

A good-behavior kid...

Divides the world into good people and bad people. Like Peter before he caught the fish, constantly tries to prove himself to be one of the good kids.

Is prone to sins of the tongue. Tells lies to protect her image, gets defensive when others criticize her, and gossips to make herself look better than others.

Mostly points out how others do wrong. Often talks about himself in comparison to others—like the Pharisee at the temple in Jesus's parable: "God, I thank you that I am not like other men" (Luke 18:11).

Participates in worship, prayer, and Bible study so that God or others will see and approve. Is conscious of what others think when praying aloud or speaking up in a group.

Needs for parents, teachers, and other kids to notice when she's been good. May obey at home and church but struggle with behavior at school or with non-Christian friends—when no believers are watching.

Only participates reluctantly in "embarrassing" Christian activities like telling others about Jesus. Is torn between what people outside the church will think and what those inside think, and is troubled with guilt over what God thinks.

May prefer light, "fun" church activities to those that involve real worship, serious study, or meaningful confession of sin. Those latter things carry too much pressure or self-exposure to be comfortable.

A good-news kid...

Sees only bad people and one good person—Jesus. Like Peter after he caught the fish, spends his life trusting and following that one good guy.

Admits when she's wrong and allows others to correct her without fear because her confidence is in Christ. Tells others about her weaknesses and congratulates them for their strengths.

Lets the sins of others go unnoticed. Knows God loves him whatever he's done, so willingly confesses his own sins—like the tax collector in Jesus's parable: "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" (Luke 18:13).

Participates in worship, prayer, and Bible study because she loves God and fellowship with him is a joy.

Obeys God even when no one else is around to notice it. Doesn't need to be rewarded with praise because, joined to Jesus, she feels enough approval from God already.

Doesn't worry what others think because he knows God loves him as a child. Jesus's love for him makes him eager to tell others.

Enjoys having fun with other believers, but mostly because the joy and freedom she feels in Christ spills over. Worship, Bible study, and confession of sin fuel her relationship with God—and with other believers.