

THE PERSON AND LIFE OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

Character Lesson Seventeen

RIGHTEOUS

Definition:

Meeting the standards of what is right or just (morally right).

Examples and/or Questions to Ask the Children:

1. During a test at school, your friend asks you for the answer to a test question. Are you righteous if you give the answer to your friend?
2. You find a wallet on the ground - if you are righteous you return the wallet to the owner, or give it to your mom, teacher, etc.

Verse:

"We should live soberly and righteously and godly in the present age, awaiting the blessed hope, even the appearing of the glory of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ."
Titus 2:12b-13

Story: "Bee Right" taken from A Hive of Busy Bees, see attached copy.

Craft Ideas:

Coloring a picture of "Bee" with words "*Bee Right* in all your ways."

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STORY - BEE RIGHT

Joe, Henry, and Charles went to elementary school together. They were very good friends. When they were about fourteen, Joe and Henry began to go out nights. It was always late when they got home. Charles stayed at home after school and did his homework, just as he had always done.

Charles always knew his lessons, while Joe and Henry got bad grades.

When test time came, the boys begged Charles to help them. "No," said Charles firmly, "I will never do anything like that. My mom says I must be right; and I mean to be."

"Aw," said Henry, "your mother will never know."

"I say it is okay to give a friend help on a test," grumbled Joe.

"It would be cheating," said Charles quietly, "or helping you to, and that would be just as bad." Then he turned to his own work, and began to write diligently.

Charles passed all his tests with very good grades, and of course, Joe and Henry failed.

Later, the boys were mean to Charles. They called him all sorts of names.

Mother knew, by Charles' sad face, that something was wrong. "What is it, son?" she asked; and Charles told her what had happened. She told him how glad she was that he would not do wrong. She was proud of him.

"I shall never be ashamed of you," she said, "as long as you try to be right. Sometimes you will find it rather hard; but just wait a few years, and you will see that it pays."

Charles had been almost discouraged; but Mother's words made him feel quite strong and brave again. The next time he saw the boys, he looked straight into their faces, unashamed and unafraid. They dropped their eyes, and hurried away as quickly as they could. They did not bother Charles again. The principal heard what happened, and had punished Joe and Henry.

When it was summer time, the boys began to think about earning a little money. Henry was passing the drug store one day, and he saw a sign in the window---"Help Wanted. Apply in Person." He went into the store, and asked for the job.

The owner took him to a little room. "Here," he said, "is a chest of nails and bolts. You may sort them."

Henry worked for a while, and then he said to himself, "What a boring job!" He went back into the store and said to the owner, "If that's all you have for me to do, I don't want the job."

"Very well," said the owner, "that is all I have for you to do now." He paid Henry for the work he had done, and Henry went home.

The owner went back to the little room, and found bolts and nails scattered all over the floor. He put them back in the chest. He then hung his sign in the window again.

The next day Joe passed by and saw the sign. He went in and asked for the job. The owner took him to the little room and showed him the chest of nails, and told him to sort them.

When the boy had worked a while, he went to the owner and said, "Those rusty old nails are no good. Why don't you let me throw them away? I don't like this job anyway."

"Okay," said the owner; and he paid Joe for what he had done and let him go. As he put the nails and bolts back in the chest he said to himself "I am willing to pay more than this to find a person who tries to be right."

Later, Joe and Henry walked down the street, and they saw the same sign in the window.

"Guess he doesn't want help very bad," said Joe. "That's no job--sorting those old rusty things. Did you find anything in the chest besides bolts and nails, Henry?"

"I'm not telling everything I found," said Henry with a laugh.

Joe looked up, puzzled and a little alarmed. "Now I wonder--" he began--but stopped suddenly and talked about something else.

A few days later, Charles passed by the drug store and saw the sign in the window. He went in and told the owner that he would like to have the job.

"Are Joe and Henry friends of yours?" asked the owner, looking at him sharply.

"Oh, no, sir," replied Charles quickly. "We used to be good friends, but something happened that I don't like to tell. They wouldn't have anything to do with me afterward."

"I'm glad to hear that," said the owner. "I think you're the one I want."

For two or three hours Charles worked steadily; now and then whistling a snatch of tune. Then he went to the owner and told him he had finished the job.

The owner went to the little room to see how Charles had done his work. The boy had found some boxes lying about, and he placed the bolts in one, the nails in another, and the screws in a third.

"And see what I found!" exclaimed Charles. "It was lying under those old bolts in the bottom of the chest." He gave the owner a five-dollar bill.

The owner took the money and said with a smile, "Now you may place the bolts, nails, and screws back in the chest just as you have them arranged in the boxes."

After he did that, Charles was sent on a few errands. He was then dismissed for the day.

A few days later the owner gave Charles a key and said, "You may come early in the morning and open the store. Do the sweeping and dusting."

At the end of the first week, Charles received his pay-envelope. He found the five-dollar bill along with the week's wages.

One morning not long afterward, Charles was sweeping the floor, and found a few pennies lying near the counter. He picked them up and put them on the shelf, and told the owner about them. Another day he found some pennies, a dime, and two nickels. He laid these on the shelf, telling the owner about them.

About a month later, he was sweeping one morning, and found a brand new dollar. How he did wish he might keep it for himself! "The owner would never know," whispered a tiny voice. Just at that instant, Bee Right began to buzz around his ears. "Don't forget what your mother told you," said the bee. "She said she would never be ashamed of you, as long as you tried your best to be right."

Charles turned the dollar over and over in his hand. The bee kept buzzing--"Never do anything that will make your mother ashamed of you. Be right! Be right!"

"Yes," said Charles at last, "I will." He put the dollar on the shelf. When the owner came in, he told him about it.

