

Lesson Plan for Lesson 31

Respecting Truth

Preparation and Supplies

- Study chapter 31, “Respecting Truth,” in the handbook.
- Gather newsprint, markers, and a Bible.
- Make a copy of the handout “Blessed Are You” (Document #: TX003421).

Pray It! (5 minutes)

Tell the participants that class will begin with a brief examination of conscience. **Ask** a volunteer to read 1 Peter 2:1–2. After the reading, **ask** the young people to take a moment to prayerfully reflect on the question, Have you been guilty of spreading rumors or gossip about others? Then **invite** the participants to turn to page 447 in the handbook and pray together the “Act of Contrition.”

Study It! (35 to 45 minutes, depending on your class length)

A. Living the Truth

1. **Invite** the participants to brainstorm the different ways in which our speech can hurt others. **Write** their responses on the board. Then **ask** the young people to name different ways in which the spoken word can heal or help others. **List** these insights on the board as well.
2. **Direct** the participants to read the chapter introduction and the sections “Living the Truth” and “The Effect of Lying” on pages 341–344 in the handbook. The content covers points 1 through 4 on the handout “Lesson 31 Summary” (Document #: TX003420).
3. *(Optional)* **Use** the Reflect questions on page 344 in the handbook to lead a discussion.

B. Respecting Reputations

1. **Ask** the participants to find a partner and discuss the following questions:
 - Have you ever had to make a decision about revealing someone’s secret—for their own good?
 - What were the circumstances? How did you handle it?
 - Do you wish you had done anything differently?

Invite volunteers to share their answers.

2. **Direct** the young people to read the sections “Respecting Reputations,” “Reparations and Amends,” and “Confidentiality,” on pages 344–348 in the handbook. The content covers points 5 through 8 on the handout “Lesson 31 Summary.”



3. **(Optional) Invite** questions and observations on the content. You might also invite discussion on the Reflect question on page 347 in the handbook.

C. Truth in Society

Direct the participants to read the section “Truth in Society,” on page 349 in the handbook. The content covers point 9 on the handout “Lesson 31 Summary.”

Note: If you are running short on time, you may wish to just briefly summarize this section of the handbook.

Live It! (15 to 20 minutes)

1. **Direct** the participants to form ten groups. **Give** each group a sheet of newsprint and a marker. **Assign** each group one of the following categories: friendship, education, family relationships, medical care, buying or selling goods and services, sports, news reporting in the media, government, financial institutions, relations between nations.
Explain the task as follows:
 - Each group is to create a short story that is based on the group’s assigned category.
 - Your story should describe a realistic situation in which some people or institutions are untrustworthy and do not hold honesty as a value. In your story these people or institutions say and do whatever serves their immediate interests.
 - Each group should designate a person to write down its story on the sheet of newsprint.
2. **Invite** one person from each group to come forward and present her or his group’s story. Lead the participants in a class discussion, using the following questions:
 - Do the stories resemble the world as we know it? Why or why not?
 - What were the motivations of the dishonest people or institutions in the stories?
 - In the long run, what might be the impact of these dishonest people or institutions on other people? on themselves?
 - What do you think Jesus would say about the lack of trust and honesty in our world today?
3. **Share** the following comments in your own words:
 - The Eighth Commandment, “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor,” includes the sins of lying, deception, hypocrisy, and slander. But the heart of the Commandment isn’t about forbidding certain acts; it is about being a person of integrity who respects and lives the truth.
 - Fortunately, by nature we are inclined toward the truth. Morally we are obliged to seek the truth, especially religious truth. And once we know what is true, we must live by it. Jesus tells us that he is the way, the truth, and the life (see John 14:6). As followers of Jesus, we are bound by the truth of the Gospel.
 - Because we as humans have a natural tendency to be truthful, we have to be motivated to tell a lie. Some people lie to cover up something they did wrong, to avoid punishment, or to make themselves appear more important. Well-meaning people sometimes lie to avoid confronting someone with an unpleasant truth.



- Getting away with a lie can still hurt and wound others, even if they never find out you lied to them.

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Following any announcements, **ask** three volunteers to serve as readers. **Invite** the first reader to proclaim Psalm 119:41–48. Allow a few moments for quiet reflection. Then **ask** the second reader to proclaim John 8:31–32. **Allow** a few moments for quiet reflection again. **Ask** the participants to think about their own struggle to be truthful. **Invite** the third reader to read the handout “Blessed Are You” (Document #: TX003421). **Conclude** with the Sign of the Cross.

