

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum for Residents of Youth-Reach

Written by Curt Williams

Yesterday you were promoted from *Level Zero to Level One*. Many things now will change. One important thing is that you will now enter the Level System and can be eligible for merits. When you earn six merits you will be promoted to *Level Two*.

You earn merits with consistent performance on your chores and on work projects. You also will receive merits when you display overall responsibility, a positive attitude and a teachable spirit. Your performance at school is extremely important when it comes to your possible advancement.

You may also earn demerits. These are earned through poor performance, a lazy attitude regarding work, negative reports from school, a defensive or offensive relationship towards your peers or staff members and the breaking of stated rules.

Level Two has many added privileges. You will receive more opportunities for passes and trips. There are phone privileges, job possibilities and the first option on many other opportunities. Nothing though is freely given to you at Youth-Reach. If you reach *Level Two*, it is because you have truly earned it.

One hint that will help you obtain *Level Two*: Start performing now like a *Level Two* resident then, you will be rewarded consistently. There is a list of character attributes that you will be judged by. You may ask your counselor to see this list.

This curriculum is a big part of what *Level One* is and without completing this curriculum it is impossible for you to be advanced to *Level Two*. You are to complete the prescribed worksheet each day and have it signed off by a counselor. You will not be told. If you do not develop the self discipline to do this without being told you do not belong on *Level Two*.

Work hard, keep your head and be sensitive to the voice of the Lord, and all will go well with you. This applies not just to Youth-Reach, but to life in general.

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week One

Day One

Date _____

Are you ready to go? The curriculum will now be a bit more complex. Don't worry though, you can handle it. First, we are going to deal with change.

Describe the three biggest changes you have gone through in your life. *(These could be times such as a move to a new home, a new school or dealing with the death of a loved one)*

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What was the hardest part about dealing with these changes?

Do you feel that it helps to talk to someone you trust at these times?

How are you dealing with the change that took place when you came to Youth-Reach?

What would life be like if things never changed?

What important changes do you see in your future?

How important is it to have things in your life that are constant and do not change? Explain.

What does the Bible say about the Lord regarding change? (Psalm 110:4, Malachi 3:6, James 1:7)

Counselor Initials _____

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week One

Day Two

Date _____

One of the biggest problems that residents bring in to Youth-Reach is anger. In this study you need to be very honest, if you deal well with this issue, you will benefit a lifetime, if you do not deal with it, you and your future family will suffer for this choice.

Speaking very honestly, what makes you angry?

Are you the type to bottle up your anger inside or do you just let it explode? Explain.

Circle all of the issues that can cause you to feel angry.

- A. Being rejected
- B. Not getting your way.
- C. Feeling restricted.
- D. Not being trusted.
- E. You cannot have something you want.
- F. Jealousy.

Would you describe yourself as having a temper? _____

Who do you find yourself most being angry with? _____

Is all anger considered sin? _____

Did Jesus ever get angry? (See John 2:15-17) _____

In this instance, why did Jesus get angry?

Using this instance as an example, how can you be angry in the same way, yet not sin?

Counselor Initials _____

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week One

Day Three

Date _____

Yesterday we began a study on anger. We were looking at how Jesus became angry, yet did not sin. Open your Bible to John 2:15.

What do you see that Jesus did in this verse that helps us to see that He did not lose His temper, but coolly planned what He was going to do?

Check out Mark 10:13-16.

What did Jesus become indignant (angry) about here?

Once again, using this instance as an example, what can you become angry with and not sin?

Now go to Mark 4:35-41. Here we see Jesus rebuking the wind and the waves.

Was Jesus angry at the weather or angry with the disciples?

Why was He angry?

So let's review: We see here at least three instances (*in the temple, with the children and in the boat*) that Jesus displayed anger, yet we know He did not sin. Here is how you can, as a Christian, mirror His attitude and show appropriate anger:

In the temple: Jesus was angry in defense of the precious things of God that were being defaced by people making God's temple into a marketplace. You can be angry in defense of the holy things of God.

