

TO UNDERSTAND THE PRINCIPLES AND TEACHINGS
OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH
THE SOCIAL PRINCIPLES OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

SPIRITUAL QUALITIES RELEVANT TO THIS TOPIC:
FAITH, COURAGE, TRUSTWORTHINESS, HONESTY

Let your vision be world-embracing, rather than confined to your own self.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 94

The All-Knowing Physician hath His finger on the pulse of mankind. He perceiveth the disease, and prescribeth, in His unerring wisdom, the remedy. Every age hath its own problem, and every soul its particular aspiration. The remedy the world needeth in its present-day afflictions can never be the same as that which a subsequent age may require. Be anxiously concerned with the needs of the age ye live in, and center your deliberations on its exigencies and requirements.

Bahá'u'lláh: *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 213

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES



KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE

- To know some of the main social principles in the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh
For example:
 - Obedience to government
 - Non-involvement in partisan politics
 - Universal education
 - Universal language
 - Equality of men and women
 - Elimination of extremes of poverty and wealth
 - Elimination of all forms of prejudice
 - Spiritual solutions to economic challenges

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Teach songs about the various social principles of Bahá'u'lláh.
- Have learners work in groups to define the words and terms used in the Writings to describe each of the social principles.
- Ask the learners to research Bahá'u'lláh's Writings and *The Promulgation of Universal Peace* to uncover the social principles of Bahá'u'lláh, as elucidated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá.



WISDOM OBJECTIVE

- To understand that the transformation of humanity will occur through the application of these principles

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Create short plays that demonstrate the transformation of humanity through the application of the social principles and teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.
- Recount stories about the application of one or more of these principles, *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. Two*, pp. 149-60.
- Demonstrate a tangible analogy from the Writings illustrating the transformation of humanity, e.g. dust heap to rose garden, darkness to light, etc.
- Have the students prepare visual displays such as murals and dioramas demonstrating some of these principles.

GOAL: TO UNDERSTAND THE PRINCIPLES AND TEACHINGS OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH
TOPIC: THE SOCIAL PRINCIPLES OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH



SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVES

- To perceive the power of the application of these principles as the only solution to the social problems of this age
- To perceive that one can become a spiritual magnet by living the principles of Bahá'u'lláh in one's daily encounters with others

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Share selections from the Writings that identify Bahá'u'lláh as the Divine Physician, and His Teachings as the only cure for the world's ills. Allow time for meditation.
- Encourage the students to use art media to portray the social principles of Bahá'u'lláh as the Divine remedy for the world's problems.
- Have the learners work in groups to trace the causes of various social problems to their roots, then show how they are solved by the application of the principles of Bahá'u'lláh.
- Enable learners to reflect deeply on 'Abdu'l-Bahá's statement regarding the effect of an individual's living even one of the principles of Bahá'u'lláh.
- Consult about how the various social problems facing humanity today will be solved by the application of these sacred principles.
- Have learners share examples from their own lives illustrating problems or solutions related to the social principles (verbally or written).



ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVES

- To incorporate these principles into one's every action in the community
- To describe these principles to others

SUGGESTED LEARNING ACTIVITY

- Have students plan a United Nations Day celebration or devotional gathering in which they: present role playing skits to demonstrate the application of Bahá'u'lláh's social principles; give talks and presentations on the social principles, and their role in transforming the world; express their efforts and successes at incorporating these principles into their actions in the community.

Sample Activities

ACTIVITY: BAHÁ'U'LLÁH HAS THE SOLUTIONS

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE: To perceive the power of the application of these principles as the only solution to the social problems of this age

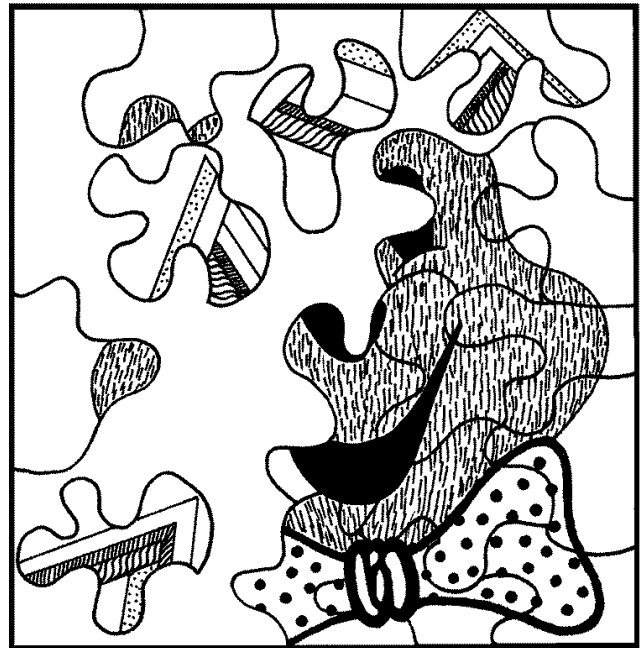
INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Engaging mind and heart; Direct use of Sacred Writings; Use of manipulatives; Use of the power of reasoning; Use of questions; Use of consultation

