

Gloating

Biblical Material: Proverbs 24.17

'Don't be glad when your enemy meets disaster, and don't rejoice when he stumbles. God knows when people gloat and does not like it.'

You will need:

- A large copy of the gloat (provided).
- Paper and a thick felt-tipped pen.

Introduction

When someone we do not like gets into trouble, it is tempting to gloat - to think they deserve it and to enjoy their misery. 'Serves them right,' we think. 'I told you so.'

Core Material

Read the Gloat poem and ask the pupils what they think the gloat might look like. They might like to draw their impression of a gloat. Show the picture, (enlarged or put on an acetate). This is how one person imagined a gloat. Ask the pupils what type of person a 'Gloat' might be.

The Gloat

The Gloat is an appalling creature
Be careful that it does not eat yer!
Its eyes are round, its lips are thin
And carved into a pompous grin.
Its head is large - it swells with pride
And nose in the air through life it glides.
Its frequent cry I'm sure you know:
It is, of course, 'I told you so.'

Read the Biblical Material. Jesus told a story about gloating.

'Once a religious leader and a tax collector went into the Temple to pray. The religious leader looked up to heaven and said, "I thank you God that I am not like other people. I don't steal or cheat like everyone else. I'm not like that tax collector over there." The tax collector stood at a distance and was so ashamed that he could not even look up. "Forgive me, God," he said. "I've done so much wrong." It was the tax collector who was right with God, said Jesus.' (Luke 18.9-14).

The religious leader had avoided many bad things. He did not steal etc, but his attitudes were wrong: he

gloated over the wrong of another person. In the Bible, it makes it clear that good actions are not enough, attitudes matter as well.

Prayer/Reflection

Using ideas from the assembly, pupils can create an acrostic prayer or use this one.

Gentle, make us gentle towards others.

Love, love must be the rule.

Attitude, attitudes matter.

Obedient, obedient to the golden rule:

'Treat others as you would want to be treated.'

Note. For guidance on prayers and reflections see pages 9-11.