With the children: Jesus was angry when the kids were prevented from coming to Him. We can be angry when someone or something prevents those attempting to reach Jesus from coming to Him.

In the boat: He was not angry with the wind and sea; He was angry with those that had witnessed so many great miracles now displaying no faith in Him. You have the right to be angry with those that should have faith that claim to be mature but show a weakness when it comes to trusting in Jesus.

In all of this, what have you learned about your anger?

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week One

Day Four

Date: _____

Go back and review the first two day's questions and your answers. Then, and only then, go to today's questions. Yesterday we studied Jesus' anger. We see one common thing about his anger. He was never angry over something done to Him, but always in defense of God or others.

What does this say about your anger?

NOTE: If you claim to be a Christian, you are claiming that you are attempting every day to be like Jesus. How should you then plan to face the problem of your anger?

Now that you see your anger of what it is, let's check out the root cause of some forms of anger. What is the tenth commandment in Exodus chapter 20?

CHECK IT OUT: In our culture you are constantly bombarded with advertising for every product imaginable. It is easy to fall into sin of coveting. To covet is to desire something that you cannot or should not have. Coveting leads to many other sins, anger being the most common. Also it may lead to stealing, lying and in its extreme form, people have even killed to get what they want. It can be very frustrating to see everyone else enjoying something that appears to you to be outside of your reach.

Can we really believe all the hype and advertising we see today? _____

Do advertisers and the media have your best interest at heart? _____

What is the real truth behind all the commercials and ads that are portraying people that appear to be enjoying a product?

Check out Matthew 6:25-34 and be prepared to discuss this with your counselor.

What will really happen to you if you do not have all the latest clothes and gadgets?

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week One

Day Five

Date: _____

In yesterday's study, we saw how coveting can lead to frustration and frustration can lead to anger. Another cause of anger is the lack of a healthy self-image. Let's dive into this issue.

What do you most admire? (Please, no Sunday School' answers here)

Why do you admire them? _____

Would you consider them your hero? _____

Who do you most want to be like? _____

CHECK IT OUT: You see, most of us build our self-image by observing others, particularly those we admire. For example, men in healthy homes that is most often their fathers. When a young man does not have a strong and loving father, less positive role models can easily mold him.

When you take an honest look at yourself, who do you most resemble?

When you take that close, hard core look at yourself, are you pleased by what you see or are you disappointed? (or, how would describe it?) _____

As Christians, where are we supposed to get our self-image? _____

Read Ephesians 5:1-2 and be prepared to discuss this with your counselor.

Where do we learn about Jesus so we can effectively draw a renewed image of Him into our lives?

When God looks down on you, what does He think of? *Check out John 3:16, Romans 8:1 and II Corinthians 5:17*

Counselor Initials _____

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week One

Day Six

Date: _____

We are still on the subject of anger today. All of us wrestle with anger from time to time. Victory comes when we recognize that most of our anger is sin and we confess it to God as such. To deal with anger effectively we must focus on obtaining self-control. If you have self-control; you will never be dominated by anger.

Have you ever feared that your anger could get out of control? _____

In your anger, have you ever become violent? _____

What are some good coping skills you have used that may have helped you with anger?

Below are some acceptable and healthy coping skills that will help you deal effectively with anger.

- Walk away. This is not acceptable if you are being spoken to by a staff member, but if you can vacate the area where the problem lies you should do so.
- Slow down and think.
- Communicate. Say something like, “What you are doing now makes me angry. I’d appreciate it if you would stop now.” Clearly communicating instead of reacting negatively is a giant step toward really dealing with anger.
- Seek help. The Youth-Reach staff and counselors are here for you 24 hours a day. Do not just suppress you anger, go to a staff member and talk it out.

Open your Bible to the book of Galatians. Go to Chapter 5 and verses 22 and 23. This is where the Fruit of the Spirit are listed. Where does anger fit in with these personality traits?

