

# Youth group @ Home

Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2020

## **Christian Character – Session 2: Being trustworthy**

Good morning and welcome to session 2 of Youth Group @ Home. Each week we are going to look at a different element of what builds Christian character. Last week we looked at being peaceful, this week we are going to explore how we can be more trustworthy. Why not go through today's session with family or friends? You could always Zoom call some friends and go through the activities together.

### **Activity**

To start us off thinking about trustworthiness, go through the list of people below and next to each person mark, on a scale of 1-10, how trustworthy you think that person is. 1 = Not trustworthy at all 10 = Completely trustworthy.

- Youth leaders
- Teachers
- Police
- Clergy
- Doctors
- Estate agents
- Architects
- Builders
- Plumbers
- Shop assistants

What made you feel trusting or distrusting of the each of the above people? Was it past experience? Expectations because of the kind of work they do? Their reputation? Or another reason entirely?

What are some of the assumptions that we make about trusting others?

Psalm 115:9-11 says, '*All you Israelites, trust in the Lord – he is their help and shield. House of Aaron, trust in the Lord – he is their help and shield. You who fear him, trust in the Lord – he is their help and shield.*'

Now, this verse may sound a little confusing – we aren't Israelites, and we aren't from the House of Aaron, and the idea of being someone who fears the Lord doesn't exactly fit with our idea of a loving relationship between us and God – but, let me explain. Firstly, the word 'fear' doesn't just mean to be scared or afraid, another meaning for the word 'fear' is reverence. I'll tell you more on that in a moment.

Secondly, what this verse is saying is *not* that we should be scared of God, or that God will only help and protect us if we are Israelites or from the House of Aaron, rather, it is saying that God will help

and shield those who follow Him. And when this verse refers to ‘you who fear him’ it doesn’t mean that we should be scared of God, it is reminding us that we should have reverence and respect for God – God is a loving father and friend to us, but we must never lose sight of the fact that God is also a mighty, majestic king of all the world and He has immense power.

Have a think about how trustworthy you think God is compared to how trustworthy you think people are.

The Bible passage we have just looked at, tells us that we should trust in God. He will always protect us, always help us, always be there for us, and always love us. God is completely trustworthy. He will not lie to us or be dishonest, so you can 100% trust God.

God has never let me down, but like I said last week when we looked at peace, God doesn’t always help us in the way we would like or expect, but He will always take care of us and He *does* always know what is best for us – even if it doesn’t feel that way sometimes!

## **Activity**

For this you will need: Two pieces of paper and different coloured pens.

- 1) Take your piece of paper and write the word ‘trust’ in the middle of it.
- 2) Grab a different colour pen and write words or phrases around the edge of the paper that describe what ‘trust’ means to you.

Here are some of the things we came up with when we thought about the word ‘trust’ – Allowing a friend to look after something that is important to you, falling backwards into someone’s arms because you trust that they will catch you... See how many you can come up with.

Now take another piece of paper and write the words ‘not trust’ in the middle. Do the same thing as you’ve just done, but this time write down all things you can think of that represent distrust for you.

Some of the things we thought of are – feeling suspicious of someone, not feeling safe around someone, not allowing someone into your home because you don’t know what they might do... See how many you can come up with.

## **Think**

Quietly in your head, think about someone you really trust, maybe a parent, grandparent, or close friend. Now consider why you trust this person. Do you trust them because they have always been reliable – they don’t let you down? Do they make you feel safe? Do they protect you?

Now, think about someone you don’t trust. Why? Have they let you down? Are they unpredictable?

Having thought about that, take a look at the sheet below.

# Trust the Evidence

In each of these cases, which one person appears untrustworthy? Why?

1 →

These are the expense claims submitted by four people for a particular year? Who would you not trust and why?

Jackson	£1,512	<input type="radio"/>
Jenkins	£2,767	<input type="radio"/>
Johnson	£1,459	<input type="radio"/>
Jones	£1,367	<input type="radio"/>

2 →

Four students wrote the following answers to a question for their English Homework which asked "What is a verb? Put the answer in your own words?". Based on the answers given, who do you think might not be trustworthy?

- |          |  |                       |
|----------|--|-----------------------|
| Jackson: | "A verb is a word which tells us what is being done or happening. It is an action sort of word." | <input type="radio"/> |
| Jenkins: | "A verb is a word which completes a sentence by joining the person and what they do"             | <input type="radio"/> |
| Johnson: | "A verb is a word what says what is happening"   | <input type="radio"/> |
| Jones:   | "A verb is a part of speech which expresses action, occurrence or being"                         | <input type="radio"/> |

3 →

A crime had taken place on the evening of March 14th. The following four people were asked to tell the police where they were at 9:30pm that evening. Based on the responses given below, who would you be least likely to trust?

