

TOOLS FOR PARENTS



The Grecian Urn

QUESTIONS FOR CUBS

NOTE TO PARENTS/TEACHERS:

The goal of this questions-and-answers section is to initiate interaction between you and your kids. Please do not just read the questions and answers to your kids. These answers are given for you at an adult level to think about and to process. Once that is accomplished, you can then translate them into appropriate answers for your kids.

LESSON

The value of honesty

KEY VERSE

"A truthful witness saves lives, but he who utters lies is treacherous." (Prov. 14:25)

EAR CHECK (STORY COMPREHENSION)

- Q: How did the urn (vase) break?
A: *It fell off of Ned's head as he was trying to balance it*
- Q: Whose lives were threatened because of Ned's sin?
A: *The rats: Mahdavi and Rick*
- Q: What did Eunice McGruff say she saw in the Collins' mansion?
A: *She said she saw a rat*
- Q: Paw Paw Chuck told C.J. that sin has many effects. Can you name one?
A: *Your relationship with God will be affected; you may experience loss of friendships*
- Q: Who did Eunice McGruff get Mrs. Collins to fire?
A: *Katie, Mrs. Collins' housekeeper*

HEART CHECK (SPIRITUAL APPLICATION)

Q: What are the various levels of lying?

- A: *Lying doesn't have levels. There are no white lies or fibs. There aren't accidental lies, simple misrepresentations, or just withholding of the truth. Lies are all the same, and therefore, they are all rebellion against God.*

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The notion that some lies matter less than others is a lie from Satan, whom the Bible calls the “father of lies” (Jn. 8:44). He knows how damaging lying can be, and he loves to confuse us about it. Lies hurt not only the one who is lied to but also the liar and his or her relationship with God. Take this seriously and learn to hate—yes, actually hate—lies. God does (Prov. 6:16-19).

QUESTIONS FOR CUBS

Q: What should I do if someone lies to me?

A: First, forgive him or her. That doesn’t mean you say, “It’s OK.” It’s not OK to lie. But you need to forgive the person anyway.

Second, understand that you may feel like you can’t trust that person anymore, and that’s normal—it’s even healthy. Forgiving doesn’t mean that you turn a blind eye to sin. If someone blamed you for something he or she did, you would be wise not to trust this person again until he or she has proven that he or she has changed (Prov. 14:5-9). You might even be the one to try to help him or her change. Help the person see that lying is damaging and hurtful. Once he or she has indicated a change of heart, then you should give him or her another chance to prove that he or she is trustworthy.

“I” CHECK (PERSONAL APPLICATION)

1. Ned let his friend take the fall for something he did and then lied about it so he wouldn’t get in trouble. If you had a friend who did something like that, do you think you could continue to be his or her friend? Would you tell someone what your friend did, knowing that he or she would get into trouble? Or would you wait to see if your friend decided to tell the truth by him- or herself? Would you tell someone what your friend did if you knew for certain that telling would end your friendship?
2. When was the last time you were dishonest? Why did you choose not to be honest? Was the truth discovered? Did you suffer any consequences for being dishonest? Has your experience taught you anything about honesty? Do you think you’ll do things differently as a result?
3. Read the key verse above. Can you think of a situation in which being truthful might actually save someone’s life?
4. Some people think that telling little lies or lies that make people feel good (sometimes called “white lies”) isn’t sinful. But God takes lying very seriously. Read Acts 5:1-11. In your own words, explain the sin Ananias and Sapphira committed.

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DIRECTOR'S NOTES

There are two constant goals for the creative team of Paws & Tales. One is to teach truth to kids. The other is to find new ways to remind kids of the truth they already know and give them additional reasons to believe it. This episode falls under the second category.

Every kid has probably heard that he or she shouldn't lie. If that were all we needed to say, then there would be no more lying. One of the challenges of imparting spiritual truth is to get the student to "own" it. This is not something that occurs automatically. We can learn a fact and know it to be true but not yet own it. This secondary level of understanding occurs when we use the fact to help organize our lives. When this happens, we own the fact. It is good to know that a red light means "stop," but it can be tragic if we do not own this fact. If we only know this fact intellectually, we will be tempted to run red lights whenever the mood strikes us. We might come to hate red lights because they are constantly telling us what we cannot do—and who doesn't hate that? To own this fact is harder and takes more work. It requires us to more deeply understand the purpose, function, and intent of a red light. If we're wise, we'll come to see that the red light does not keep us from any good thing. On the contrary, it is a gift of protection!

How do we get our kids (or ourselves) to own the fact that God wants us to always tell the truth? What would it look like if they (or we) did own this concept? I would suggest that we help our kids to understand this commandment more deeply. I wanted this episode to put the various effects of Ned's sin on display. Ned may have gotten away with his sin, but it damaged his relationship with Eunice McGruff, C.J., and Mrs. Collins. Worse than that, it affected others that Ned didn't even know about. His dishonesty almost caused the death of the rats Rick and Mahdavi. Ned's sin caused a rippling effect, like tossing a stone into a still pond. It is impossible to stop these ripples. We can't even know all of the places they'll go. Truth-telling is a commandment that looks like an annoying red light to Ned. All of Ned's excuses for not stepping up are common, and our kids have likely used some of them. Ned only makes them because he does not understand truth-telling much at all. If Ned were to decide to obey this concept himself, he would take a stand against all forms of lying and dishonesty. He would know deeply that though it looks like a quick and easy way out of a tight spot, deceit only causes worse things to happen to him and those around him, including those of whom he may never be aware.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Carl'.

David B. Carl
Creative Director
Paws & Tales