Now check out verses 19-21. These sound more like they would get along better with an angry spirit. What does verse 21 say about the final outcome of a life lived this way?

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Level One Curriculum

Week One

Day Seven

Date: _____

Yesterday we were looking at the fruit of the spirit in Galatians chapter five. Turn there now as we go further into this study.

On a scale of one to five (with one being poor and five being good) rate yourself on how these traits are practiced in your life. Circle your choice.

Love 1 2 3 4 5

Joy 1 2 3 4 5

Peace 1 2 3 4 5

Patience 1 2 3 4 5

Kindness 1 2 3 4 5

Goodness 1 2 3 4 5

Faithfulness 1 2 3 4 5

Gentleness 1 2 3 4 5

Self-Control 1 2 3 4 5

How will your relationships with others be if you employ all of these attributes into your life?

CHECK IT OUT: If you notice, there is a cool thing about the Fruit of the Spirit; if you truly have any one of these, you will most likely have them all. For instance, if you truly walk in love you will be patient and kind. If you are gentle, it is likely that this will be because you are at peace and have joy in your heart.

Were these things (the fruit of the Spirit) evident in your home when you were growing up? _____

If not, how would your life have been different if these would have been practiced in your home.

HINT: Maybe it would be a good idea to write the Fruit of the Spirit on a small card and carry them with you in your pocket for a while. Get these in your heart and head at all cost!

Let's get past the surface problem of anger, what is it that is really eating at you? What is it that, deep down, is causing you to be an angry person? _____

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Two

Day One

Date: _____

Today we are going to get off the subject of anger (don't get mad) and deal with another character trait.

HONESTY:

Do you make it a habit to always tell the truth? _____

Do you find it easy to embellish, exaggerate or allow stories to spin out of control? _____

Explain. _____

In God's eyes, is there any differences between telling a little white lie and lying to a judge (perjury) in court?

How does *Proverbs 12:14* describe one who give an honest testimony?

How do those in authority view those who always tell the truth?

HINT: *See Proverbs 16:13*

Check out Proverbs 12:13. Is it possible to always avoid being caught in a lie? _____

Explain. _____

Have you ever been caught in a lie? (Explain) _____

How did it make you feel? _____

What are some of the reasons we choose to lie and not just tell the truth?

CHECK IT OUT: Read Proverbs 10:19. See what it says there? One of the reasons we lie is because we just talk too much. There is a time when it is best to just shut up. It is hard to lie when you are being quiet.

Counselor Initials _____

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Two

Day Two

Date: _____

The title of this Level One Curriculum is “The Pursuit of Character”. Webster’s Dictionary defines *character* as “*moral excellence*”. This is one of the major goals we have for you and one of the areas where we will be looking for consistent progress before you are promoted to *Level Two* and before you move into the Stage Two home.

What long-standing habits do you have that fight against your efforts to be morally excellent!

What rewards are in store for a man that pursues character?

(See Proverbs 11:18,13:21)

According to *Romans 5:3-4*, what does character in our life produce? _____

What single thing can corrupt good character? _____

(OK. I’ll give you a hint. Check out I Corinthians 15:33)

Considering your past, how has your choice of friends affected your actions?

In what ways would your life be different today if you had hung out with young people of high character?

Who is our example today as Christians that we can look to as a picture of high character?

In a world full of distractions, what other influences can cause you to compromise your character?

If you are facing a point of weakness in your character and need help, where should you turn?

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Two

Day Three

Date: _____

Many of the residents that come to Youth-Reach are amazed at the workload around our facilities and all they are expected to do. Why is this so important? This is where we begin today.

What chores or work projects were you expected to do around your home before you came to Youth-Reach?

Many people are impressed at how everything at Youth-Reach is clean and well maintained. How would our home appear if all of the work and all of our efforts were to stop?

Read Proverbs 6:6-11. Now answer these questions...In what way can the ant teach us a lesson?