- |          |  |                       |
|----------|--|-----------------------|
| Jackson: | "I was at my grans all night. You could call her. I've got her number here." | <input type="radio"/> |
| Jenkins: | "I was at home with my mates playing on the Xbox. Ask them."                 | <input type="radio"/> |
| Johnson: | "I went out for a walk by myself."   | <input type="radio"/> |
| Jones:   | "I was in my room. Mum grounded me for being lippy to my sister."            | <input type="radio"/> |

## **Think**

Having gone through the sheet above, think about which person on the sheet seems more trustworthy and why.

Hopefully, you will have had a good think about who seems most trustworthy and now have a good idea of who you would be most likely to trust. Now, have a think about these points...

If you can, why not discuss these questions with friends or family?

1. Jenkins' expenses seem much higher than everyone else's.
2. Jones' answer is copied from a dictionary. The errors in the spelling and grammar of the other three suggest they are more original.
3. Johnson's alibi cannot be checked with anyone else.

There may be all sorts of reasons why the above three people are actually honest, trustworthy people, but the evidence we have been given, points to them not being so, by comparison with the other people.

Untrustworthiness is almost always comparative. Can you think of a time when someone has seemed untrustworthy or dishonest, but actually, they were honest?

## **Bible Study**

For this you will need a Bible, alternatively, you can look up the Bible passage on a phone or laptop.

We are going to be looking at Luke 16:1-12.

First of all, read verses 1-8. Now have a think about how you feel about what the man in this passage did?

Think about the fact that the man was commended for his shrewdness (this means: Showing good powers of judgement) not for his dishonesty.

Secondly, read verses 9-10. Can you think of a time when someone has trusted you with something big? How did knowing that they trusted you make you feel?

Let's think about how someone would feel if they were innocent, but there was no evidence to support their innocence, and because they had been untrustworthy before, no one would trust them. Maybe you can think of a time when someone blamed you for something you didn't do and they wouldn't believe you when you told them otherwise?

A reputation for trustworthiness will stand you in good stead on those occasions when you are innocent but there is not evidence to support your behaviour. As Christians we should strive to have a reputation of being trustworthy and honest. This won't always be easy, sometimes telling a lie might seem easier than telling the truth, but verse 12 of today's passage said, '*And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own?*'

In the same way, if we take the easier option and choose to be dishonest sometimes, who will be able to trust us with anything? Who will be able to tell when we are being honest and when we are being dishonest?

## **Remember**

Here are some key points for you to remember:

- 1) God is 100% trustworthy and He is always with you and will take care of you.
- 2) Sometimes it can be difficult to trust when we can't see any evidence that something or someone is trustworthy, but when it comes to God, there is a whole Bible full of evidence that He can be trusted – just like Psalm 115:9-11 said, all of the Israelites could trust in God, because they knew that God would help and protect them.
- 3) God wants us to be trustworthy too. So maybe, this week, you could have a think about some ways that you could build a more trustworthy character?

## **Prayers**

As we come to the end of our session on trustworthiness, let's take some time to pray for those we put our trust in, those who find it difficult to trust, and that God would help us to become more trustworthy too.

*Dear God,*

*We pray for those people in society who find it difficult to trust (say the names of the people you are thinking of)*

*We pray for those who put their trust in us. Help us to be worthy of their trust. Help us to be honest even when it is hard to be.*

*We pray for people who have been let down by times when we have been dishonest or untrustworthy (you may want to pray for a specific situation) Please help them to forgive us, and please help us to be forgiving to those who let us down at times.*

*We pray for the people who we put our trust in. We pray for the people who are in positions of leadership; especially the government and queen, please give them wisdom as they lead our country.*

*We also pray for all of the NHS workers, who people entrust their lives to. Please help as they work hard to save lives. (Say the names of other people you trust in)*

*Please God, help us to be wise about who we put our trust in. Please lead us and guide us. Help us to remember that you are always with us and love us no matter what.*

*Amen.*

Remember, you can pray anytime – day or night – God is always listening to you and He loves to hear your voice.

We really hope you enjoyed this session. If you have questions you want to ask, or want to request a certain topic for a future session, you can email me: [Freya@Bedhampton.Church](mailto:Freya@Bedhampton.Church).