

challenging Charlie

Children's Story

Cycle C, Proper 15

Title: Challenging Charlie
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Church: Home Street Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, MB
Text: Luke 12: 49-56
Theme: Jesus knows it can be risky to stand up for God's ways.

Wondering Questions:

- I wonder why Charlie was so bossy.
- I wonder how Stephen felt when David stood up for him.
- I wonder what I would have done in that after school program.
- I wonder if David was praying when he took that deep breath before he challenged Charlie.

Gathering Activity:

Good morning, children. How is everyone today? Did you listen to the Scripture this morning from Luke? Who thinks they can tell me what it is talking about? I think it is telling us Jesus knows that following him might mean we disagree with people who do not follow Jesus. Have any of you ever fought with someone because you thought what they said or did was wrong? Me, too. Let's prepare ourselves to listen to a story about someone who stood up for God's way, even when it was hard. We will listen better if we settle into a comfortable position and connect with that quiet spot inside where we know we are close to God. (Pause) Are you ready?

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Story:

Once upon a time, there was a group of children in an after school program. In this group there was a girl named Charlie. Charlie expected everyone to do what she told them to do. If someone did not listen to her, she would tell mean lies about them to others, or she would tell others not to play with that person. One day during the after school program, David was doing some math homework on the pavement with Stephen, when Charlie came and told him she wanted him to move so that she and her friends could play a game. David moved, but he suspected that Charlie was going to play one of her teasing games with Stephen again, so he asked her, "Are you going to tease Stephen about his accent again?" Charlie replied, "Maybe, but that is none of your business, so move." David knew that Stephen's feelings were hurt when Charlie teased him for speaking differently. "Well, I know that, last time, your teasing game hurt Stephen's feelings a lot and I don't want you to tease him anymore." "Oh, you both are such babies! I was just joking! It's not my fault if he can't take it." David took a deep breath. Then he looked at her and said, "Charlie, you know people don't like being teased, and my parents and our teachers say that we should be nice to each other. And, my Sunday school teacher told us that Jesus wants us to help those who need help. Stephen only moved here a few months ago, and I am trying to help him have a better time at school. If that means you are going to pick on me instead, or tell others lies about me, fine, but I am not going to let you bully Stephen anymore." "Whatever," Charlie sighed, and walked away. And you know what? Charlie still teased David and Stephen after that, but lots of the others thought that David was very brave, and they decided to try and be braver, too. The children in the after school program became less scared of what Charlie might say about them, because

they knew it was not the truth. David chose to follow what he thought Jesus wanted, even though that meant standing up to a bully. Jesus knows that it is not always easy to follow him, but if we ask, Jesus will help us to stand up to others in order to follow Jesus' way.

Prayer:

Dear Jesus, You know that sometimes others do things that are not what you want. Help us to show them your way. Help us to be brave when we need to say or do things that are different from what others are doing, so that we can follow you. Amen.

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