

July 15, 2018: Proper 10-B:

Texts: Amos 7:7-15; Psalm 85:8-13 Ephesians 1:3-14; Mark 6:14-29

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE¹

Theme: Be a Truth Teller

Objects: Copy of the book *Pinocchio*; a flashlight

Good morning. I'm so glad you're here today. Today we're going to play a game called "Truth or Lie." I will tell you something that is either a truth or a lie. See if you can guess which is a lie and which is a truth.

Truth or Lie Game Questions:

1. This church building we're currently sitting in is over 200 years old. (*Lie: 150+ years.*)
2. Cinderella's carriage turns into an onion at the stroke of midnight. (*Lie: into a pumpkin.*)
3. Red is the color at the top of a rainbow. (*True.*)
4. The molten rock that comes from a volcano after it has erupted is known as lava. (*True.*)
5. The center of the earth is hotter than the surface of the sun? (*True: the earth's center is ~10,800° Fahrenheit; the sun's surface is ~10,000° degrees.*)
6. Hogwarts is the name of the school that Spider-Man attended. (*Lie: That's Harry Potter's school.*)
7. Acorns are nuts that grow on oak trees. (*True.*)
8. Raspberry jelly is a sweet that is produced by honey bees. (*Lie – bees produce honey.*)
9. New York is the capital city of the United States? (*Lie: Washington D.C. is the capital.*)

Sometimes it's hard to know if something someone says to us is the truth or is a lie. But here's another question for you. Is it okay to tell a lie if it gets you what you want or gets you out of trouble? (*Wait for responses from children.*)

In the fairy tale *The Adventures of Pinocchio*,² the carpenter Geppetto creates a wooden marionette puppet, named Pinocchio (*Show the book with its cover picture.*). Pinocchio comes to life but he is a mischievous puppet. As he ventures out into the world, he often gets carried away by bad company; and he is prone to lying. Who remembers what happens when Pinocchio tells a lie? (*Let children respond.*) That's right – his nose grows longer and longer and longer. If you told two or three lies today how long do you think your nose would be? (*Let children answer.*)

In the Bible there were men and women who told the truth. They did not tell lies. They are called prophets and prophetesses.

John the Baptist was one of these truth-tellers. John told King Herod that it was not lawful for him to marry his brother's wife. He told the truth to Herod. But Herod didn't like what John told him and so he had him put in prison. Then King Herod had John killed.

¹Based on a children's sermon by Arley K. Fadness. <https://www.store.sermonsuite.com/cssplus/truth-tellers>

²Author is Carlo Collodi (1883).

To tell the truth is like putting light into a dark place. (*Demonstrate with a light.*) But it can be costly or even dangerous to tell the truth. You could lose a friend by telling the truth. For example, imagine that you and a friend go into a store and your friend says to you:

“Let’s take a candy bar from the candy rack; we can do it secretly and slip it in our pocket so that no one will know. Then we’ll have a treat and not have to pay for it. We won’t get into any trouble because no one will know.”

What should you do? Should you go along with your friend’s suggestion and steal the candy bar or should you tell your friend the truth that taking something that doesn’t belong to you is wrong? What might happen if you speak the truth to your friend? (*Wait for responses.*) If you speak the truth to your friend, you might lose that person as your friend. But in the long run it is always better to tell the truth even if the truth hurts. However, we need to remember to speak the truth to others in a loving way, because love is the greatest virtue.

We can all be truth tellers. We also know that God is with us when we speak the truth. And do you know what the best truth of all is? It’s to tell others that God loves us even when our noses have grown long like Pinocchio's.

Prayer: Thank you, dear Lord, for prophets who tell the truth. Help us to always speak the truth in love to others. Amen.