



AFFIRMATION: The whole world is
home, and we are a divine family.

THE DANGEROUS ROAD

>> Lesson 9: Connecting with Kindness

Affirmation: The whole world is home, and we are a divine family.

Getting to the Heart of the Lesson

When we see God within ourselves and others, being kind is natural.

Exposure to people of different cultures, ages, interests, and backgrounds can help children develop feelings of acceptance for others. Kindness, however, comes from a sense of connectedness. This lesson emphasizes that we are all one human family, with one divine parent. When there is awareness of our divine connection, then even if one never leaves the neighborhood, the whole world is home, and the human race is family.

Teacher Reflection: Questions to Consider

- Think of a time when you received a kindness from someone. What did the person say or do? How did you feel before and after receiving the kindness?
- Think of a time you were kind to someone else. What did you do? How did you feel after doing it? What was the person's reaction?

Bible Verses

Matthew 5:44-48

As you know, we were once told, "You are to love your neighbor and you are to hate your enemy." But I tell you: love your enemies and pray for your persecutors. You'll then become children of God. For God causes the sun to rise on both the bad and the good, and sends rain on both the just and the unjust. Tell me, if you love those who love you, why should you be commended for that? Even the toll collectors do as much, don't they? And if you greet only your friends, what have you done that is exceptional? Even the pagans do as much, don't they? To sum it up, you are to be unstinting in your generosity in the way God's

generosity is unstinting. (TFG)

Galatians 3:26-28

For in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.

Quotes

I am not an Athenian or a Greek, but a citizen of the world.
— *Socrates*

Kind words can be short and easy to speak but their echoes are truly endless.
— *Mother Teresa*

My true religion is kindness.
— *Dalai Lama*

I. Opening the Lesson

Begin with the craft activity or the music activity, which illustrate our connection with one another. If you have time, do both activities. Read the Bible verses and/or the quotations that are about being one divine family and relate them to the activities.

Connection Craft Activity

Materials needed: gift wrap or shelf paper, scissors, patterns, pencils

Old-fashioned paper doll chains, where each figure is connected to the next, can be used to teach our connection to others. Cookie cutters make good simple shapes to trace. Show the children how to outline the shape on the edge of a long piece of paper. Use this shape as a guide to accordion-fold the paper to the right size. Make sure the figure is touching the folds on both sides. Cut out the figure, leaving a

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portion on the folds uncut so when opened, it will be a chain. Use lightweight paper that is easy to cut when folded several times, such as wrapping paper, or shelf paper that comes on a roll. Discuss how all creation is connected on an inner level. Let the children who finish the project early draw clothing on their figures.



Connection Music Activity

Materials needed: music, ball of yarn

Choose some music to play and tell the children they may dance to the music in whatever way they like. When the music stops, everyone must stop and stand in one spot. (You will need to stay near the music to turn it on and off.) Take the ball of yarn and wrap it around your ankle and then roll it to a player close to you. That player must wrap the yarn around their ankle and hold the ball of yarn.

Play the music again and let the children dance around. Players that are attached to the yarn can only move their upper bodies while keeping their feet still. When the music stops, everyone stops moving and the player with the yarn rolls it to another player, who is now connected in the same way. Keep playing until everyone is connected with the yarn. To finish the game, play the music and see how long it takes to roll the yarn back to each player in turn and disconnect everyone.

Discuss the inner connection we have with others that can never be broken. We all come from the same source.

II. Building the Lesson

Read the quotations about kindness and ask the children how they would describe kindness. Suggest that it may be easier to act with kindness toward

someone we feel connected with, such as a neighbor or friend. But if we remember our inner connection to all, kindness to everyone becomes easier. We really are all of one kind — a divine family.

Try Kindness Activity

Write out short scenarios describing situations that can be handled with kindness on 3" x 5" cards. Examples:

- 1) A classmate at school is teased because of a new haircut; how can you respond with kindness?
- 2) Another shopper is agitated and impatient in the checkout lane at the grocery store; how can you respond with kindness?
- 3) Your sibling is angry and upset because he can't find his favorite toy; how can you respond with kindness?
- 4) Someone pushes you out of the way while rushing down the hall at school; how can you respond with kindness?

