappy inside even though she now had the toys she had wanted.

- What could Angela do to change her unhappy feeling?

Compliment the children on their appropriate suggestions, and explain what Angela did:

Angela's mother noticed her playing underneath the bed and asked what she was doing. Angela showed her mother the play food and explained how unhappy she felt. Angela's mother helped her understand what she had to do to feel happy again. Angela took the toy food back to Maria and told Maria she was sorry for taking it. After returning the toy food, Angela felt happy and relieved. She was glad she could correct her wrong choice.

- What did Angela do that was wrong?

Discussion

Display the smiling/frowning face drawing. Show the unhappy face and then the happy face.

- Which face shows how Angela felt after she took the toy food? (Invite a child to turn the drawing to the unhappy face.)
- What did Angela do to correct her wrong choice?
- Which face shows how Angela felt after she returned the food? (Invite a child to turn the drawing to the happy face.)

Tell the children that we all sometimes do things that are wrong. Doing wrong things makes us unhappy. But when we say we are sorry and try to correct our wrong choices, we can feel happy again.

Jesus Christ Wants Us to Feel Happy

Teacher presentation

Explain that saying we are sorry and trying to correct our wrong choices are two of the steps of repentance.

Have the children repeat the word *repentance* a few times.

Explain that Jesus Christ wants us to choose the right, but he knows we will sometimes do wrong things. He has made it possible for us to repent when we do wrong things. He has promised that if we repent, we will be forgiven for our mistakes and feel happy again. Repentance is an important part of being a member of Jesus' church.

Remind the children that doing something wrong is like having a stone in our shoe. We feel uncomfortable. Repentance is like taking the stone out of the shoe. It feels good to have the problem gone.

Scripture story

Show the Bible and explain that in this book of scripture the Savior tells a story about a son who chose to do something wrong and then repented and did what was right. Ask the children to listen to what the son did and how his father helped him.

In your own words, tell the story found in Luke 15:11–24. Show picture 2-46, The Prodigal Son, at an appropriate time.

Explain that sometimes this story is called "The Prodigal Son." Tell the children that the word *prodigal* means wasteful. Explain that the younger son wanted his money because he did not want to work hard anymore. He wanted to do whatever he wanted. When he got the money, he wasted it. He spent it on things that were not good.

Explain that when the son ran out of money, he realized he had been foolish and had done wrong things. He decided to return to his father and tell him that he was sorry. He felt that he was no longer good enough to be called his father's son, but he decided to return home and ask to become one of his father's servants.

- How do you think the son felt when he realized he had done wrong things?

Read aloud Luke 15:20–24.

- What did the father do when his son came home?
- How do you think the son felt when his father greeted him?

Explain that just as this young man's father was happy that the young man changed from doing wrong things to doing right things, our parents and our Heavenly Father are happy when we try to correct our wrong choices. We are also happy when we choose to do what is right.

We Can Have Happy Feelings When We Correct Our Wrong Choices

Activity

Give each child a paper circle and a pencil or crayon. Let the children draw their own smiling/frowning faces. Show the completed smiling/frowning face so they can copy it, and help them as needed.

Describe some situations in which someone has made a wrong choice. Have the children hold up their paper faces to show how each person felt after making the wrong choice. Then ask how the person could correct the wrong choice, and have the children use the paper faces to show how each person would feel after doing so. Use the following examples or create some of your own:

1. Thomas climbed over a fence on his way home from school and tore his best pants. He knew his mother would be upset because she had told him many times not to climb the fence in his school clothes.
 - What should Thomas do?
2. Karin's mother gave her two pieces of candy, one for her and one for her sister. While her sister was gone, Karin ate both pieces of candy.
 - What should Karin do?
3. Ben went to his friend's house to play, but his friend was not home. As Ben was leaving, he saw one of his friend's toys in the yard. Ben took the toy home and played with it.
 - What should Ben do?
4. Rachel found a purse on her way to school. Later when a girl asked if she had seen the purse, Rachel said, "No."
 - What should Rachel do?
5. Philip was playing in the backyard with his brother. His brother did something that Philip didn't like, and Philip hit him and made him cry.
 - What should Philip do now?

Song Have the children hold up their smiling/frowning faces and sing or say the words to "Smiles," turning the paper faces when appropriate.

Summary

Testimony Bear testimony to the children that we can have happy feelings when we choose the right. We can also have happy feelings when we correct our wrong choices. Explain that as we learn to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ more closely, we will make fewer wrong choices.

Suggest that the children take their paper faces home and tell their families what they learned about happy and unhappy feelings.

Song Sing or say the words to "Choose the Right Way" with the children.

Invite a child to give the closing prayer. Remind the child to ask Heavenly Father to help the children recognize and correct their wrong choices.

Enrichment Activities

Choose from the following activities those that will work best for the children in your class. You can use them in the lesson itself or as a review or summary. For additional guidance, see "Class Time" in "Helps for the Teacher."

1. Using the situations you described in the section "We Can Have Happy Feelings When We Correct Our Wrong Choices," help the children think of how the wrong choices could be prevented or avoided. Let them act out their solutions.

2. Sing or say the words to "If You're Happy" (*Children's Songbook*, p. 266), helping the children make up new verses and actions about happy choices.

For example:

If you're happy and you know it, help your friends (*clap hands*)!
If you're happy and you know it, help your friends (*clap hands*)!
If you're happy and you know it, then choose the right and show it.
If you're happy and you know it, help your friends (*clap hands*)!

Other possibilities:

tell the truth (*touch mouth twice*)
share your toys (*hold one hand out, then the other*)
say your prayers (*fold arms and bow head*)

You may want to end by singing a final verse with all your ideas combined:

If you're happy and you know it, help your friends (*clap hands*), tell the truth (*touch mouth twice*), share your toys (*hold one hand out, then the other*), and say your prayers (*fold arms and bow head*)!

3. Have the children sit in a circle. Ask a review question and then toss a beanbag or other soft object to the child whom you want to answer the question. After the child has answered, have him or her toss the beanbag back to you. Continue until each child has answered at least one question.

Possible questions:

- How did your foot feel with the stone or bean in your shoe?
- How do we feel when we do something wrong?
- Why didn't Angela enjoy playing with the stolen toy food?
- What did Angela do to change her unhappy feeling?
- How do we feel when we try to correct a wrong choice?