What does this scripture promise to the lazy man?

Laziness guarantees something, as does hard work. What are these guarantees?

(The answer is conveniently located at Proverbs 10:4)

CHECK IT OUT: *The word “diligent” also means “consistent”. You will not do well only working hard occasionally, but the rewards come from consistent and excellent labor. Look over at Proverbs 13:4. Simply craving something will get you what? _____*

All over America, people are on the streets going hungry. To what can most of this be attributed?

(Proverbs 19:15)

In Proverbs 22:14 we see a ridiculous excuse to not go out and work. What have been some of your excuses to try to get out of work?

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Two

Day Four

Date: _____

Today we are still studying the value of hard work and by contrast the folly of laziness. Your work ethic is an area where we will be looking closely for consistent improvement. No lazy person will be advanced at Youth-Reach. Ever.

What benefits come to a man that has gained a special skill in work?

(This answer is found somewhere in Proverbs chapter 22. Don't be lazy, find it yourself.)

What modern day problem *(described in Proverbs 23:19-21)* is a major contributing factor to laziness, hunger and poverty?

NOTE: Any and all addictions, whether it's drugs, nicotine, alcohol, food, or television is distracting and destructive. We are to be a slave to nothing but Jesus.

In Proverbs 24:33 and 35 we see that poverty strikes quickly. Before we realize it our life can be wasted. What personal goals in your life can only be attained with hard consistent work?

CHECK IT OUT: Work and laziness at Youth-Reach is judged by how you do your assigned chores, how easily you are distracted and how quickly you pitch in without having to be told. A big factor in your possible advancement is how well you perform on the work projects and whether you have to be told to get involved or if you jump right in with a good attitude.

Described in Proverbs 26:16, what is one annoying trait of the lazy man?

What does a man find in his work? *(Ecclesiastes 2: 24-25)* _____

After reading Ecclesiastes 5:18-20, describe the heart of a man that finds the secret value of hard work.

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Level One Curriculum

Week Two

Day Five

Date: _____

All this time we have covered several topics and character traits. We are going to set aside any further study on the value of work (for now) and focus on a related topic... Discipline. (Don't you just love it?)

NOTE: As you have surely noticed, we are primarily studying from the Book of Proverbs, which is the wisdom book in the Bible. Go to chapter 15 right now.

Verse 32 tells us that a man that ignores discipline despises himself. That is pretty heavy. In this verse what is promised to the man that heeds correction?

In life there are boundaries. The first boundaries are placed around us by parents and later teachers, bosses and ultimately the lawman. In verse 10, what is the outcome of a man's choice to wander outside of the boundaries?

And the outcome for hating correction? _____

Proverbs 3:11 tells us not to be resentful when we are rebuked by the Lord. Chapter 9:8 tells us that a wise man loves to be corrected. Why do you think that is so?

An undisciplined man is like cancer; his problem spreads and he leads others astray (10:17). The opposite is true of the man that heeds correction. What is it that this verse says about this choice and the positive consequences?

Considering your past choices regarding discipline and correction, where have you been leading others?

Check out Proverbs 13:13. You are here at Youth-Reach to gain discipline in your life and to learn to do what is right simply because it is the right thing to do. Look at this verse. What is your reward for gaining these things in your life?

If you ignore this discipline, what does verse 18 promise you?

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Two

Day Six

Date: _____

One of your worst problems is that gaping hole under your nose. Our mouth and a restless and undisciplined tongue is dangerous to both ourselves and others. To learn to control your speech is a skill well worth attaining and it will profit you all of your life. Here's what the Word of God has to say....

One sure sign that someone is a fool, even by the Bible's standard is their inability to control their mouth. Open your Bible to Proverbs 18:6-7. In verse 6 what is coming to the fool with a big mouth?

What effect do our lips have on our soul? _____

In chapter 12:14, what is the reward promised to him who speaks justly?

Describe the contrast given in Proverbs 13:3.

