Explore: Motives Behind Our Actions

I Kings 17:1-7: Elijah Is Fed by Ravens

Elijah was fed by ravens in the wilderness. The ravens picture false ideas that may sustain us for a time, but must be replaced by true ideas for us to grow spiritually. Today's discussion takes a closer look at the spiritual dimensions of friendship, focusing on the inner qualities of true friendship.



Supplies Needed for Each Student

- copy of discussion page "Motives Behind Our Actions" (see attached sheet)
- *optional:* paper and pen or pencil

Discussion

Follow discussion guidelines. To extend this activity further, distribute paper and pens and encourage students to consider "What's In It For Me" by themselves. If appropriate, invite the students to share general observations they may have made about themselves, e.g. I was surprised by_____, or I've never thought about_____ before. Here are a few questions to help you:

In thinking about your relationship with another person:



1. Was there anything that surprised you?

2. How might you go about making changes in this relationship?

3. What do you have control over in a relationship, and what are you unable to control?

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Who is good?



A person who

- is always willing to give you advice?
- apologizes when they have hurt you?
- is friendly to someone but criticizes them behind their back?
- listens to your concerns?
- goes to church each week?

1. Can a person's behavior tell you whether a person is good or not?
2. Why or why not?

Who Are Your Friends?

People who

- are fun to be with?
- like the same kinds of things you like?
- believe the same kinds of things you do?
- are there to talk to when you need help?
- make you feel good?

1. What makes a true friend?
2. Have you been friends with someone who let you down? Did your opinion of the other person change when this happened? How?
3. Are you a true friend to someone if you say nothing when you know they are being dishonest?
4. What are we really making friends with in another person?

Who are the Lord's Friends?

The Lord

- is friends with people who do whatever He commands (John 15:14)
- laid down His life for His friends (John 15:13)
- calls us His friends (John 15:15)
- was betrayed by His friends
- called Judas "friend" even after he betrayed Him



1. The Lord loves everyone—and no matter what we do, He will remain our Friend. But every friendship involves two people. How can we be a friend to the Lord?

What's In It For Me?

Focus on one friendship. Ask yourself:

- Why do I like this person?
- What's in it for me?
- Am I a true friend to this person?
- What is one thing I can do this week to be a real friend to him or her?

TEACHER COPY

Motives Behind Our Actions

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1. Can a person's behavior tell you whether a person is good or not? (No! Only the Lord knows that.)
2. Why or why not? (A person's inner motivations might not be what they appear to be on the surface. Also, a single act or mistake may not show us the whole picture.)

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1. The Lord loves everyone—and no matter what we do, He will remain our Friend. But every friendship involves two people. How can we be a friend to the Lord? (Do justly, love mercy, walk humbly with our God.)



What's In It For Me?

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