Religious Studies

Grade: 5

Curriculum Notes (Easter Term)

Topic: Choices

Decision-making is a process that involves several steps:

- Identify problem
- Gather information
- Find alternatives/other possibilities
- Evaluate alternatives
- Decide & implement
- Follow up

The story of the Prodigal Son relates an example of poor and good decision making. The following poor decisions were made by the son: a) he left the comforts of home b) he asked for his inheritance before time c) he spent his money foolishly. In the end, the Prodigal Son decided to return to his father and to beg for forgiveness.

Individuals should evaluate decisions they make on a daily basis. People who make good decisions enjoy the benefits while those who make bad ones tend to regret them. It is very important to think about the decisions we make.

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Topic: Growing with Values

(i) Compassion

Compassion is defined as a feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for someone struck by misfortune, accompanied by a desire to alleviate the suffering; mercy, kindness.

Jesus often took pity on the crowds that followed Him. Mark 6:34 states that Jesus "was moved with compassion for them because they were like sheep not having a shepherd." He went on to alleviate their hunger by providing food for all. He also showed compassion by healing their diseases on many occasions.

Since Christians strive to follow Christ's example, compassion for others must be nurtured and developed. I Peter 3:8 states that we must have compassion for one another. Compassion is desperately needed in a world where sickness, poverty, disease and other ills are so widespread.

Matthew 25:35-40 gives practical examples of how compassion can be shown. They include: feeding the hungry, welcoming strangers, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and visiting those in prison. Children can show compassion in simple ways such as being kind to others, sharing their lunch and welcoming new students.

(ii) Fair/Just

The word "fair" means free from bias (prejudice), dishonesty or injustice. "Fairness means treating other people the way you want to be treated. It means trying to give everyone rights and chances like those you have." (What Do You Stand For? For Kids)

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There are many reasons why people are sometimes treated unfairly. People are sometimes treated unfairly because of their race, religion or nationality. People are generally unfair because they lack respect for others.

There are many ways individuals can endeavor to treat people fairly. They include the following: • Share and take turns • Decide not to be jealous • Respect all people.

The Golden Rule states," Do unto others as your would have them do unto you." It is based on the scripture, Luke 6:31. This rule suggests that we must treat others as we want to be treated.

(iii) Honesty

Honesty is one of the best values individuals can nurture in their lives. When individuals are honest, people trust and respect them more. They also demonstrate to God that they value His truth. Deuteronomy 5:20 commands, "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Dishonesty was displayed by a number of biblical characters. Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5) and both were struck down dead. David lied to Achish, the Philistine ruler, by pretending to be loyal to him. (1 Samuel 27-29). God rescued him although he didn't deserve it.

Being honest requires a choice: to tell truth or lies. With choices come positive or negative reactions. Dishonesty can result in people being hurt, individuals being expelled from school and people being sent to jail.

Honest behaviour must be demonstrated in our daily lives. Individuals can demonstrate honesty by being truthful, genuine (the real you) and trustworthy.

(iv) Reliable

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To be reliable is to be consistently dependable in character, judgement, result or performance. People who are reliable can be trusted to complete assignments on time, show up to events and perform consistently.

Two biblical characters who exemplified reliability are the disciple John and Ruth. John was the disciple who remained close to Jesus. When Jesus was on the cross, He entrusted the care of His mother to John. Jesus knew he could rely on John. Ruth demonstrated that she was reliable when she refused to leave her motherin-law Naomi.

Reliability fosters security, trust and faith. In families and communities this creates stability, justice and peace. Schools will not function well if the staff and students are not reliable. Businesses will not function well and make money if employees are not reliable.

TOPIC: CARING FOR GOD'S CREATION

God gave the Leviticus laws to help people live peacefully with each another. The laws gave special attention to the poor, to orphans, to foreigners, and to those who were unable to earn a living. The laws stressed God's desire that all people be cared for and treated with compassion, no matter what their status in society. These laws extended to animals.

Many of the Leviticus laws are not relevant to society today. One of the laws states that if someone deliberately kills someone else he should be put to death. Today, it is not easy to execute someone, even if he/she has committed murder. We can however, apply the laws which limit vengeance and which encourage protection of foreigners, orphans and animals.

It is important to promote the need to care for people and animals in society. This is usually done by agencies and special groups in society. In The Bahamas, the Department of Social Services supervises the protection of special groups in society, especially children and the elderly. The Humane Society

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promotes the rights of animals. We can all do our part to encourage the protection and care of people and animals in society.

TOPIC: RIGHTS/RESPONSIBILITIES

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that all human beings are born free and equal. They are entitled to basic rights and freedoms:

a) Speech and movement

b) Religion

c) Peaceful assembly

d) Free primary education

e) Work and employment

However, they are to be protected from:

a) Torture and slavery

b) Degradation

c) Arbitrary arrest and exile

The Bible contains several passages that relate to the basic rights of humans. Colossians 3:11 and Galatians 3:28 tell us that we should not discriminate. Proverbs 14:31 gives warnings against oppressing the poor. Leviticus 19:10 states that we must provide for the poor. Ephesians 4:28 encourages everyone to earn an honest living.