CHECK IT OUT: Words are sometimes used to poke fun at people or to be sarcastic, neither of which if used with malice display the Fruit of the Spirit you studied. Many times words are employed to bring about an argument. None of this is consistent with someone who is seeking to be like Jesus. Look at chapter 17, which has a lot to say about words.

In verse 14, what is the problem with simply voicing your opinion or making a controversial statement?

If you love a good argument, what does verse 19 say about you? _____

As a man gains maturity and knowledge, what happens to his words? (verse 27)

When it comes to limiting words, what does verse 28 say about a fool that keeps his mouth shut?

Many people would rather talk than listen. What title does chapter 18:2 give to them?

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Two

Day Seven

Date: _____

Well you have now been at Level One for two weeks. We hope you are learning a lot. We still have so much we want to teach you. Yesterday we learned about the power of words and the wisdom of restraining the tongue. Now let's go a step further. Open again to the Book of Proverbs. Chapter 15 begins with, "A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." In the youth culture today, rarely is a gentle word spoken. More common is communication that is sprinkled with liberal amounts of filthy and perverse speech. This is never consistent with the character of Christ.

In Chapter 8:13, how does God view perverse language, evil behavior, pride and arrogance?

If He feels this way about it, how should you feel about it? _____

Can you see Jesus attending a movie where perverse speech is being spouted? _____

Wicked people are expected, in chapter 10:32, to do what?

Chapter 28:18 says that what will happen to the man whose ways are perverse?

In the times when this was written, men that were perverse were despised (12:8). Today, how do people feel about the stars and celebrities that are perverse?

Did God change his opinion of this behavior? _____

CHECK IT OUT: *You do not have to say actual dirty words to speak perversely. Suggestive sexual language, finding humor in the obscene and acting our degrading behavior is as wrong as the speaking of perverse words.* What is the outcome, as described in chapter 16:28, of the speech of the perverse man and the gossip?

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Three

Day One

Date: _____

In the last two days, we have discussed the tongue and 'perverse speech'. You can use your mouth for other unholy things also. Today we look at another trait of a weak character, lying.

Why do we find it necessary to lie?

CHECK IT OUT: Here is another reason you may not have listed. We also lie because we are small people in our own eyes so we invent a fantasy to make ourselves look bigger. We lie and claim things that are not true. There is an old saying that says, "No one has a good enough memory to be a successful liar." When you truly discover who you are in Jesus, this kind of lying becomes pretty silly.

To begin with, what does chapter 19:9 say is the eventual outcome for a liar?

(See verse 5 also) NOTE: Look in chapter five and read verses 16 through 19. Notice there that two of the seven things the Lord hates have to do with lying.

Look over at chapter 14:5. After reading this, what kind of reputation do you want to have?

Can the tongue be used as a weapon? (See 26:28) _____
Explain. _____

Read chapter 21:28, is it good to listen to a liar? _____
Explain. _____

We all know how guys feel about a good kiss from a pretty girl. Not bad. This is what God uses to describe an honest answer. Can you find this in The Book of Proverbs? Chapter _____, and verse _____

BIG HINT TIME: If you earn the reputation at Youth-Reach of being a liar, life will be tough. No one believes a man with this rap laid on him. Tell the truth even when it hurts. Filter your words with wisdom and use self-control. You will sleep well, advance in the program and mature in the things of the Lord. We guarantee it!

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Three

Day Two

Date: _____

For now, we are going to get off the problems associated with words and the mouth. Now, "Let's get spiritual. I wanna get spiritual, spiritual..." OK. Enough! Let's open our Bibles to the Book of Proverbs to discover some truths regarding the fear of the Lord.

Look up Proverbs 3:7-8. What does it mean to be "wise in your own eyes?"

In these verses, what is the benefit of the fear of the Lord?

