

# FAMILY FAITH BUILDER

## Character Lessons for Practical Application of Faith

### Sincerity v. Hypocrisy



#### Being as genuine on the inside as we appear to be on the outside

An often repeated folk etymology is that sincere is derived from the Latin *sine* = *without*, and *cera* = *wax*. One of the popular explanations is that dishonest sculptors in Rome or Greece would cover flaws in their work with wax to deceive the viewer; therefore, a sculpture "without wax" would mean a pure work. Whether the story is true or false it serves as a good explanation for Sincerity.

For someone to act with sincerity means that their walk matches their talk and that both come from the heart. There is a wholeness or a completeness about their attitude and actions. Everything fits together. And all is in harmony with God's plan for us. To be sincere in our actions means we have taken the time to develop sincerity in our heart. To be open to the love that God calls us to.

This month, practice sincerity by acting outwardly with the integrity you have prayerfully cultivated inwardly.

#### To Practice Sincerity I Will:

- ♥ I will be all that I can be
- ♥ I will take responsibility for my own actions
- ♥ I will respect others' opinions
- ♥ I will always mean what I say
- ♥ I will not take advantage of other people

Any others appropriate to your family?

#### God's Word on Sincerity

*"Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt: and serve ye the Lord."*

*Joshua 24:14*

*"Let us keep the feast, then, with none of the old yeast and no leavening of evil and wickedness, but only the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."*

*1 Corinthians 5:8*

*"For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word, but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ."*

*2 Corinthians 2:17*

*"But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere."*

*James 3:17*

*Jesus said "You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye."*

*Matthew 7:5*

#### The Good Samaritan Teaches Us About Sincerity

The parable of the Good Samaritan has transcended spiritual literature as to become a well-known colloquial phrase meaning someone who helps a stranger. In the story, a man who is presumed to be a Jew is beaten, robbed and left on the side of the road. A priest and a Levite both pass him by but when the Samaritan comes upon the man in the road, he stops to help him. The Samaritan helped the man get to a place where he could receive the help he needed and provided money to pay for his care. He also promised to return later. Now in those days, Samaritans and Jews did not like each other which makes the story all the more powerful. The one who stopped to help fully embraced the job of helping the victim.

In this story, Jesus is telling us that it isn't enough to profess to be a good person, we actually have to go out and live like that - even when it isn't easy. The story was told to answer the question, "Who is my neighbor?" The answer then is everyone is my neighbor. If we are to live a life sincerely aligned with the gospel teachings we must be willing to help even those that we don't like.



## The Orange

This exercise can be done one of several ways. You can start with a discussion of what you expect from certain people based on the behavior that you have witnessed already. Use an orange to demonstrate this expectation. You can place a small slice in the orange and then squeeze the orange juice from the orange into a glass. When you see an orange you expect to get orange juice from it. If you want to get really tricky you can use a needle-like turkey baster to inject food dye into the orange. Injecting via the navel of the orange is the best way to disguise the injection site. When you squeeze this prepared orange, it won't look like orange juice. This will demonstrate insincerity - being different on the inside than how we act on the outside.



“The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.” Timothy 1:5

POSTER IDEA:

## Sincerity

**Being as genuine on the inside as we are on the outside.**



**“Jesus said unto him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”**

**John 14:6**

**Is religion ‘Church on Sundays’ or a Way of Life?**

Dear Jesus,

We praise you for your goodness and mercy and thank you for the example of Sincerity in your life. We remember how you embraced the role you were given by the Father. Help us to embrace our roles as your servants here on Earth and be all that we can be. Remind us to take responsibility for our own actions and to respect others' opinions. May we learn to mean what we say and not take advantage of other people. Help us to act in all things in harmony with the will of the Father.

Amen.

### Other ways to teach character in the home:

- Display the character quality and definition in a prominent place such as on the refrigerator or let each child decorate it for their bedroom door.
- At the dinner table ask if anyone noticed anyone (not just family members) demonstrating the character quality (or not demonstrating it).
- Point out news stories where character was or was not involved.
- During car trips, challenge the kids by describing scenarios and having them identify if it describes being the quality or being the opposite.
- Praise with character by recognizing the character quality involved rather than the achievement.

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For more activities that can be adapted for family use, visit [www.charactercincinnati.org/quality\\_resource.php?q=sincerity](http://www.charactercincinnati.org/quality_resource.php?q=sincerity)