INTRODUCTION
SINCERITY
Eagerness to do what is right with transparent motives

Have you ever excitedly accepted a task assigned to you, but then you never finished it? Maybe you didn’t consider the task to be that important. Perhaps you slacked off because others quit. Maybe you were distracted by more entertaining activities. A sincere “yes” to the task means you will dedicate yourself to completing it. According to II Chronicles 16:9, God is looking throughout the whole earth for faithfully devoted participants in His work. Even completing small tasks, such as emptying trash cans, helps Mom in big ways, and helping Mom is part of an even bigger purpose God has for you! Playing a part in God’s plan is much better than giving up halfway through when other factors change. If you are willing, the Holy Spirit will give you an eagerness to fulfill your commitments with wholehearted dedication.

God’s Reward to a Wholehearted Follower

SINCERITY
Eagerness to do what is right with transparent motives
The operational definition of sincerity is “eagerness to do what is right with transparent motives.” God’s Word tells us what is right and that we should desire to eagerly do His will. “I will run the way of thy commandments . . . . I shall observe [Thy Law] with my whole heart” (Psalm 119:32–34). Sincerity, however, looks beyond one’s “right” actions and examines the heart motives behind them. Motives are the reasons why we do what we do. Sincere motives are based on God’s standard of righteousness, not on what society or culture finds acceptable. One of the Greek words for sincerity means “judged in the sunlight.” Holding a drinking glass up to the sunlight reveals water spots that you otherwise might not see. Likewise, you can examine your own motives by holding them up to the light of God’s Word, which is able to discern the real intentions of your heart. (See Hebrews 4:12.) Godly intentions are motivated by love instead of selfishness.

The opposite of sincerity is hypocrisy. A hypocrite is a person who pretends to be someone he is not. He may appear to be moral, upright, or religious, but in reality, he cares more about keeping up an appearance than becoming a person of good character. What he does in private is also different from what he teaches others to do. Jesus repeatedly rebuked the religious leaders for teaching people to do what they would not practice themselves! Because of this hypocris, Jesus taught the people to follow the leaders’ right teachings but not to copy their actions which were contrary to those teachings. (See Matthew 23:1–3.) Do your actions show that you sincerely believe with your heart what your lips say and teach is right, or do your actions reveal a hypocritical heart that is far from God? (See Isaiah 29:13.)

A sincere person has no false or hidden motives. He speaks honestly, having the best interest of others in mind without secretly hoping for a returned favor. A carpenter who is sincere in his work does not use substandard materials or present poor quality products as genuine. A friend with pure motives would not use flattery to get what he wants from you; instead, he would ask you plainly. Do you know why you do what you do? Before you speak or act, consider the real reasons motivating you. In Luke 12:1–3, Jesus reminds us to beware of hypocrisy and to remember that nothing is hidden from the Lord. As He brings wrong intentions to your mind, ask Him to replace them with unselfish, transparent, and pure motives.
Sincerity in Scripture

Read aloud and discuss each verse, question, and concept.

Proverbs 2:1–6 says, “My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.” What a privilege to study the rich truths of God’s Word, hide them in your heart, and apply them to daily life! These truths are priceless treasures, far above the value and beauty of rubies and diamonds. As you dig deeper into God’s Word, see Who He is, and allow Him to work in you, your life will be a radiant expression of His love. He will be glorified as His character is seen in you.

THE CHARACTER OF GOD
We see examples of sincerity in God’s character in the following ways:

• God openly and clearly makes His instructions known to mankind. (See Deuteronomy 30:10–12.)
• God’s patience toward us is motivated by His desire that all should come to repentance. (See II Peter 3:9.)
• Jesus’ compassion for people motivated Him to heal the sick when He saw the multitudes. (See Matthew 14:14.)
• Every action of Jesus was guided by His desire to please His Father. (See John 8:29.)
• Jesus endured the suffering of the crucifixion because of the joy that would soon be His as He fulfilled God’s redemptive plan. (See Hebrews 12:2.)
• Jesus spoke without any deceitful motives. (See I Peter 2:21–22.)

• Apart from the leading of the Holy Spirit, we will not know what is right and pleasing to God. (See Romans 8:5–8.)

SINCERITY IN MY LIFE
Now let’s examine some ways God wants us to live out sincerity daily.

• What are the benefits of pure motives and honest words? (See Psalm 24:3–5.)
• Who can help me examine my motives because He knows my thoughts even better than I do? (See Psalm 139:23–24; Proverbs 16:2.)
• What is one reward of being open and honest with my parents? (See Proverbs 28:13.)
• How can I ensure my devotional time is not simply a ritual but an opportunity to draw closer to God? (See Matthew 6:5–7.)
• Instead of pretending to love people, do I ask God to give me His love for them? (See Romans 12:9.)
• What reasons should I have for completing my chores wholeheartedly? (See Colossians 3:22–24.)
• When I say “I’m sorry,” am I truly regretful? Why ought I mean what I say? (See James 5:12.)

