

Responsible Heart Devotional

Training Character from a Biblical Perspective

Read the italic section or paraphrase with your children to fit their age level.

Day 1

1. Introduction: *Because we love Jesus and want to follow Him, we want to act the way He acts. The different ways we act or behave are called character traits. Each month we are going to learn a new character trait of Jesus that we can practice, so we can grow to be more like Him. Jesus has lots of good character traits. He is loving, kind, and helpful. Can you think of some other character traits He has? (wait for answers or help them think of examples of others) Do you want to learn to show these character traits, too? People will want to know Jesus more if we act like Jesus, so its a good idea to practice!*

2. Define Responsible: *This month we are going to learn the character trait, "responsibility." This means to be responsible. What does it mean to be responsible? (let them tell you or give examples if they can) Responsible means to do the work you are given to do and take care of the things that belong to you. To be responsible, we do our chores, and take care of our things.*

3. Give Examples:

What are some of the chores or work you are given to do?

What are some things that are yours that you are responsible for?

4. Learn from Jesus:

Let's see what Jesus was responsible for when He was on earth.

Read Luke 4:16-21

“He (Jesus) went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.””

Read paraphrase for younger kids:

In Luke 4 we learn that God gave Jesus the responsibility to preach the Good News of God to the poor, to give freedom to people, and to heal people. Jesus came to earth and did just as God asked of Him.

Read Philippians 2:5-8

“In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!”

Read paraphrase for younger kids:

In Philippians 2 we learn that God gave Jesus the responsibility to come down from Heaven and become a man, serve people, and die on the cross for our sins.

According to these verse, how was Jesus responsible?

Did He do the work that God gave Him to do even though it was hard?

Did He get tired and stop, or did He finish His work?

Yes, God sent Jesus to earth to help and heal people. He also sent Him to die for our sins. Jesus did all the work He was supposed to do. What if He came to earth and decided to just be lazy and not do anything? He could have gone to the beach with the disciples, fished, and just relaxed, but then He would not have done what God had called Him to do. And what if He decided not to die on the cross for our sins? Wouldn't that be sad? We wouldn't be able to go to Heaven one day! But because He is God's Son, Jesus IS responsible, and He ALWAYS does the work His Father, God, gives Him to do. So if Jesus can be responsible, can we be responsible with God's help, too?

Day 2

1. Read Verse and Ask Questions:

Elementary Version: “*Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters..*” Col 3:23, NIV

PreK/Kindergarten Version: “*In all the work you are given, do the best you can..*”
Col 3:23, ERV

How are we supposed to do our work and be responsible, according to the Bible verse?

Who are we really working for?

Why do we want to do our work and be responsible for God?

2. Scenarios: *I am going to read some scenarios. Give me a thumbs up if the scenario shows a responsible heart and a thumbs down if it does not. If it does not, tell how you would be responsible. Have older children make up their own scenarios.*

a. You get a new iPad for Christmas, and your mom tells you to be very careful with it. You drop it on the floor and leave it there. Your little brother steps on it and breaks it.

b. It's your chore time, and you are supposed to put the clothes in the washer. You get the dirty clothes and carefully put them all in the washer.

c. You have school work to do, but you would really rather watch television. You forgot to tell your mom you haven't finished and watch television until dinner time.

Day 3

Practice Responsibility:

1. **Memorize the verse** above with your children and use it as a reminder of what it means to be responsible.

For a link to a quick song and motions for the simplified version, [click here](#).

2. **Make a Chores/ Responsibility Chart** with your children and talk about their responsibilities for the year. Charts help to stay consistent with responsibilities, both for you and the kids!

Here are some example charts and tips for starting chores below:

<http://www.livingwellspendingless.com/2014/09/19/great-chores-kids/>

http://www.livingwellspendingless.com/wp-content/documents/Chore-Chart_CheckBoxes.pdf

What Every Child Should Know Along the Way by Gail Martin has a sample chart for young kids that a friend of mine uses and loves and a list of what children should know how to do by a certain age from toddler to high school. It's a great resources to have and use with your kids!

Day 4 +

Remind/ Reinforce:

1. Remind your children to do their responsibilities from the list.

Depending on the ages, have them start checking their chart on their own and encourage them to do their chores without you having to tell them.

2. Praise your children when you catch them doing their chores

For example, “Wow, I love how you made your bed today without being asked. You are really acting responsible!”

3. Make a goal/ incentive for each day, week, or month, depending on the age and needs of your children.

For example, my children are using the check box chart (second link above under charts) and tally marking each week they do their chores in the box. After each month, we will do a fun family activity as a special reward for having a responsible heart all month. We hope to continue it through the year!