

LOYALTY

THEME: SEMPER FIDELIS?

OPENERS:

1. Loyalty is the willing and thorough devotion of a person to a cause. - Josiah Royce
2. A synonym of loyalty is "fidelity." The motto of the Marine Corps is "Semper fidelis" or "always faithful."
3. In the military an officer does not take an oath of loyalty to the Commander-in-Chief. He takes an oath of loyalty to the Constitution. - Sam Donaldson
4. Loyalty to petrified opinion never broke a chain or freed a human soul. - Mark Twain
5. Some of the strongest words in the English language are reserved for those who violate their loyalties - adultery, betrayal, treason, treachery. - George P. Fletcher
6. Blind adherence to any object of loyalty - whether friend, lover, or nation - converts loyalty into idolatry. - George P. Fletcher
7. One of the most important ways to manifest integrity is to be loyal to those who are not present. - Stephen Covey
8. Patriotism is loyalty plus affection. - George P. Fletcher
9. Do not let loyalty and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck. - Proverbs 3:3
10. What is desirable in a person is loyalty.... - Proverbs 19:22a
11. The sexual act is a way of saying to the other: "You and only you matter to me. And I demonstrate this commitment by sharing this profound pleasure exclusively with you." Monogamous sexuality is a rite of pleasure that overcomes each partner's recurrent doubts whether the other is fully there. Not surprisingly, then, in a world of generally easy sexual contact, fidelity becomes a relatively greater need. Because disloyalty is so easy and so tempting, constant reassurance becomes mandatory. - George P. Fletcher

DISCUSSION PROBES:

1. Is it ever right to lie in order to maintain loyalty? Discuss.
2. Does loyalty to our nation necessarily imply patriotism to our nation?
3. Should people who refuse to respect the flag of our nation be considered disloyal? Should they be persecuted under law? Discuss.
4. Are you always faithful to our nation, to your friends, your family? Under what conditions is disloyalty OK?
5. What do you think about people who refuse to recite The Pledge of Allegiance? Discuss.
6. Do you think disloyalty or infidelity should be crimes punishable by law? Under what circumstances?
7. What would you do if you thought you were in a situation where you had a conflict between loyalty to your nation and loyalty to your religion? To your family?
8. Some people claim that pets are more loyal than humans. Others claim that animals will be attached to the person who feeds them. Who is right? Are animals loyal for the same reasons that people are loyal?
9. In the past certain groups of Americans including Jews, Catholics, Asians, Germans,

and Arabs have been questioned about their loyalty and fidelity to America. Does this still happen? To whom? Why? What can be done to create an atmosphere where people are not targeted for inappropriate discrimination?

10. Is it ever right to shift loyalties? When? Why? Discuss.

11. Someone has said that loyalties generally lead people to suspend judgment about right and wrong. Is this true? When you are loyal, are you blind to the facts? Discuss.

12. How do you feel about people who have been unfaithful or disloyal? Discuss.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. Most analysts believe that loyalty is a unique characteristic of humans and that animals do not actually "choose" to be loyal.

2. In the history of the world we have been much harsher and punitive on people who have betrayed their nation than we have on people who have been disloyal to their friends, lovers, or ideas.

3. Despite emotional claims and fervent statements about what a person claims he or she is loyal to, we can best judge a person's true loyalties by the person's behavior.

4. Conflicting loyalties often lead to great personal anguish.

BRINGING IT HOME:

1. Make a list of the people and causes to which you would never, ever be disloyal. Review the list once a year.

2. Review the oath that you took when you became a cadet in Civil Air Patrol. Reflect on the extent to which you have been loyal to your oath.

3. Talk with someone who you know has been disloyal or unfaithful to another person and find out how they feel about what they did.

4. Make an assessment about your own loyalties and disloyalties before you harshly criticize another person's behavior.