

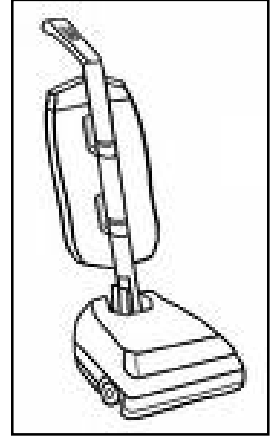
DON'T STINK!

Bible Principle: We should be careful to only watch, listen to, and think about good things.

Bible Verse: Philippians 4:8

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." (KJV)

Item(s) Needed: A vacuum cleaner OR a garbage can.



Teaching the Lesson:

1. *Introduce the lesson.* Gather your children and tell them that you "are going talk to them about how important it is to guard what we watch, listen to, and think about". Tell them you are going to learn specific things that are GOOD and when you read the Verse you are going to have them repeat them.

2. *Read Philippians 4:8.* As you are reading, have them repeat the words in bold. (i.e. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true". Everyone say TRUE. "whatsoever things are honest". Everyone say HONEST. etc.)

3. *Introduce your friend.* Next, tell them you want to introduce them to your friend. Bring out the vacuum cleaner or garbage can. Give your friend a name (Fred, Bob, Sally, or something like that).

4. *Introduce your friend's problem.* Tell them "Fred" has a problem. Let them guess what the problem might be. Then, tell them that his problem is that he stinks! Explain that he stinks because of all the bad things put in him. Let them tell you some stinky things that might be put in "Fred".

5. *Introduce a solution to the friend's problem.* Ask them to tell you some good smelling things that could be put into "Fred" that would help him smell good rather than stink.

6. *Stress the application of the Bible Verse.* Remind them that just like "Fred" could smell good or smell bad depending on what was put in him.... God tells us that what WE take in our heads has either good or bad effects too.

7. *How we take things in?* Ask the children how we can take things in our head. Help them (if needed) by pointing to your eyes and then your ears.

8. *Read Philippians 4:8 again.* Again, have them repeat the words in bold.

9. *Good things?* Ask them to name some good things to think about. (i.e. God, Jesus, Heaven, Bible, love, etc.) Do not be overly judgmental about their responses. Stress the good attributes of what they come up with. For example, a little girl may say "flowers". Well, this is part of God's creation and it is beautiful.

10. *Pray.* Lead a short prayer to God to thank Him for all of the great things He has given us to think about. Ask Him to help each of you ensure we are only putting good things in our heads.

After the Lesson: Here are some tips to make the effects of this lesson more powerful in your family's life.

#1: Point out to your children that this is one reason why Daddy / Mommy are very cautious about what the family can and can't watch. *(Note: Don't be a hypocrite. Truly guard both what the children AND you take into your heads.)* After being instructed about the Bible principle, your children will generally understand and appreciate the fact that Daddy / Mommy are looking out for their best interest. *(Note: If there is ever a misunderstanding in the future over what is watched, remind them of this Biblical principle and the fact that you are responsible to God as their parent.)*

#2: Recall and apply this lesson frequently – especially during the days and weeks immediately following the lesson. This will serve to instill the principle solidly within the minds of your children. You instill this principle by leading them to evaluate the expected content of various things. (i.e. "Sponge Bob is very rude and disrespectful.....is being rude and disrespectful good or bad? Right....it's bad. We had better watch something else." OR "Wow, that is a good thought! That is really doing what we learned last night.....being careful to think on good things. Good job!" OR at dinner time you can ask if anyone was cautious about thinking on good things and wants to share some of them.)

#3: Be aware that one of the most vital aspects in lessons such as this is that you are teaching your children the authority and wisdom of God's Word. You are instilling in your children the importance of learning and applying what God says as the guidebook for ones life.