

Matthew 23:24–28 1 Peter 2:1

BIBLICAL PASSAGE

MEMORY VERSE

Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. 1 Peter 2:1

Does anyone like being with a fake? Didn't think so. Nine times out of 10, if you were to ask people what is the most important characteristic in a relationship, they would use words like trust, honesty, and integrity. Whether or not they are Christians, people value authenticity in relationships. You will never hear someone say that they are marrying another because he or she is dishonest, or a fake. You also will never hear a candidate for president run on a platform of distrust.

Read Matthew 23:24–28. It's likely that although most people in Jesus' day feared the Pharisees, they

probably did not necessarily like them, or trust them. Most people can identify a fake in time. Sooner or later their disingenuous nature is going to start to bleed through their thin skin of truth.

Teenagers know the value of having friends who are honest. They learn this from an early age. The struggle is in growing into a person of integrity. Jesus named the problem: Knowing God's Laws and yet, choosing to live in disobedience. It's called hypocrisy. Our teenagers will follow our example one way or another. What example are you setting?

FAMILY DEVOTION TIME

Connect . . .

First, the family takes a poll: **What are the qualities you find most important in a relationship with another person?** Then, a family member enlists responses. If some of the same words are used, write them down on a sheet of paper. Then, using those words, call for a vote on which is the most important. Every family member gets two votes.

Finally, someone says: **Most people value honesty, authenticity, and integrity in a relationship. Why is this important to you?**

Explore . . .

First, a family member reads Matthew 23:24–28. Then, someone asks: **Who was Jesus talking to? Why do you think Jesus was speaking so harshly? Why did Jesus have little tolerance for being the hypocrisy of teachers of God's Laws? How does this serve as a warning to us?**

Transform . . .

The family discusses: **On a scale from 1–10, evaluate your level of integrity with your friends, brothers or sisters, parents, and people at church. What needs to happen in order that truth will prevail in your life, being lived out authentically, instead of being hidden behind an act?** Then, someone says: **Once again, think of words that could be used to help you walk with integrity. For example: Honesty, Confession . . . Which of these will you choose to carry out integrity in your life?**

Pray that your family members will allow God to make them into people of integrity, transforming their lives through His Word.