

**OBJECTIVE** Each young man will analyze himself and strive to be honest in all things.

**PREPARATION**

1. Prayerfully study Exodus 20:13–17 and Alma 7:20.
2. Materials needed:
  - a. Copies of the scriptures (each young man should bring his own).
  - b. Pencils for marking scriptures.

**SUGGESTED  
LESSON  
DEVELOPMENT**

**Dishonesty Causes Unhappiness; Honesty Brings Peace**

Quotation and discussion

Relate the following experience told by Elder Gordon B. Hinckley:

“Among many unsigned letters I have received was one of particular interest. It contained a \$20 bill and a brief note which stated that the writer had come to my home many years ago. When there was no response to the bell, he had tried the door and, finding it unlocked, had entered and walked about. On the dresser he saw a \$20 bill, took it, and left. Through the years his conscience had bothered him and he was now returning the money.

“He did not include anything for interest for the period during which he had used my money. But as I read his pathetic letter I thought of the [interest] to which he had subjected himself for a quarter of a century with the unceasing nagging of his conscience. For him there had been no peace until he had made restitution” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1976, p. 90; or *Ensign*, May 1976, p. 60).

- Why do you think that dishonesty makes a person unhappy?

Quotation

Read the following statement about the importance of maintaining the peace and joy that come from righteous living:

“Sometimes and under some conditions it is possible to escape from many things—from prison walls, from false friends, from bad company, from boring people, from old environments—but never from ourselves. When we lie down at night, we are there with our own thoughts—whether we like them or not. When we wake in the morning, we are still there—whether we like [ourselves] or not. The most persistent thing in life (and, we have no doubt, in death also) is our own consciousness of ourselves. This being so, there is no more pitiable person than he who is uncomfortable in his own company—no matter where he runs or how fast, or how far” (Richard L. Evans, *Richard Evans’ Quote Book* [Salt Lake City: Publishers Press, 1971], p. 214).

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Explain that we do not need to suffer the unhappiness of a guilty conscience. We have the Holy Ghost to direct our actions and thoughts in ways that will allow us to have joy. But any time we do not heed the Spirit of the Lord, we lose some of our peace and happiness.

**Honesty Is the Basis for All Good Relationships**

Scripture and discussion

Explain that honesty is the basis of all good relationships. Many of the Ten Commandments teach us how to live peacefully with others.

Have the young men read and mark Exodus 20:13–17.

- In what way does each of these verses teach us to be honest? What do these verses teach about the value the Lord places on honesty?

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Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you know that you can trust someone? (By experience with the person.)</li> <li>• What experiences have you had that show you can trust your parents, the bishop, and your friends?</li> </ul> <p>Let the young men relate some of the experiences that have led them to trust others. Point out that in each case there has been personal integrity on the part of the trusted one.</p>
Scripture and discussion	<p>One of the most important characteristics of the Lord is that he always keeps his word to us. Have one of the young men read and mark Alma 7:20.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In what way does this verse help you know that you can trust the Lord?</li> <li>• What does it mean to us that the Lord will not vary from what he says?</li> <li>• How can this verse help you learn how to treat others?</li> </ul> <p>Make sure the young men understand that we learn to trust the Lord because we know he is honest with us. We should also be honest with others so that they can trust us.</p>

### **Honesty Prepares Us to Serve the Lord**

Quotation	<p>Explain that honesty prepares us to serve the Lord. A young man cannot be an effective missionary unless he has learned to be honest. Read the following statement by President N. Eldon Tanner:</p> <p>“There is no greater quality of character than honesty in all we do. . . . I am very sorry to report that we have cases where people, both men and women, have lied to go to the temple and to go on missions. The Lord has said that no unclean thing shall enter the temple of God. (See D&amp;C 97:15.) When one is being interviewed for a temple recommend or for a mission, he should realize that the bishop and stake president are representing the Lord and that their answers are to the Lord and their commitments to the Lord. The Lord knows and will not be mocked. . . .</p> <p>“Prospective missionaries should realize that the Lord wants somebody in whom he can place every confidence, one who is clean and worthy in every way to represent him in the mission field. If you are not worthy, don’t accept a call, don’t lie to get there, but through repentance prepare yourself to go” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1976, pp. 66–67; or <i>Ensign</i>, May 1976, p. 44).</p>
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why is it so important not to lie to our priesthood leaders?</li> </ul> <p>Emphasize the great importance of the young men keeping themselves worthy to go on a mission.</p>
Story and discussion	<p>Explain that one of the Lord’s leaders in South America learned as a child to be honest. Tell the following story:</p> <p>“When Ben Pantoja of Santiago, Chile, was six years old, his parents went to a nearby city to buy groceries for the family. After they had gone, Ben’s eight-year-old brother said, ‘Let’s go get an ice cream cone.’</p> <p>“Now, an ice cream cone for Ben and his little sister Mercedes was a special treat. They asked their brother what they would do for money. He said their father had told him if they wanted a treat he could take the money from the chest where they kept the family budget.</p>

Ben knew in his heart that was not the truth, but the anticipation of the ice cream overwhelmed his sense of what was right.

“They had their ice cream cone. When their parents returned home, Ben’s mother went to the chest to return the change from their trip to the market and noticed that money was missing. The children were questioned and the truth discovered.

“Ben Pantoja made up his mind that night that he would never be dishonest again, that he would never go contrary to what he knew to be right. Today he is one of the Lord’s chosen leaders in South America because he has kept his resolve” (Lynn Mickelsen, “Stretching the Truth,” *New Era*, Apr. 1992, p. 4).

- How do you think Ben’s decision as a child prepared him to become a leader in the Church?

### **Conclusion**

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Tell the young men that Heavenly Father has given us the opportunity to become like him and to eventually become gods. It is impossible to imagine that we can become like Heavenly Father until we can be honest with others and with ourselves.

Testimony and challenge

Bear testimony of the value of honesty in your life. Challenge the young men to analyze how honest they are and strive to be more honest by following the promptings of the Holy Ghost.