The owner smiled and patted him on the shoulder. "You are a good boy," was all he said. At the end of the week, Charles found the brand new dollar in his pay-envelope, besides his usual wages.

A few weeks later, the owner began to give Charles large sums of money to take to the bank. "I have found that I can trust you, my boy," he would say.

Charles worked in the store all summer. When school opened again, he helped the owner mornings and evenings. His tired mother did not have to work so much now. Charles always gave her his money at the end of the week.

After he finished school, the owner gave him a steady job in the store with good wages.

"Charles," said the owner one day, "do you remember the day you sorted bolts and nails for me?"

"Yes," answered Charles. "How glad I was to find work that day, so I could help my mother a little. I'll never forget how surprised I was to find a five-dollar bill at the bottom of the chest."

"I put it there on purpose," said the owner. "I wanted to find out what sort of boy you were."

"You did!" exclaimed the astonished boy.

"Yes. When you brought it to me, I was pretty sure that I had found the right one. However, I wanted to be able to trust you with large sums of money, so I tested you still further. I left pennies, nickels, and a dime on the floor; and last of all a dollar. When you picked them up, and put them on the shelf, and told me about them--I knew then that I could safely trust you."

"I'd like to ask you," said Charles suddenly--"was there a five-dollar bill in the bottom of the chest when Joe and Henry sorted the nails, too?"

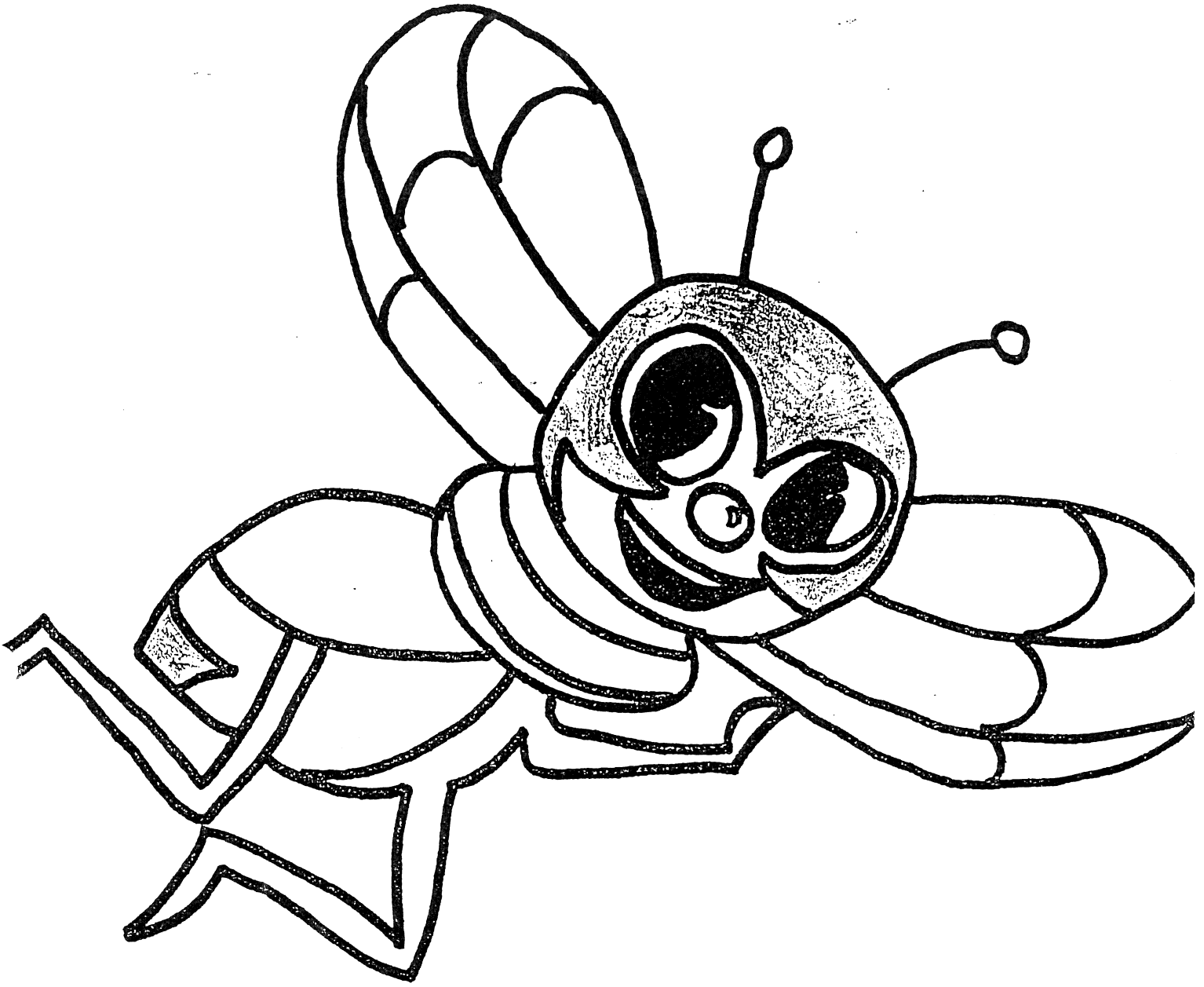
"Yes," said the owner, "each of them found a five-dollar bill, and each of them kept it."

"So you lost ten dollars!" exclaimed Charles.

"Yes, lost ten dollars hunting for someone honest. It was worth it--I found one!"

Years later things happened to Henry and Joe. Soon after Charles started working at the store, Henry was caught stealing things from a department store. He was arrested, but his father paid the fine, so he was allowed to go free. His dishonest habits, though, soon got him into more trouble. He never could keep a job for very long. He was so dishonest that no one could depend on him. Joe forged a check, and was sent to jail.

How much better it would have been if Henry and Joe had listened to the bee in the first place.



Bee Right