

Character Trait for October 11-17 is Forgiveness

Ephesians 5:1, "Therefore, be imitators of God"

CHARACTER: qualities built into our lives that determine our responses, regardless of circumstances.

Forgiveness: Clearing the record of those who have wronged me and not holding a grudge. Forgiveness involves restoring relationships by relinquishing our right to revenge.

Weekly Verse: Luke 6:37 "Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven."

Bible Story: Luke 15:11-32 is the story that has come to be known as "The Prodigal Son".

Quote: In every language, the most difficult words to say are, "I'm sorry. Please forgive me."

Leadership: Like any other habit, a good character quality can be developed (and an undesirable character quality eliminated) by repeatedly making decisions and taking actions that reinforce the pattern of good character qualities. Each person is responsible for their thoughts, words and behavior. While there may be many factors that have impacted a person's development, they are still responsible for their own responses to these factors. New habits can be developed by all of us - to do so remains our responsibility. In our family, we try to stress that "you are only responsible for you" when it comes to changing behaviors.

Living in Community: Many schools focus on bullying prevention programs. However, I am a firm believer that you get more of what you focus on, and by putting their focus on bullying in my experience it can be made worse. At Santiam Christian, we choose to focus on character. If we can help to develop young men and women of great character and leadership, bullying will not be an issue. Also, if we emphasize how to live in community with others, we should develop a school where we care for each other instead of bullying each other. We choose to emphasize the positive and look for more of it.

Application: To practice forgiveness I will:

- be quick to forgive
- not cover up my own wrongs but will ask for forgiveness
- not seek revenge
- respond kindly to those who hurt me
- not take up offenses for others

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Did you have the opportunity to practice forgiveness this past week?
- 2) Why do you think it is so hard for us to ask for forgiveness?
- 3) How would you respond if you asked someone to forgive you and they said "no"?