

Admit When You are Wrong

We make no claims as teachers or parents to be perfect. We make mistakes. Let's use those opportunities to model how to respond and apologise when it is appropriate. It provides a sense of vulnerability and reality for our students or children and one that they appreciate. The challenge is for us to swallow our pride, recognise when we need to sort things out, and lead by example. This is an aspect of true education when we portray Christianity in action.

The Home Economics teacher was away and as the Deputy Principal, I was supervising her Sewing Class. I quietly roamed around the room making sure they were productive and working effectively. Anna came in ten minutes late. I greeted her, established why she was late and then told her what we were doing and asked her to commence working. She went over and sat near Simon.

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I was only four or five metres away from the group, watching them, when I saw Anna grab the cutting board that Simon was using and then use it herself. I was almost certain she had not asked him for it. He appeared surprised it had been so abruptly taken from him.

Immediately I walked over to Anna and asked her if she had asked Simon if she could use the cutting board. She said, “No, I didn't.” I then asked her to please return the cutting board to Simon as that

was his to use and she had not asked appropriately. Begrudgingly she did so. She then returned to her seat and sat there sulking. After a few minutes, I sat down beside her to learn more.

She looked at me and asked, “Did you hear what he said to me?” I had to confess I did not. So then I asked her to share with me what had so clearly upset her. With a long history in school together, they oscillated between being great mates and bitter enemies. He had shared some very inappropriate comments, hence her immediate reaction to grab the cutting board.

I asked Simon to join us; he acknowledged what he had said. Due judgment was delivered and I apologised to Anna for not dealing with it fairly at the time. The next day her mother told me that Anna had told her that for the first time in her life, a teacher had apologised to her.

Nathan told King David to go ahead and build the temple for God. But then he had to go back and say to David, “I ran ahead of God. You are not going to be able to build the temple after all.” There are times when we have the best of intentions as parents or teachers, and yet we make a wrong judgment call. How will our children and students learn to rectify their mistakes if we do not model it for them?

Jesus provides absolute forgiveness but then also empowers us to change. That is what we need to portray to the people we interact with. Forgive and then expect the best. It is important that we provide a sense of how to sort things out when they go wrong for us. That level of vulnerability is just what our children and students need.

