

Activity: A Cord of Three Strands

Written by Michele Stamm, Trainer



Teaching Goal: We are not meant to live in isolation. God made us to be in relationship with others, and with Him.

Scripture: Proverbs 18:24 One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

Ecclesiastes 4: 9-12 Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work. If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

Materials: 4 cups
Dirt or water to fill one of the cups
3 steak knives {Always keep sharp objects away from little hands!}
Bible

- I. Play theme song
- II. Pray
- III. Review last lesson
- IV. Lesson and Discussion

☺ Words that are written in **bold** are when the leader is speaking. Feel free to use your own words.

A. **ACTIVITY:** Turn 3 of the cups upside down. Fill a fourth cup with dirt or water. Place the 4 cups, along with the 3 steak knives in the center of the table. **Kids, the dirt in this one cup represents the troubles in life (or the water represents the tears from when we have those troubles). And each steak knife represents a person.**

Balance the handle of one of the steak knives on the end of one of the upside-down cups, with the sharp part pointing off the edge, like a diving board. **Kids, do you think I can safely balance the cup with the dirt (or water) in it on the end of this knife?** (*They will likely answer no, which is true, you cannot.*) Lightly begin to rest the cup of dirt (or water) on the sharp end of the knife, demonstrating that it will not work.

Do you see how this one person cannot bear his troubles alone? Sometimes we think we can “man up” when we have troubles, that we can handle difficult things on our own. But that is not how we are created; God made us to live in relationship with others. We can and should support each other, especially in times of trouble. Feel free to expand the discussion by sharing examples from your own life, of when you were helped in times of trouble,

FAMILY TIME TRAINING

5511 S. Youngfield Street • Littleton, CO 80127 • 303-433-7010 • 866-433-7010

FAMTIME.COM • info@famtime.com • Find us on Facebook, Twitter & YouTube • @FamtimeTraining

or when you had the chance to help someone else.

And remember, we are talking about TRUE friends; friends who aren't just there for us in the fun times, but in the tough times as well. THAT is what a true friend is. Read Proverbs 18:24. Discuss the different kinds of friends talked about in this verse, unreliable ones compared to those who stick by us in times of trouble. Again, share stories from your own life. Encourage your kids to share examples from their lives as well.

Then arrange the three upside-down cups in a triangle, about a steak knife's distance from each other. Balance the knives on the three cups as before, with the handles balanced on the cups and the sharp ends pointing toward the middle. Intersect the sharp ends of all three knives in the center, leaving a small triangle in the very center of them. You are interweaving the three knives. (Hint: Each knife should weave UNDER the first knife it crosses and OVER the second one it crosses.) *SEE FIRST PHOTO BELOW.

Kids, do you think I can safely balance the cup with the dirt (or water) in it on these three knives? (They may answer yes or no, but you know you can!) Go ahead and balance that cup of dirt (or water) on top of the intersection of the three interwoven knives. *SEE SECOND PHOTO BELOW.

Read Ecclesiastes 4:9-12. **These words tell us that two are better than one, and that three is even better. When we are having a bad day, isn't it great when a friend or family member comes alongside us, to help us feel better? When we fail at something, isn't it great when someone encourages us to try again? Also, how much easier is it when we all work together to accomplish a task (clearing the table, cleaning the garage, shoveling the driveway)? We can encourage each other, even when the work is hard and we are feeling discouraged. Plus, the hard job gets done faster too! I challenge you to find ways you can be a true friend this week by supporting others.**

Some Bible scholars teach that the cord of three that we read about in Ecclesiastes 4:12 can be considered as two people who then invite Jesus to be the third. This is sometimes a verse shared at weddings; think about how much stronger a marriage is when the husband and wife support each other, and then also ask Jesus to be a part of their marriage...a cord of three strands...not quickly broken!

V. Memorize

God knows we need someone to call,
to help us up after we fall.

VI. Close in Prayer

VII. Pass It On

We welcome you to make an extra copy of this lesson and *pass it on* to another family.