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 60 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- jigsaw puzzles

1. Provide learners with a fairly simple jigsaw puzzle from which you have previously removed about 1/3 of the pieces, and have replaced them with the same number of pieces from a different puzzle.
2. Ask them to put the puzzle together.
3. As the learners become frustrated or realize the mix-up, encourage them to discuss what's wrong, and why.
4. Once they have verbalized and understand that it can only be completed with the right pieces, ask them to sort out the ones that don't fit. Replace these with the missing pieces that do fit.
5. Compare their experience with the wrong puzzle pieces with the problems of society. Try as we might, if we don't have the right solutions, we just can't solve the problems.
6. Finish assembling the puzzle. Remind the students that in assembling the puzzle you had to have the correct pieces. Ask: Who has the correct solutions for the world's problems?
7. Share a passage from Bahá'u'lláh's Writings which compares the Manifestation to the Divine Physician Who has the only remedy for the problems of the Day, *Gleanings* pp. 80-81 or 213, *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. Two*, p. 154, or the first quotation on p. 97 of this Lesson Planning Guide.



8. Consult about the meanings of the passage.
9. Memorize the quotation.
10. Read and discuss the stories, "Not in My Class" and "Bahá'u'lláh's Tablet to the Queen" in *The Central Figures: Bahá'u'lláh, Vol. Two*. Discuss: How can we express Bahá'u'lláh's pivotal principle of oneness in our daily lives?

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ACTIVITY: BAHÁ'U'LLÁH'S SOCIAL PRINCIPLES ARE SOLUTIONS TO SOCIETY'S ILLS

KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVE: To know some of the social principles in the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh.

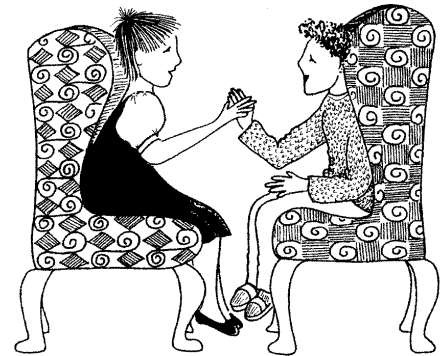
WISDOM OBJECTIVE: To understand that the transformation of humanity will occur through the application of these principles

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Engaging mind and heart; Direct use of Sacred Writings; Use of manipulatives; Use of the power of reasoning; Use of questions; Use of consultation; Use of arts

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 60 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- news magazines
- 5"x7" cards, pencils, markers
- several copies of *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, and *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, or copies of pp. 97-98 of this Guide



1. Look through news-magazines for examples of what is wrong in human society. Discuss the spiritual roots of a few sample problems, and offer Bahá'u'lláh's principles that apply.
2. Present *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas* as the Divine Physician's remedy book. Remind students that 'Abdu'l-Bahá describes *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, and other books written by Bahá'u'lláh as a supplement to the *Most Holy Book*.
3. Separate the students into two groups. One group searches through news magazines to find examples of at least 10 problems or issues afflicting mankind. They draw and label each problem on a large card (5"x7"). They consult about each of the ills to determine what is the underlying cause and be prepared to explain it.
4. The other group researches *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas* and other books, using the table of contents and indexes to find such topics as laws, education, language, peace, war, justice, wealth, unity, government, prejudice, race, for listings and explanations of the social principles of Bahá'u'lláh. They draw and label each principle on a card. Consult on how each principle would help cure society's ills. If these books are not available, you may conduct this activity using photocopies of pp. 103-104 of this Lesson Planning Guide.
5. When both groups have finished their research, everyone is now ready to play the Divine Remedies Game.
6. The Social Ills group and the Social Principles of Bahá'u'lláh group sit opposite each other. The Social Ills group places one of their cards face up, explains that "ill" and what they feel causes it.
7. The Social Principles group consults and then places one or more of their cards beside the ill. The Principles group explains why they think this Principle is the Divine remedy for that ill.
8. The Social Ills group consults: if they agree with the proposed remedy, both teams shake hands, the social ill is healed, and that card is turned upside down. If the Social Ills group disagrees with the proposed remedy both groups consult together until a cure is found.
9. The Social Principles cards are retrieved, to be used again as needed. Game ends when all of the Social Ills cards have been played, and remedies have been found.

