

BAHÁ'Í CHILDREN'S CLASS LESSONS

18. ACQUIRING VIRTUES

Greet the children as they arrive and have them sit quietly. Ask one or two children to say a prayer.

Today we are going to think about acquiring virtues. Virtues are our good qualities, and acquiring virtues means that we try to become better, that we try to improve our characters. Bahá'u'lláh said in the first Hidden Word **"O Son of Spirit! My first counsel is this: Possess a pure, kindly and radiant heart."**

'Abdu'l-Bahá has reminded us about the importance of improving our character. If I said to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, "I have a bad temper." What do you think he would say? Would he tell me to just accept that? No, of course not. He would encourage me to overcome it – to learn step by step to control my temper. So it is with our whole character, step by step we can improve.

'Abdu'l-Bahá says, **"It is essential that children be reared in the Bahá'í way (so) that they may find happiness both in this world and the next. If not, they shall be beset (attacked) by sorrows and troubles, for human happiness is founded upon spiritual behaviour."** (SWAB p.127)

Discuss the meaning of this quotation with the children so that they understand that our good behaviour brings us happiness.

One day a Bahá'í told 'Abdu'l-Bahá how discouraged he felt as he could not possibly gain all the good qualities expected of a Bahá'í. 'Abdu'l-Bahá said, **"Little by little, day by day."** (Vignettes, p.27)

At another time 'Abdu'l-Bahá expressed his own patience, waiting for the Bahá'ís to become better people. He said, **"Ah me, I am waiting, waiting, to hear the joyful tidings that the believers are the very embodiment of sincerity and truthfulness, the incarnation of love and amity, the living symbols of unity and concord. Will they not gladden my heart? Will they not satisfy my yearning? Will they not manifest my wish? Will they not fulfil my heart's desire? Will they not give ear to my call? I am waiting, patiently waiting."** (Vignettes, p.28)

Did you know that an ugly caterpillar changes into a beautiful butterfly? We can change our ugly behaviour into beautiful actions and gladden the heart of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. Today we can draw pictures showing lots of fat creepy, crawly caterpillars, and beautiful butterflies.

GROUP A

Colour the caterpillars and the butterflies. Try to draw more butterflies. Make a garden for them to live in. Remember that caterpillars also love to live in a vegetable garden!!

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GROUPS B AND C

Draw a garden with many caterpillars and butterflies.

TO FINISH

See that the children tidy up the room. Get them to repeat the sentence from the Hidden Word that they have learnt. We must learn not to say unkind things about other people. Have one or two children read or say a closing prayer.

ACQUIRING VIRTUES Group A These caterpillars will change into beautiful butterflies. Colour these and draw some more.

