

Lesson 7.7 Jesus' Assertiveness: I-statements

Topic: Model for Peacemaking
Subtopic: Integrity
3G. Integrity, Honesty and Justice
4B. Communication Skills

Class: Standard IV (Grade 4)

Objectives: **Knowledge:** Students will be able to write an I-statement.

Attitude: Students will try to be assertive without being belligerent.

Materials Needed:
Blackboard and Chalk
Exercise book

References: Matthew 22:15-22, 34-40,
Matthew 23:27-28

Memory Verse: Ephesians 4:26

Teacher Activities

Introduction: *Optional.* Songs and Prayer. Ask students if they have used any peacemaking skills like saying No or being calm when teased. Have them share about it. Today we will learn another peacemaking skill.

Bible Story: Ask students what they remember about last week's lesson.

Application: Explain I-statements.
Small Group Discussion – Think of things that cause anger and then each person give an I-statement for a time when they get angry.

Evaluation: Try using an I-statement next time you are angry. Is it helpful to share what you want? Encourage students to use I-statements when you can tell they are frustrated or upset.

Student Activities

Introduction: Share examples of times they have used peacemaking skills.

Bible Story: Students review the last lesson. The Jewish leaders tried to trick Jesus with questions but He stayed calm and answered their questions. Then he told them how he felt about their hypocrisy.

Application: Review I-statements and give a few examples.
Small Groups. Discuss situations that cause them to be angry and then say an I-statement.
Journal. Write two examples of I-statements.

Evaluation: Are students able to write two I-statements? Make sure they use a feeling word and do not turn it into a statement of blame. Is everyone participating in the groups?

Extension Activities: *Memory Verse.* Discuss the memory verse. Point out that everyone gets angry but we must choose what we will do when we are angry. I-statements are one thing we can do. Discuss other choices. Then have students practice the verse with their small groups.

Roleplays. Have students roleplay situations they have talked about in small groups and show how they would use an I-statement.

Notes for Teacher

We return to last week's story and explore how Jesus was assertive. Students will learn how to use I-statements to express feelings in a non-threatening way.

Key Points: A peacemaker sometimes needs to speak assertively. I-statements are one way to be assertive.

Introduction: Encourage students to share examples of times when they or another student used peacemaking skills like saying NO or walking away when others were tempting or teasing them.

Bible Story: Ask students what they remember about the last lesson. If they do not remember it, use these questions to review:

- Who tried to get Jesus to argue with them? (Sadducees and Pharisees)
- Why did they do that? (They wanted to trap Him into saying something they could use against Him in court)
- How did Jesus react? (He stayed calm and gave a wise answer to their questions; then He let them know that He knew they were being hypocrites—they didn't really want to know the answers to their questions, they were just trying to start an argument)

Jesus was not intimidated by the Jewish Leaders. He stayed calm and answered their questions but then He told them how He felt and let them know He did not like their sneaky, dishonest ways. Remind students that the Holy Spirit can help us know what to say. If we stay calm we will think more clearly and be able to give a calm answer.

Application: Sometimes we don't know how to speak without getting very angry so we just stay quiet and then we are angry inside. We may even hold a grudge and stay angry but not know how to express it without starting a fight. It is better to speak up for ourselves as Jesus did but we need to do it in a way that isn't accusing or belligerent. One way to give a calm response is to say how you feel with an **I-statement**. An I-statement tells how you feel but it does not do any name-calling, blaming or making excuses. Write the following on the board:

I feel _____ when _____
I want _____.

Here is an example Jesus might have said to the Pharisees:

I feel angry when you pretend like you want to learn but you just want to start a fight.

I want you to stop asking me questions.

Feelings. Have the students think of words that describe feelings and write the words on the board. Examples: frustrated, irritated, enraged, lonely, curious, disappointed, tired, excited, happy, sad. Then invite students to think of a time they felt like one of those emotions and think of an I-statement for it. Have students give several examples. *Here is one more example:*

I feel irritated when someone plays calls me names.

I want them to stop doing it.

Small groups. After several class examples, have students get into small groups and share examples of things that make them feel angry. Then have them go around the circle and let each person give an example of an I-statement.

Journal. Have each student write two I-statements using two different emotion words.

I feel angry... I feel lonely... (or two words of their own choice)