TOPIC: THE SOCIAL PRINCIPLES OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

ACTIVITY: TEACHING BAHÁ'Í SOCIAL PRINCIPLES

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE: To describe these principles to others

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Engage mind and heart; Use of Sacred Writings; Use of the power of reasoning; Use of art

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 30 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- poster board/paper
- markers, pens

1. Use the artwork and descriptions from the cards, combined with the verses about the Divine Physician to create a group teaching aid—a poster or a booklet that can be photocopied.
2. Use this teaching aid at a booth at a community event, a regular devotional gathering, or find another way to teach these principles to others.

ACTIVITY: PERSONAL SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION OBJECTIVE: To perceive that one can become a spiritual magnet by living the principles of Bahá'u'lláh in one's daily encounters with others

ELOQUENT SPEECH OBJECTIVE: To incorporate these principles into one's every action in the community

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND LEARNING TOOLS: Engage mind and heart; Use of Sacred Writings; Use of the power of reasoning; Use of meditation; Use of stories; Use of reflection

SUGGESTED TIME FOR ACTIVITY: 30 MIN.

Materials Needed:

- flashlight and/or candle
- CD – *We Are One* or *The Royal Falcon*

1. Display the cards created about the Social Principles. Point out that each is like a light in the darkness around us. Enforce the concept visually by darkening the room and shining a single flashlight or candle. Add more lights, until the darkness is dispelled.
2. Play the song, “Be A Light in the Darkness,” *We Are One*, Leslie and Kelly or *The Royal Falcon*, Parrish and Toppano, or a similar song.
3. Share the quotation: “Be eyes to the blind and a guiding light to the feet of the erring,” Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 93.
4. Allow time for a meditation on the quotation with a single light in the room. Ask the students to consider one principle that they will strive to manifest.
5. Assist the students to locate writings that may serve as sources for their personal daily deepening and devotions plans.
6. At subsequent meetings, share stories and the results of each other's progress toward expressing these principles in our lives.

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Resource Pages

REMEDIES FROM THE DIVINE PHYSICIAN

The All-Knowing Physician hath His finger on the pulse of mankind. He perceiveth the disease, and prescribeth, in His unerring wisdom, the remedy. Every age hath its own problem, and every soul its particular aspiration. The remedy the world needeth in its present-day afflictions can never be the same as that which a subsequent age may require. Be anxiously concerned with the needs of the age ye live in, and center your deliberations on its exigencies and requirements.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, CVI, p. 213

We pray God—exalted be His glory—and cherish the hope that He may graciously assist the manifestations of affluence and power and the daysprings of sovereignty and glory, the kings of the earth—may God aid them through His strengthening grace—to establish the Lesser Peace.... Should one king rise up against another, all the other kings must arise to deter him. Arms and armaments will, then, be no more needed beyond that which is necessary to insure the internal security of their respective countries.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 30

It behoveth the sovereigns of the world—may God assist them—or the ministers of the earth to take counsel together and to adopt one of the existing languages or a new one to be taught to children in schools throughout the world, and likewise one script. Thus the whole earth will come to be regarded as one country.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 21

O contending peoples and kindreds of the earth! Set your faces towards unity, and let the radiance of its light shine upon you. Gather ye together, and for the sake of God resolve to root out whatever is the source of contention amongst you.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 217

O Children of Men!

Know ye not why We created you all from the same dust? That no one should exalt himself over the other.

Bahá'u'lláh, *The Arabic Hidden Words*, no. 68

Women and men have been and will always be equal in the sight of God.

Bahá'u'lláh, *The Compilation of Compilations Vol. II*, p. 379

In every country where any of this people reside, they must behave towards the government of that country with loyalty, honesty and truthfulness.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 23

O people of God! That which traineth the world is Justice, for it is upheld by two pillars, reward and punishment. These two pillars are the sources of life to the world.

Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 27

Whoso cleaveth to justice, can, under no circumstances, transgress the limits of moderation. He discerneth the truth in all things, through the guidance of Him Who is the All-Seeing. The civilization, so often vaunted by the learned exponents of arts and sciences, will, if allowed to overleap the bounds of moderation, bring great evil upon men. Thus warneth you He Who is the All-Knowing. If carried to excess, civilization will prove as prolific a source of evil as it had been of goodness when kept within the restraints of moderation.

Bahá'u'lláh, Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 342

Say, take heed lest the overpowering might of the oppressors alarm you. The day is approaching when every emblem of vainglory will have been reduced to nothingness; then shall ye behold the invincible sovereignty of your Lord ruling over all things visible and invisible.

Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 266

No light can compare with the light of justice. The establishment of order in the world and the tranquillity of the nations depend upon it.

Bahá'u'lláh, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, p. 28

Schools must first train the children in the principles of religion, so that the Promise and the Threat recorded in the Books of God may prevent them from the things forbidden and adorn them with the mantle of the commandments; but this in such a measure that it may not injure the children by resulting in ignorant fanaticism and bigotry.

Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 68

They that are endued with sincerity and faithfulness should associate with all the peoples and kindreds of the earth with joy and radiance, inasmuch as consorting with people hath promoted and will continue to promote unity and concord, which in turn are conducive to the maintenance of order in the world and to the regeneration of nations. Blessed are such as hold fast to the cord of kindness and tender mercy and are free from animosity and hatred.

The essence of all that We have revealed for thee is Justice, is for man to free himself from idle fancy and imitation, discern with the eye of oneness His glorious handiwork, and look into all things with a searching eye.

Bahá'u'lláh, Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh, p. 157

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LIST OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

STORIES & ARTICLES:

Brilliant Star:

- “The Bright Side” Mar/Apr 02
“What Do Bahá’ís Believe?,” “Who and Where Are the Bahá’ís?,” “What Does it Mean to Be a Bahá’í?” Jan/Feb 02
“A Hospital in the Jungle” Sept/Oct 00
“The United Nations” Jan/Feb 00
“The Giant and the Princess,” “Catching Health” Sept/Oct 99
“Star Kids: Friends Around the World,” “The Hungry Travelers” Jul/Aug 99
“Man of the Trees” May/June 99
“Shining Lamp,” “Working for Equality Around the World,” “Learning to Fly,” “Did You Know About Int’l. Women’s Day?” Mar/Apr 99
The Central Figures: Bahá’u’lláh, Vol. Two: “Not in My Class,” “Bahá’u’lláh’s Tablet to the Queen”
Afshin, Mahnaz, *The Story of Bahá’u’lláh*, p. 64
Barnes, Kiser, *A Story of Peace*
Danesh, Hossein, *The Promise*, Vol. I, p. 20-21, 24-25, 30-31; Vol. II, p. 10-14, 20-30, 34, 40-43, 46-47
Oldziey, Peter, *The Garden of Bahá’u’lláh*, pp. 84-85, 88-99, 118-19, 154-55, 178-79

Worksheets and Coloring Pages:

Brilliant Star:

- “Be a Doctor/Less is More” May/June 99
“Decode It,” “Walking Together” Mar/Apr 99
“Artists and Craftsmen” Nov/Dec 97
“Puzzled about Principles?” May/June 97
“Restore the Balance” Mar/Apr 96
“America’s Amazing Destiny” SpEd 95
“Service Plan” Sept/Oct 95
“From Prejudice to Peace” Mar/Apr 95
Unity Flows from Every Color, coloring book
Nathesan, S., *Bahá’í Activities for Children*, pp. 39, 47
Oldziey, Peter, *The Garden of Bahá’u’lláh*, pp. 85, 89, 91, 93, 95, 97, 99, 119, 155, 179

Activities:

Brilliant Star:

- “Building Communities” SpEd 99
“The Greatest Treasures” Sept/Oct 99
“Nimni’s Bird Puppet” Mar/Apr 99
“With Two Wings” Mar/Apr 96
“Together We Can Make It Through,” “Strength in Accord” SpEd 95
“Make a City of Núr” Jan/Feb 95
Zavitz, Elaine, *Feast Activity Book*

Music:

List other favorite resources:

Brilliant Star:

- “Equal but Not the Same” Mar/Apr 99
“The World Pledge,” “Ensign of the Most Great Peace,” SpEd 95
The Bahá’í Songbook, “Let It Be This Generation,” “Peace Moves,” “Why Not Have Peace?,” “Rejoice! Rejoice!”
Grammer, Red, *Teaching Peace*

Games:

- Brilliant Star:* “Resources” Sept/Oct 96
“Who Started it?,” “The Servant Game” May/June 96
“Heal the World” Jan/Feb 96
“The Peace Process Game” Jul/Aug 93

Drama:

Brilliant Star:

- “The Marhabá News,” Mar/Apr 95
“The World’s Comeliest Garment,” SpEd 95

Poetry:

Brilliant Star:

- “Adopt a Highway” Jul/Aug 98
“How Can I Hug the World?” Sept/Oct 95

Video:

- The Power of Race Unity; Two Wings*

If you find any additional resources, please notify the National Teacher Training Center, or submit your findings to the Educational Materials web site.