What other emotion in chapter 8:13 comes along with the fear of the Lord? _____
Where is this emotion aimed? _____

If you are on a path towards acquiring wisdom, where should you start? (See 9:10)

In chapter 14:26, what is the benefit of the fear of the God? _____
Who does this benefit? _____

In just one verse in chapter 19:23, there are three promises associated with the fear of the Lord. Can you name all three?

Again, in chapter 22:4, there are three benefits listed that we can assume when we possess the fear of the Lord. Name all three. _____

Is it ever productive to fear man? (See 29:25) _____

LET'S REVIEW: Look at all the benefits of the fear of the Lord that we have found in this short study. There is safety, health, nourishment, wisdom, knowledge, security, blessings on your children, contentment, protection, real life, wealth, honor, and the ability to truly hate sin. Not too bad. All of this is promised to you when you pursue a sincere fear of the Lord and knowledge of who God really is. What more could you ask for?

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Three

Day Three

Date: _____

We learned yesterday that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Now we are going back to the Book of Proverbs to study wisdom specifically.

What is the difference between wisdom and knowledge?

In chapter 13:20, what is a sure-fire way to grow wise?

Check out chapter 9:8. What does it mean to “rebuke” someone?

Why would a wise man love a rebuke? _____

In Proverbs 16:16, what is wisdom judged to be better than? _____

Is this the way people today think of wisdom? _____

There are two steps you must take to receive wisdom found in chapter 19:20. What are they?

Are you doing both of these things? _____

What do you need to work on? _____

FACE IT! To not have wisdom is a problem that can many times be quite embarrassing. Look at Ecclesiastes chapter 10:3. Everyone seems to recognize a fool but the fool himself!

What is the theme of the Book of Proverbs? (HINT: *Look at chapter 1:2*)

Now read on through verse 6 of chapter 1. If this is the theme of this book and you really desire wisdom, what should you do? _____

Coincidence? Proverbs...31 chapters. A month...30-31 days. Hmmm. One a day?

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Three

Day Four

Date: _____

It is probably the one thing that most gets you into trouble... The many faces of PRIDE. We will start in the Book of Proverbs again today. Now, let's look at pride.

Open up to chapter 11:2. When pride takes root in your life, what is the next thing to come in?

FACE IT! There is no such thing as true or real pride. Pride is always false. It is just a front we throw up to keep people from seeing who we really are.

What does the Bible say that pride breeds in chapter 13:10?

CHECK IT OUT: You know it's true. You've known people who, because of pride, got into a stupid argument and it ended in violence or even death. That's pride. A prideful man is just a weak-minded coward hiding behind the mask of a hero.

Which way is the man who lives in pride headed?

Inevitably, the Bible predicts what (Isaiah 2:12-22) for the proud man?

In Proverbs 21:4, what does the Bible call pride exactly? _____

How does God feel about those with a proud heart? (16:5) _____

And what does He promise them? _____

What do you think it would be like to be God's enemy? (Go to James 4:6) What does it say God does to the proud man?

BRAIN MATTER: Memorize Proverbs 16:18. Be prepared to recite it to your counselor. Don't just cram it in there, MEMORIZE it. You'll need it later.

In Romans 12:16, what is the evidence of a man that has dealt with his pride?

Is there pride in your life you need to deal with? _____

Counselor Initials _____

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Level One Curriculum

Week Three

Day Five

Date: _____

Today we are going to look at your favorite subject...your relationship with your parents. You may have both of them or just one. Maybe you have the stepparent thing going. Whatever the situation is, let's look at some truths to help you get through this tough area of your life. Turn again to the Book of Proverbs. Ready for a reality check?

Get honest, how have you treated your parent(s) lately?

Now look at chapter 10:1, does this look familiar at all? _____

Now look at chapter 13:1. Are you wise? _____ Are you a mocker? _____

What are your true feelings in regards to your mother? Don't say you love her if you treat her like dirt. Now look at chapter 15:20. Has this been you in the past? _____

FACE IT! Believe it or not, nowhere in the Bible does it say you can treat your parents badly if you think they are dumb, ignorant or uncool. Regardless of what you think the Word of God say you must obey and honor them.