SINCERITY KEY VERSE

“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.” I Peter 1:22
Two years after their deliverance from Egypt, God’s people were on the brink of entering Canaan, the Promised Land. Twelve men were appointed to spy out the land, and after forty days, they returned to tell of the fertile, fruitful land! They also told of great walled cities and mighty giants. One spy named Caleb quieted the crowd and encouraged them to take the land. However, ten of the spies insisted that Canaan would be too difficult to conquer. The Israelites believed the negative report, murmured against Moses, and threatened to return to Egypt. Caleb, along with Joshua, pleaded with the rebellious people to believe God’s promise, but the congregation angrily determined to stone them. God instead judged the faithless nation, sending them wandering in the desert for forty years—one year for each day the spies had been in the land. However, God noted Caleb’s sincere faith and promised him a special portion of land. In the wilderness, Caleb witnessed God’s presence and provision for Israel. After Moses commissioned Joshua to lead the new generation onward, the Israelites once again arrived at the Promised Land. Would Caleb still seek to claim the land God promised him? Had God sustained Caleb’s wholehearted commitment during the forty long years in the desert?

BIBLE STORY QUESTIONS
Read Joshua 14:6–14; 15:13–14 together and discuss the following questions:

1. **As Caleb wandered in the wilderness with the Israelites, what promise was he waiting for God to fulfill?** (See Numbers 14:22–24.)
   - When other Christians do not wholly follow the Lord, what will help you stay committed to Him?

2. **After forty years in the wilderness, how many men remained from that first generation? Who were they?** (See Numbers 26:63–65.)
   - What difficulty has God brought you through?
   - What helped you to remain faithful to Him?

3. **Why did God promise that the very land where Caleb had walked would be his inheritance for generations?** (See Joshua 14:9.)
   - How are others impacted when you choose to believe and obey God wholeheartedly?
   - (See Proverbs 20:7; 25:13, 19.)

4. **Caleb was 40 years old when he first scouted the Promised Land. How old was he now? Had he grown weaker?** (See Joshua 14:10.)
   - When God has given you a task that requires patience and strength, what can help you remain dedicated to God and His goals? (See Psalm 37:5, 7; II Corinthians 9:8.)

5. **What did Caleb’s total dedication lead him to ask of Joshua?** (See Joshua 14:12a.)
   - What has God set before you that you are eager to accomplish?

6. **Why was Caleb confident that he could drive out the inhabitants of the mountain?** (See Joshua 14:12b.)
   - Why should you not fear others as you seek to honor God? (See Psalm 118:6.)

7. **What resulted from Caleb’s commitment to his faithful God?** (See Joshua 14:14; 15:13–14.)
   - What spiritual disciplines can help you grow to be wholly committed to God? What is God calling you to do? Do you believe He will enable you to see it through to completion? (See Philippians 2:13.)
Memory Verse
I PETER 1:22

Play the game together to help the children commit I Peter 1:22 to memory. In the section “Doers of the Word,” have the children record how they will apply the verse to their lives.

“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.”

I PETER 1:22

MEMORY VERSE GAME

Erase-A-Word
Write the verse on a whiteboard. Read the verse aloud with the children several times, explaining key words as needed. Each time, before repeating the verse together, have a child erase any two words in the verse on the whiteboard. Can they remember which words were erased and say them the next time through, even though the words are no longer visible? Repeat until every word is erased and the children have the verse memorized.

DOERS OF THE WORD
In the blank below, write how this verse could be applied in your life, e.g., “do good for someone else’s benefit,” or “show love to my family members from a pure heart,” or “assist with others’ tasks.”

“Dear Lord, I yield to You and am willing to apply this verse. Help me to ______________
_______________________________________
__________________________________________

I ask that You would develop sincerity in my life. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.”

When the Lord gives you an opportunity to apply this verse, write it in your journal to later recall God’s working in your life.
INTRODUCTION

Enjoy meditating on and thinking about the words of the sincerity key verse and definition as you find them in the word search below. The underlined words are hidden horizontally, vertically, diagonally, or backwards.

I Peter 1:22

“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.”

Sincerity

Eagerness to do what is right with transparent motives.

If finding the underlined words is too difficult or frustrating for your child, assign only a few words to find, such as “see” or “love.” Younger children could point to the ABCs. Older children may enjoy the extra challenge of finding all the words instead of only the underlined words.
INTRODUCTION

During this character study we are asking the Lord to develop sincerity in our lives. What a privilege to respond to the work He is doing to change us into the image of His Son! Today we are going to make paper plate houses to remind us to eagerly do what is right no matter where we are because of our relationship with the Lord.

Supplies:
- Paper plate
- Scissors
- Markers
- Construction paper
- Tape
- Pencil

Instructions

To make your paper plate house, cut off the bottom of the plate to create a flat edge for the base of your house. Cut a rectangle from the leftover piece of plate to use as a chimney. Tape the chimney to the roof of your house. Cut two squares for windows and a rectangle for a door out of the construction paper. With the tape, fasten one edge of the door and each window onto your house so they will open and close.