As previously stated, all human beings have rights. With these rights come the responsibility to act within the confines of the law and to respect the rights

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and opinions of others. Galatians 5:13 states that even though we are free, we must be controlled by love.

Because the rights of individuals are not protected in all countries around the world, individuals should be grateful for the rights they enjoy in The Bahamas. This gratitude can be expressed verbally. More importantly it should be demonstrated in our daily attitudes and conduct.

TOPIC: LOVE AND FORGIVENESS

Love and forgiveness go hand in hand; when you love someone, you also have to forgive their trespasses. It is very important to demonstrate love and forgiveness within the family structure. Families become stronger and more united when love is expressed and forgiveness is freely demonstrated.

Unforgiveness results in bitterness and this can affect individuals both mentally and physically. It can cause stress, conflict and even severed relationships. It may be difficult to forgive a family member, but once you forgive them you eventually feel better.

The story of Joseph is an excellent example of how forgiveness can bring about reconciliation within the family. Joseph was betrayed by his brothers and sold into slavery. In the end, he was able to forgive his brothers. He realized that all he had experienced was a part of God's plan to save a generation of people. This power to forgive caused his family to be reunited and allowed his father, Jacob, to die in peace.

Problems that arise in the family should be solved in a loving manner. If family members hurt one another they should identify the problem, deal with it calmly and forgive one another. The suggestions in the section, "Seven Ways to be Forgiving," could easily be applied when solving problems.

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TOPIC: CELEBRATING EASTER

According to Webster's Dictionary, the word "sacrifice" means the offering of something to a deity, as in propitiation; something so offered; to surrender for the sake of something else. The word propitiation comes from the word propitiate which means to appease or conciliate. A sacrifice is therefore intended to appease a deity.

In the Old Testament, lambs and other animals were used as sacrifices when persons committed sin. The priest usually offered sacrifices on behalf of the people. Sacrifices were offered year after year for sin. The New Testament records the death of Jesus on the cross. Jesus was referred to as the "Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." (John 1:29) After Jesus' death animal sacrifices were no longer needed.

Jesus sacrificed His life so that mankind everywhere could have eternal life. Because of Jesus death, anyone who believes in Him "shall not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) This sacrifice appeased God fully. Individuals now have the freedom to approach God because of the death of Jesus (Hebrews 10:22). Through Jesus' death the lives of individuals can be transformed.

Jesus sacrificed His life to save mankind. Individuals are required to sacrifice their time, money, talents and even their lives to help others. Romans Chapter 12 verse 1 states that we must offer our bodies as living sacrifices to God.

Although the world was filled with sin, God loved it so much that He sent His only Son to die for mankind. This was the ultimate sacrifice and showed the extent of God's love. In John 15:13 Jesus states, "The greatest love you can have for your friends is to give your life for them."

Because of Jesus' love for mankind He endured much pain and suffering. Jesus was whipped, mocked and teased cruelly. A crown of thorns was pressed on His head. He had to carry a heavy cross on the way to Golgotha. He was nailed to the cross with large nails where He endured the brutal death of crucifixion.

God's love and ultimate sacrifice for mankind through the death of His Son, Jesus, has impacted the whole world. Individuals in every part of the world

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have experienced salvation from sin. This transformation of the hearts of individuals has resulted in the love of Jesus being spread throughout the world. God's love helps, teaches and heals us.

The message of God's love should be demonstrated by Christians every day. They should show this love in the way they treat others. The Bible states, "My children, our love should not be just words and talk; it must be true love, which shows itself in action." (I John 3:18) If we love God, we cannot hate others. (I John 4:20-21)

Jesus' resurrection is an event of great triumph. Jesus died on Good Friday and was resurrected three days later. Many individuals were witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus, namely Mary Magdalene and the disciples. Through Jesus' resurrection He triumphed over death and sin. (I Corinthians 15:56-57)

The resurrection gives hope to all believers that one day they will also rise from the dead. (Corinthians 15:21-24) It also reminds them that God is able to forgive sins and bring hope to a world that seems hopeless. Hope gives life meaning and makes it worth living. During times of sickness, struggle, conflict or hardship, people may feel hopeless. However, because of Jesus' resurrection there is hope for the future.

There are many scriptures which relate to living a life of hope because of Jesus' resurrection. I Thessalonians 4:13 states that even when someone dies we should not be "sad as those who have no hope." 1 Peter 1:3 states that Jesus' resurrection gives believers a 'living hope." Romans 12: 12 states, "Let your hope keep you joyful, be patient in your troubles, and pray at all times."

This message of hope should be shared with people everywhere. It should be shared with the sick, those who are lost in sin and those who have lost loved ones. It could be shared through drama, singing, and the electronic and print media.

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