Turn back toward the front of your Bible to Deuteronomy chapter 21:18-21. We are now, thankfully, in the age of God's grace, but according to the law and if you were living at the time when this was written, what would have happened to you? _____

Do you think most kids obeyed their parents back then? _____

What is the effect of balanced discipline on a child and on a home in general? (See Proverbs 29:15-17)

Do you feel that you deserve most of the discipline that you have from your parents? Explain.

In your view, what is the difference between discipline and abuse?

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Level One Curriculum

Week Three

Day Six

Date: _____

Well, here we are again. We are still dealing with that parent-you relationship. Turn to...you guessed it, the Book of Proverbs. Go to chapter 30:17.

How does God view a young person that is disrespectful of their parents?

Before we depart the Book of Proverbs for a quick Bible tour of some other parent/child relations texts, make sure you read chapter 30:11-14. Now, let's move on the Book of Exodus, the second book in the Bible. As a review go to chapter 21:15-17. We all should be thankful that the age of the law has passed and God's mercy is available to us. Don't abuse it!

In chapter 20 there is a list of the Ten Commandments. What is the only commandment that is accompanied by a specific promise, and in what verse is it found? _____

What does this mean though if you ignore and disobey this commandment?

CHECK IT OUT: Why is it that humans go through such strange stages? As a child we adore our parents, then we hit adolescence and although we are still very young, we think we know everything. We especially think we know more than our parents who have usually lived twice as long as we have. Then as we continue to mature we begin to recognize our foolishness and once again adore our now very wise parents. Weird huh?

Hop over to the Book of Romans. In chapter 1 we see a long list of horrible sins starting in verse 29. Do you see anything in that list that concerns the subject of this particular work sheet? _____

What does it say? _____

Now, what is the verdict in verse 32 for those that commit these acts? _____

In Colossians chapter 3:20, in regards to what are you to obey your parents?

How does it say the Lord feels about this?

Before you put this away for the day, read II Timothy chapter 3:1-5. See anything familiar in verse two? _____

Do you know any young person that acts like this?

The Pursuit of Character

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Week Three

Day Seven

Date: _____

Hello. It is so good to see you progressing through these studies. Today, we are going to begin dealing with one of your favorite subjects...Sexuality. See! You thought this was boring stuff.

First off, you need to understand God's intentions for sex. Go to Hebrews 13:4. What does God say here about marriage and the marriage bed?

IT'S TRUE! God created sex! That's right. He created sex and He did a really great job. Sex is good, but man has taken one of the most precious of God's created things and perverted it. The Lord intended sex to be an intimate, trusting and compassionate act between a man and a woman that are not just in love, but are in a committed marriage. Any sex act outside of a marriage relationship is sin.

*Now go back to Exodus chapter 20. What is the seventh commandment? _____
Why is this wrong? _____*

NOTE: Adultery is not only a sexual sin on it's own, but it is even more complicated than that. It is a sin that damages an intact marriage. It is a direct violation in God's eyes of the vows taken at a wedding. In today's entertainment world, adultery and sexual relations are portrayed as acceptable, harmless and even preferable. God does not agree. He knows what sex outside of marriage can do to us. He loves us and wants the best for us, which is a healthy an innocent sex life with our marriage partner. Read Proverbs chapter5:1-21. This is the way God see adultery and the joy of the marriage bed.

Now flip over to Corinthians chapter 6:9-10, we see some strong words. What is the promise for those that commit these acts? _____

In the first place, what is your body meant for? (verse 13)

When a man and woman have sex, what is said in regards to their flesh in verse sixteen?

Read on a bit. When it comes to sexual immorality, what is the best physical reaction when we are confronted with sexual immorality?

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Four

Day One

Date: _____

We are today continuing our study of Sexuality. Turn back to I Corinthians chapter 6. Look again to verse 18. What do we do to our bodies when we commit sexual immorality?