Read the following to the children while they make their craft:

How would you describe your relationship with your best friend? Do you like to spend time together? Talk often with each other? Have similar goals? Share the same interests? Do any of these characteristics also sound similar to your relationship with God? Like your relationship with your friend, when you spend time with God, you get to know Him more. You learn about His faithfulness, His love, and His forgiveness. You see His provision, His protection, and His answers to prayer. You learn His character, His will, and His ways. As you know God more, you will be motivated to do what He wants you to do. This desire will fill your heart and be present even when others are not around to see what you do or hear what you say. Without this motivation to please the Lord, you may be tempted to do right only so that others will see and think you are Godly. However, if you have a loving relationship with God, you will want to do what is right consistently, whether alone, in public, or at home with your family.

Now let’s open the door and windows of your house and draw pictures of doing what is right even at home. (You may want to draw a light pencil line around the door and windows on the paper plate so that you do not draw your pictures larger than the area that will be covered when the door and windows are closed.) You could draw yourself studying wholeheartedly, completing your chores thoroughly, obeying your parents promptly, or fervently praying. Around the curved edge of the paper plate write, “I will walk within my house with a perfect heart” (Psalm 101:2b).

Use your markers to decorate your house and place it where you will be reminded to eagerly do what is right, no matter where you are!
“But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it” (Numbers 14:24).
“Living for Jesus”

Sing “Living for Jesus” and read about the sincerity proclaimed by the hymn writer, Thomas O. Chisholm.

The gentleman held the letter, pondering the request. Thomas O. Chisholm wrote poetry primarily for his own personal enjoyment, although many of his works had been published. The letter he had received was from C. Harold Lowden, a pastor in New Jersey. Two years earlier Pastor Lowden had written a children’s song for a special service. The melody was a “light and summery tune.” Now the pastor was preparing a book of hymns and felt the original words did not fit the lilting melody. Would Mr. Chisholm please write new words for his tune?

Shaking his head, Mr. Chisholm wrote back, regretting that he did not know how to write lyrics for music. However, Pastor Lowden refused to take “no” for an answer. He responded, urging Mr. Chisholm to try again. Pastor Lowden believed Mr. Chisholm was the man for the task. With his daughter assisting by repeatedly humming the melody, Mr. Chisholm penned the words that we know now as “Living for Jesus.”

The writer’s early years began with his birth in a log cabin in 1866. Mr. Chisholm was educated in a one-room schoolhouse in which, at sixteen, he became the classroom teacher! Several years later he was hired by a local newspaper. When he was twenty-seven, he heard the Gospel at a revival meeting and received Jesus as his Lord and Savior. The young man was employed by the evangelist and later ordained as a pastor. However, severe health challenges forced him to leave the pastorate after one year. Mr. Chisholm sold insurance to make ends meet, and for personal therapy, he found an outlet in writing poems. Other poems he wrote include the classic hymns “Great Is Thy Faithfulness” and “O to Be Like Thee.”

Despite the fact that he wrote over 1,200 poems, Mr. Chisholm’s goal was never wealth nor fame. He once wrote, “I have sought to be true to the Word, and to avoid flippant and catchy titles and treatment. I have greatly desired that each hymn and poem might have some definite message to the hearts for whom it is written.”

Sincerity is “Eagerness to do what is right with transparent motives.” Mr. Chisholm’s works humbly reflect this quality, as his desire was to do right, with no hidden motives. The hymn “Living for Jesus” expresses the longing of a sincere heart. Do the words express your heart’s desire? Indeed, doing what is right from a pure heart will guide you on “the pathway of blessing”!

Living for Jesus, a life that is true,
Striving to please Him in all that I do.
Yielding allegiance, glad-hearted and free,
This is the pathway of blessing for me.

Thomas O. Chisholm (1866–1960)
Living for Jesus

Thomas O. Chisholm (1866-1960)  C. Harold Lowden (1883-1963)

Living for Jesus a life that is true,
Living for Jesus who died in my place,
Living for Jesus wherever I am,
Living for Jesus thru earth's little while,

Striving to please Him in all that I do;
Bearing on Cal'ry my sin and disgrace;
Doin' each duty in His holy name;
My dearest treasure the light of His smile;

Yielding allegiance, glad-hearted and free,
Such love constrains me to answer His call,
Will to suffer affliction and loss,
Seeking the lost ones He died to redeem,

This is the pathway of blessing for me.
Follow His leading and give Him my all.
Taking each trial as part of my cross.
Bring the weary to find rest in Him.
Jesus, Lord and Savior, I give myself to Thee; For

Thou, in Thy atonement, Didst give Thyself for me; I

own no other Master, My heart shall be Thy throne; My

life I give, henceforth to live, O Christ, for Thee alone.
Word Search Answer Key

Recommended Resources

- 2019 Biblical Character Illustrated Calendar
- Hymns for the Family CDs
  (“Living for Jesus” is sung to piano accompaniment on Volume 4.)
- The Power for True Success
- Character Cards
- Character Cards Memory Game
- Character Sketches, Volumes 1–3
- Achieving True Success
- My Heart, Christ’s Home by Robert Boyd Munger
- Heroes of Faith - Dwight L. Moody in booklet or audio drama CD series
- “How to Be an Effective Speaker” (Message by Larry Guthrie, available at embassymedia.com.)

To view these resources and many more, visit us at: store.iblp.org

Hymn History Bibliography
