

Being Trustworthy – Supporting the Core Activities

Narrator: There is a well-known legend of two friends, Damon and Pythias, that has come to symbolize trust and loyalty in friendship. It is suggested that you tell the story to the children today, explaining that it is a very old tale from the early history of humanity.

Narrator: Ever since they were children, Damon and Pythias had been friends. They played together and studied together and shared many of their thoughts with each other. They were so close that they trusted each other completely. There was a true friendship; they would do anything to help each other.

Now, Damon and Pythias traveled to a city called Syracuse, which had a powerful king named Dionysius. There Pythias began giving public speeches that called into question the king's unlimited power. Any king who took power without the permission of the people was an unjust tyrant, he told the crowds that stopped to listen. When he learned of Pythias' growing influence among his people, Dionysius became convinced that he was trying to overthrow him. Angry and fearful, the king had Pythias and his friend Damon brought before him.

Dionysius, questioning Pythias says: "Why are you causing unrest among the people?"

Pythias: "There is nothing wrong in what I do, "I speak only the truth. "

Dionysius: "I do not believe you. You are trying to overthrow me. Tell the people you were not speaking the truth."

Pythias: "I will not.

Dionysius: "Then you must die. What is your last request?"

Pythias: I would like to be allowed to return to my family to say good-bye and put my things in order.

Dionysius scoffed at him: "I would be a fool to let you leave Syracuse and expect you to return.

Pythias: I give you my word that I will return.

Narrator: But the king would not hear of it.

Just then Damon breaks in

Damon: "Pythias will return if you keep me as your prisoner while he is away, and if he breaks his promise, you may kill me instead. Surely you have heard of our friendship. You must believe, as I do, that Pythias would never allow his friend to be executed in his place."

Dionysius: Hmmm. Let me think about this. Ok. I accept this unusual proposal, but I give you a

warning. Pythias must return by a week from tomorrow; otherwise Damon will be killed.

Narrator: As the days passed and Pythias did not return, the king was sure that Damon would regret his selfless act. He decided to visit Damon in jail to see whether he thought himself a fool for trusting Pythias.

Dionysius: How are you feeling Damon? Pythias has not come back yet.

Damon: (said confidently) "Pythias must be delayed. He will return. "

Dionysius: laughing scornfully, "We shall see."

Narrator: On the appointed day, Pythias still had not returned. The king had Damon brought before the executioner.

Dionysius: "The time has arrived, and yet your friend has not come for you. What do you say now? "

Damon calmly replied: "I trust my friend completely."

Narrator: At that very moment, the doors opened and a bruised and breathless Pythias staggered into the room towards Damon's open arms.

Pythias: "Thank God, you are still alive! I was afraid I would not reach here in time. My ship was wrecked in a storm and bandits attacked me on the road, but still I could not give up hope that I would make it. " Turning to the king, I am ready to die.

Narrator: The king was so astonished by the fidelity and steadfast trust of the two friends that he could not bring himself to carry out the unjust execution.

Dionysius: "Never in my life have I seen such devotion and faith in friendship. Because you have shown me that I was wrong to have doubted you, I have decided to pardon you Pythias-on one condition."

Pythias and Damon say together: "What is that?"

Dionysius: "That you teach me how to be such a friend."