



Biblical Principles vs. Children's Stories

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Part 1: Introduction – What Stories Teach Us

- **Objective:** Introduce the class to the concept of moral lessons in fairy tales and how these stories shape our understanding of right and wrong.
- **Key Stories to Discuss:**
 - *The Little Red Hen* (selfishness and sharing)
 - *The Prodigal Son* (forgiveness and generosity) – Bible parallel
 - *The Boy Who Cried Wolf* (dishonesty and its consequences)
- **Key Bible Passages:**
 - Luke 15:11-24 (Prodigal Son) for contrast with *The Little Red Hen*
 - Matthew 25:35-40 (importance of helping others)
 - Colossians 3:9-10 (honesty and living a life renewed in Christ)
- **Expanded Discussion Points:**
 - How does *The Little Red Hen* reflect a "you only get what you earn" attitude, and how does that contrast with biblical generosity?
 - In *The Boy Who Cried Wolf*, what lesson does the story teach about honesty? How does this compare to biblical teachings on honesty and integrity?
 - Can you think of modern-day equivalents where society promotes self-interest over sharing? How can Christians counter this message?
- **Application:** Challenge participants to examine where they may have absorbed cultural values of self-reliance and individualism that contradict biblical teachings on generosity and helping others. Ask: How can we live out the principle of "giving without expecting anything in return"?

Part 2: Deception, Greed, and Accountability

- **Objective:** Explore themes of deceit and greed in popular stories, contrasting them with biblical teachings on honesty and stewardship.
- **Key Stories to Discuss:**
 - *Jack and the Beanstalk* (greed and theft)
 - *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* (trespassing and taking without permission)
 - *The Emperor's New Clothes* (vanity, pride, and deception)
- **Key Bible Passages:**



- Exodus 20:15 (commandment against stealing)
- Proverbs 21:6 (the dangers of ill-gotten gain)
- Luke 12:15 (warning against all kinds of greed)
- **Expanded Discussion Points:**
 - How is Jack's theft from the giant excused or justified in *Jack and the Beanstalk*? How does that compare to biblical teachings about greed and trust in God for provision?
 - In *The Emperor's New Clothes*, the entire community is complicit in the deception. What does this say about vanity and pride? How does this reflect the biblical warning against living for appearances (1 Samuel 16:7)?
 - How do modern stories (or movies) reinforce the idea that "the ends justify the means," and how does this differ from a biblical understanding of accountability?
- **Application:** Discuss how Christians can model integrity and accountability in a world where "getting ahead" often involves bending the rules. Encourage participants to reflect on where they see greed, deceit, or vanity in their own lives, and how they can take steps toward honesty and contentment in God.

Part 3: Themes of Revenge and Justice

- **Objective:** Examine how stories portray revenge or justice and compare these with biblical teachings on forgiveness and grace.
- **Key Stories to Discuss:**
 - *Hansel and Gretel* (revenge and survival)
 - *The Ant and the Grasshopper* (punishment vs. helping those in need)
 - *Beauty and the Beast* (judgment, redemption, and transformation)
- **Key Bible Passages:**
 - Romans 12:19 (leave room for God's wrath, do not seek revenge)
 - Matthew 5:44 (love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you)
 - James 2:13 (mercy triumphs over judgment)
- **Expanded Discussion Points:**
 - How does *Hansel and Gretel* frame the children's violent response to the witch's cruelty? What might the biblical response to such a situation be, focusing on grace and forgiveness?
 - In *The Ant and the Grasshopper*, should the Ant have shown mercy to the Grasshopper, given the biblical call to help those in need, even if they "deserve" their situation?
 - Discuss *Beauty and the Beast* as a story of redemption and transformation. How can we relate the Beast's change to the biblical message of heart transformation and God's mercy in making us new creations (2 Corinthians 5:17)?
- **Application:** Ask participants to consider real-life situations where they have faced the temptation to seek revenge or withhold help from someone they felt "deserved" hardship. Encourage reflection on the power of mercy and grace, both in receiving it from God and extending it to others.

Part 4: Modern Lessons – What Are We Teaching Today's Children?

- **Objective:** Conclude by examining the long-term effects of these stories on children's moral development, and how biblical principles can be reinforced in today's world.
- **Key Stories to Discuss:**



- *Rumpelstiltskin* (deals and manipulation)
- *Cinderella* (external beauty vs. internal character)
- *Snow White* (jealousy, vanity, and justice)
- **Key Bible Passages:**
 - Matthew 6:19-21 (treasures in heaven)
 - 1 Samuel 16:7 (God looks at the heart, not outward appearance)
 - Proverbs 31:30 (beauty is fleeting, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised)
- **Expanded Discussion Points:**
 - In *Rumpelstiltskin*, the miller's daughter relies on deals and manipulation to achieve her goals. How does this compare to the biblical call to trust in God and avoid compromising integrity (Proverbs 3:5-6)?
 - *Cinderella* and *Snow White* both focus on external beauty, either as a reward or something to be envied. How do these stories influence children's perceptions of appearance versus character? How does the Bible call us to value inner beauty and godliness over outward looks?
 - Discuss how children's stories today (cartoons, movies) continue to shape moral understanding. Are there modern stories that better align with biblical values?
- **Application:** Encourage participants to reflect on how they can share stories or lessons that align with biblical values in their homes, schools, or communities. Challenge them to think about how they can counter the cultural messages of beauty, manipulation, or revenge with lessons of love, grace, and inner character.

Final Reflection:

At the end of the series, you could lead a final reflection or activity where participants are encouraged to write or discuss how they will intentionally incorporate biblical values into their storytelling, parenting, teaching, or interactions with others. This can serve as a powerful way to translate the lessons into real-life practice.

Throughout the series, encourage participants to engage with the material not just intellectually, but personally. Ask how these discussions can shape their daily interactions and the values they pass on to future generations. By the end of the series, aim to empower your class to view popular stories critically, with a strong grounding in biblical principles.