

God is Love Bible Curriculum

Unit One: Exposing Satan's Lies...

Lesson 1: Character: the Important Thing

Memory Verse:

The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart. (1 Samuel 16:7)

Jerry was plagued by a neighborhood bully. He liked to walk around the neighborhood, but he dreaded meeting this bully. One day Jerry met the bully despite his attempts to avoid him. The bully asked Jerry what the problem was. Jerry had to admit that he was afraid of the bully, that the bully did mean things to him.

But today the bully was nice. He even went so far as to tell Jerry that the boy he feared was his twin brother. He was the nice one, his twin was the mean one. Guess what? Jerry didn't believe that story, and he continued to avoid his tormentor.

Can we believe someone will be nice to us all the time just because they're being nice now? Not always. People are prone to lie about themselves. Some people lie about themselves so much they begin to believe their own lies and think of themselves as good people when, in fact, they aren't very pleasant to be around.

The things we can see about each other are our behaviors; the things we do and say. People who want to have influence over others often act one way and say the "right" things to get people to trust them. But when they think they aren't being seen, or when they're in a group of "friends," you see the real person show through.

This lesson's memory verse comes from the story of Samuel, when he came to Bethlehem to anoint one of Jesse's sons to be the King of Israel. Jesse brought his sons to Samuel starting with the oldest, Eliab. Samuel looked at him and thought that he was looking at the next king.

When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, "Surely the LORD's anointed stands here before the LORD."

But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." (1 Samuel 16:6, 7)

Probably a short time later Jesse's older sons were called into service in Saul's army. The Israelites were fighting their next-door neighbors, the Philistines. Jesse sent David to bring some provisions to his brothers and their commanders.

When David got to the battlefield he saw Goliath boasting and calling for an Israelite to come out and fight him. David asked the men around him what was going on and what would be the reward to kill the giant. Word got to Eliab that David was in camp and asking these questions.

When Eliab, David's oldest brother, heard him speaking with the men, he burned with anger at

him and asked, “Why have you come down here? And with whom did you leave those few sheep in the desert? I know how conceited you are and how wicked your heart is; you came down only to watch the battle.” (1 Samuel 17:28)

You see how cruel and jealous Eliab really was? He did something you will find people do often. When he saw something he didn't like he called it wicked. David wasn't the bad actor here. He was doing what his human father had told him to do. When he later killed Goliath he was doing what he believed his heavenly Father told him to do.

See how Eliab tried to belittle his brother. The Israelites considered the job of tending sheep to be one of the lowest jobs one could do. That's why David, the youngest son, had been given the task. By mentioning the sheep Eliab reminded his brother how “unimportant” he was.

Did Eliab's words indicate the truth of the situation? Not at all; they were lies. David obeyed, and David told the truth. Which one do you think pleased God more? Can you begin to see why God would later say of David:

“I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do. (Acts 13:22)

Does that mean David never sinned? Of course not! One time David took another man's wife. Then, trying to cover up what he had done (lying about it), he had the man killed. David broke the seventh, the ninth, and the sixth commandments.

David wasn't like some other men who did similar things. David admitted he was guilty when the prophet confronted him. You can read his response to God in Psalm 51.

This revealed who David was on the inside; what he was really like. His behavior was wrong, and he paid dearly for his mistake for the rest of his life. But his heart was with God, and he was willing to admit he'd acted wrongly when God told him what God thought of it.

David didn't always ACT like a man after God's heart, but he WAS like God inside. That's where God looked.

Let's make a statement here that you will find the truth of as you study the Bible. when the Bible talks about someone's heart it means their character; who they really are on the inside. We'll learn more about this in our next lesson.

Possible Thought Papers:

1. Why do you think Eliab would not have been a good king?
2. The sixth commandment says “do no murder.” Why did God let David kill Goliath?
3. Look at David just before he “saw” Bathsheba. Can you come up with things he might have done to avoid the temptation she presented?