

LESSONS WE LEARN FROM THREE KINGS

MEMORY VERSE FOR THIS UNIT

“And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God ask of you but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in obedience to him, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul” (Deuteronomy 10:12, NIV*).

OBJECTIVES OF THIS UNIT

This unit will help your students:

- Learn the four elements that are necessary to maintain a good relationship with God
- Understand that obedience to God is the best sacrifice
- Understand that disobedience to God carries severe consequences
- Learn to recognize and confess their faults to God
- Understand the importance of obeying God and remaining firm in their promises.

THE REASON WE TEACH THIS UNIT

In the same way that Jesus gathered travelling companions around himself, we as his disciples, are called to journey together as members of the Body of Christ. We are to engage in authentic relationships. Paul had a deep relationship with the Galatian Church, and insisted that he felt he was "in the pains of childbirth" until Christ was formed in them (4:19). As we mature as Jesus' disciples, we realize there is more to our relationship with him than the introductory moment of conversion. Christ is being formed in us. However, our spiritual formation needs the encouragement and assistance of those who are walking with us. As the community of the faithful, we consider how we can help one another grow in grace. We must seek true, reliable, dependable, faithful, trustworthy relationships.

As they grow up, pre-adolescents tend to relate to more people: friends, classmates, teachers, etc. Many of these relationships are firm and lasting, while others are weak and fleeting. Our students begin to understand what it means to maintain and care for a friendship. They know that it is important to know others and accept them with their defects and virtues. However, since our relationship with God is the most important, they must understand that they also need to know him better. For that reason it is so important that they study the Bible and pray.

Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus (John 3) shows us how to start a right relationship with God. The Church understands that "being born again" is three-fold: admitting that we have sinned, repenting and accepting Christ as our Lord and Savior. Many biblical passages, in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, teach us how to maintain and strengthen our relationship with God. Deuteronomy 10:12 provides four elements that help us fulfill this purpose. We must fear of God (honoring and respecting him), obey God (walking in his ways), love God and serve God. For there to be a harmonious relationship, we need these four elements together. For example, if people follow rules but do not obey God, they become legalistic like the Pharisees. If one says he loves God but does not respect God's commandments, his faith is based only on feelings. On the other hand, if one is only dedicated to service, she simply becomes a charitable person. It is impossible to honor and respect God if we do not obey, love and serve him. Anything else is superficial religion. But, by combining these four elements, there is a balance between

attitudes and actions.

We serve and obey God because we love and respect him. These lessons tell us about the time of the kings, from Saul to Solomon. In each story our students will evaluate to what extent Saul, David and Solomon met the four requirements, and how this influenced their lives.