Divide the students into teams and take turns acting out the scenarios. Or, have them pick cards at random and discuss options for each one. Encourage them to share their experiences of true kindness, whether just observing kindness in others, receiving kindness, or acting with kindness themselves.

An alternate activity for older children would be to prompt them only with a short idea including the people and the setting, and let them give an example from their own experience or make one up. Examples:

- 1) in school, with a new classmate
- 2) on the playground, after a argument during the foursquare game
- 3) at home, when choosing a TV program to watch
- 4) at the store in a long checkout line

III. Closing the Lesson

Read the story, The Good Samaritan, and use the discussion questions to help the children understand how it relates to the heart of the lesson. Do the

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affirmation together a few times, using the techniques suggested in Using this Curriculum. Close with a

prayer and encourage the children to look for ways to be kind during the coming week.

>> THE GOOD SAMARITAN

It was a hot day on the long, dusty road that connected the city near the river and the big city up the mountain. Travelers walked on the road, rode on donkeys or horses, or pulled carts up and down the road all day. Sometimes the travelers had money or valuable goods they carried, and sometimes robbers would wait by the road, looking for a chance to steal what they wanted.

One unfortunate merchant, who walked the road alone, was attacked by robbers and badly hurt when he tried to fight them off. After they ran away with his money, the man lay in

the dirt on the side of the road, too weak to get up and find help. No one came down the road for quite some time, and the merchant wondered if he might die there, with no water and no way to get home.

Eventually, someone did come along the road, but the injured man could not even call out for help. The traveler was a priest on his way to the temple in the big city. He was thinking about the important things he needed to do and the important people he was going to meet in the city, and then he noticed the man lying in the dirt.

If the priest stopped, he would be late and that wouldn't be good at all. There were many important

people waiting for him in the city, and he had so many important things to do. There were other people traveling on the road who didn't have important things to do and would have time to stop, he was sure. The priest looked up and down the road to see if anyone was watching, and then he walked around the injured man quickly, hurrying on his way.

As the priest disappeared around a bend, another lone traveler came up the road. He carried a bunch of books under one arm and talked to himself as he strode along, kicking up dust. When he saw the injured man in the dirt, he paused briefly to consider what to do. He was a scholar who studied books and knew a great deal about scripture and the law.

He knew nothing about healing. It

wasn't his job to take care of dirty travelers, so the scholar continued on his way, clutching his books.

As the sun beat down, a third traveler appeared, leading a donkey packed with market goods. He also was deep in thought when he reached the spot where the injured man lay in the dirt, gasping for breath. This traveler was far from his home in Samaria, and his journey had been difficult. In this region, many people hated Samaritans, and he had not heard a kind word since leaving home. He was thinking about getting his business in the city done as quickly as possible when he realized the man at the side of the road was badly hurt and needed help.

He grabbed his water bag and rushed to the injured



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merchant. After caring for his wounds and offering water, the Samaritan helped the man onto the donkey and took him back down the road to the closest inn. The Samaritan spent the night there and made sure the injured merchant was well cared for. When morning came, the Samaritan left, but not before leaving enough money with the innkeeper to cover the costs of the room and food. He also assured the surprised innkeeper that he would come back on the return journey to make sure there were no additional expenses.

When the Samaritan told a city friend why he was more than a day late, the friend was bewildered. “How do you know he wasn’t one of those people who hate Samaritans?”

The kind Samaritan answered with his own question: “Why does it matter who he was? I knew what he was — a brother in spirit, just like you.”

Discussion Questions

- 1) Do you think the priest or the scholar felt any connection with the injured merchant?
- 2) Do you think it was surprising that the Samaritan was kind, even after many people had been unkind to him?
- 3) (Read the Bible verse included in the lesson, Matthew 5:44–48.) Who in the story was trying to do as Jesus asked us to do?
- 4) What do you think “divine family” means?

Lesson Notes:

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