

Lesson 5 / June 29, 2008

# Don't Peek: A Look at an Honest Life

for use as

## STEP 1



Lesson 5

### Focus:

Always be honest.

Lesson 5

### Bible Basis:

Exodus 20:16;  
John 8:44;  
Matthew 26:31-35, 56b;  
Luke 22:54-62

**Students will explore how God feels about honesty, and what dishonesty can do to relationships. They will learn that lying may be acceptable in the world's eyes, but God holds His children to a higher standard. Jesus wants us to always be honest!**

#### Materials:

- Toys (optional)
- Baby blanket (optional)

In April of this year, ABC News shared a story about research being done at McGill University in Montreal. The researchers gathered child volunteers ages 3-14 for experiments to study the role of lying in children's development. In one study, kids were taken into a room, told to face the wall and not to turn around. A toy that made a recognizable noise was then placed on the table, and the children were told to guess what the toy was without peeking. But when the supervising adult left the room, time after time the kids would take a look. In fact, 80 percent of the kids peeked within seconds of being alone. Then, when the adult returned to the room and asked if the child turned around, the kids tended to lie. *The researchers found that 74 percent of kids ranging in age from 4 to 7 lied about it.*

In today's lesson, we're going to explore how God feels about honesty, and what dishonesty can do to relationships. To start, we'll be discussing the experiment the researchers in Montreal did. You can present this information in one of two ways. If you have Internet capability or a mobile Internet device, we encourage you to show them the ABC news video

<http://abcnews.go.com/Video/playerIndex?id=4569254>.

It shows some of the experiment footage where several kids are caught lying. On the other hand, if you don't have Internet access, you can present this experiment in a fun way by making it into a skit. Bring a few common toys that make recognizable noises (police car, crying baby doll, etc.) from home (or grab them from the church nursery), and then ask three students to act as the little children in the skit. This skit will work really well if you pick students who love being in front of a crowd or are good at acting silly. Encourage your student actors to have fun acting like little kids by sucking their thumbs or holding onto a baby blanket. You may want to watch the video several times so that you familiarize yourself with the experiment. You should play the role of the experimenter. Make sure you give your student actors very clear instructions so that they can simply play off of what you say. You may also choose to have all three actors lie or have one of them tell the truth.

Lesson 5  
**Memory Verse**

Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body.

— Ephesians 4:25

Once you have presented your skit or shown the ABC News video, say **This was an actual experiment conducted in Montreal. The researchers discovered that 74 percent of kids ranging in age from 4 to 7 lied about peeking. Can you believe that! 74%!!!**

- ▶ **Why do people lie? Why do you think the kids in the video/skit lied?**  
*(They are being selfish or lazy, exaggerating the truth for attention, or are afraid of the consequences of their actions.)*
- ▶ **What things in your life put pressure on you to lie?**
- ▶ **Is it easier to lie or tell the truth? Why?**
- ▶ **If you were one of the little kids in that experiment, what do you think you would have done?**

Today, we're going to look at how God feels about honesty, and what dishonesty can do to relationships. We'll specifically be looking at the story of one man and how lying affected him.

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Websites:

<http://abcnews.go.com/Health/story?id=4566602>

<http://abcnews.go.com/Video/playerIndex?id=4569254>

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your *Middle School Teacher's Guide*; your Step 4 appears below.)

Lesson 5 / June 29, 2008

# Don't Peek: A Look at an Honest Life

for use as

## STEP 4

Lesson 5

### Focus:

Always be honest.

Lesson 5

### Bible Basis:

Exodus 20:16;  
John 8:44;  
Matthew 26:31-35, 56b;  
Luke 22:54-62

### Materials:

- Copies of the two news stories
- Scrap paper and pens/pencils
- Wastebasket or paper shredder (optional)

**S**tart out this step by splitting your class into two groups. If you have a large class, you should consider splitting them into 4 or more groups. You will give each group one of the following two stories. It would be a good idea to copy and paste each story into a Word document and then cut out any unneeded or questionable material.

Story #1 – LONDON - A 67-year-old woman who is believed to be the world's oldest new mother told a British Sunday newspaper she lied to a U.S. fertility clinic—saying she was 55—to get treatment. (link to full story below)

Story #2 – JACKSON, Miss. - Jack Lucas, who at 14 lied his way into military service during World War II and became the youngest Marine to receive the Medal of Honor, died Thursday in a Hattiesburg, Miss., hospital. He was 80. (link to full story below)

Have each group of students read their assigned story and then answer these questions as a group:

- ▶ **What was the short-term benefit to lying? Why did this person lie?** (*Wanted to be a mom, wanted to be in the military. Both succeeded.*)
- ▶ **What was the long-term consequence? What happened to them?** (*Her twins are growing up without a daddy. She is a very old new mom. The twins may have no one else to raise them if she dies earlier than expected. He was nearly killed fighting in the war. He had to continue to lie to his military superiors.*)
- ▶ **Was it okay that they lied? What other people might have been harmed because they lied?** (*No, they should not have lied. A lot of other people could have been hurt by their lies. The fertility clinic could have gotten in trouble and the other men in Jack's military unit could have been hurt because of his young age.*)

After each group has developed their answers, have them share those answers with the rest of the group. Take a moment to discuss both news stories.

Lesson 5  
**Memory Verse**

Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body.

— Ephesians 4:25

After you're done discussing, say, **A lot of times we lie because it benefits us in the short term. Take a moment to think about some of the things you have lied about in the past. Write those lies down on this scrap piece of paper. No one will see these pieces of paper; they are for your eyes only. If you don't want to write down the specific lie, write down a single word that will help you remember that lie. Then, write down the short-term benefit and long-term consequence of that lie.**

After they have had a few minutes to work on their own specific lies, take some time to share some "lies" that they may not have considered to be lies. For instance, point out that doing someone else's homework (or having someone else do yours) is lying to the teacher. Also make it clear that not telling the whole truth can also be a form of lying. If you tell your parents where you're going and what you'll be doing, but conveniently leave out something you're afraid they won't approve of, that's also lying.

After you've shared, open your Bible and read Romans 5:8: **"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."** Remind your students of God's AMAZING love for them. Remind them that He gave His life despite the fact that they've lied! Invite each student to come to the front of the class and tear up their paper with their lies on it. As they tear, read Romans 5:8 and insert their name into the text. (If you would prefer, you may use a paper shredder instead.)

Close with a prayer, asking the Lord to help us live honest and authentic lives!

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Websites:

World's oldest new mom lied about age  
<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/16850751/>

Medal of honor's youngest recipient dies  
<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2008/06/05/national/main4156551.shtml>

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