WHATDOYATHINK? You sin against your own physical body when you commit these indecent acts. Do you think that maybe that is why we have so many sexually transmitted diseases today? Now keep a finger there in I Corinthians and turn back to Romans chapter 1.

A few days ago we discussed and learned about pride. In verse 22 we see just that- Pride. But read on, where does this pride lead? _____

Today we are being told that homosexuality is just an "alternative lifestyle" that we should tolerate and even agree with. From what you read here in verses 24-28, does God agree with homosexuality? _____
Are we to judge homosexuals in a critical way? (See Romans 2:1-3). _____

Notice verses 29-32. What does the sexual sin that is described in the earlier verses lead to?

If you are truly a born again Christian, who does your body belong to? _____

Read again I Corinthians 6:19-20. BIG TRUTH BREAK: If your body is not your own, you do not have the right any longer to do with it as you please.

Turn to the right over to I Thessalonians chapter 4. First read verses 1-8 then answer the following questions.

What is God's will? _____

What does this mean? _____

Define the word "sanctified." _____

How are we as Christians supposed to deal with our sexual urges?

What does it say God will do to those that commit these sexual acts? _____

What did God call you to do? _____

If you reject this teaching and continue to follow your own way, who are you rejecting? _____

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Four

Day Two

Date: _____

Now let's get honest. You see that sexual sin is wrong, but how can you control those teenage sexual desires? You have to deal with it before it is too late. Let's learn this stuff quick! We need to follow the trail here. Desire starts with the eyes. We see, then we think, then we act. Go to Matthew chapter 6:22-23. What happens when you allow your eyes to be filled with what is bad?

There is some excellent advice in Proverbs 4:25-27. What is the first step, seen here, that you should take in controlling your eyes? _____

FACE IT! You cannot be double-minded and be able to overcome the desires of your flesh, if you view pornography, movies with sexual themes and even suggestive television show, then attempt to live for God and overcome your sexual thoughts and desires, you will fail! Your eyes are being compromised and your mind is being perverted. You must flee this trash and feed your spirit instead of your flesh. It is your only hope!

Look at the first sentence of Psalm 101:3. How did David work to overcome his flesh?

Where should your eyes be set? (Read I Corinthians 4:18, Psalm 25:119-37, and 141:8 before you answer)

How can a young man keep his way pure? (Psalm 119:9)

Now go to Matthew chapter 5:27-28. Jesus complicated the whole lust thing. Before, men only felt that it was wrong if they acted on the thoughts of their hearts. Jesus changed everything by saying that if you did it in your heart, you were guilty of committing the entire act. What in these, verses, was the first step into sin?

CAUTION! TOUGH WORDS AHEAD! Read on through verse thirty. Can you see God's perspective here? Wow! Hell is so bad that it would be better for you to rip out your own eyes than to allow them to drag you into Hell. We must control our eyes. Make this ongoing effort in your life. You will see results!

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Four

Day Three

Date: _____

Today we are going to study the next step towards controlling our sexual desires. Yesterday we saw that sin enters first through the eyes. Now, let's look at controlling the thoughts that we wrestle with.

Can the Lord read your mind? Does He know your thoughts? (See Psalm 94:11)

In Hebrews chapter 4:12-13, what does God use to judge your thoughts? _____

In light of this, how do your thoughts measure up? _____

What was the purpose of the two books written by Peter in the New Testament? (Find out by looking at I Peter 3:1)

CHECK IT OUT! The Bible is like a spiritual and mental detergent for a dirty mind. The more you read, study and consume the Bible the more your mind is cleansed. That's what the word "sanctified" means; the cleansing of your thoughts by the washing of God's word. It really does work! Turn to Phillipians chapter 4:8. Where then should you direct your thoughts?

When you read the list of sins in I Corinthians chapter 6:9-10, it sounds hopeless. But read on through verse 11. What has the Spirit of God made possible for you through your relationship with Jesus?

Remember I Thessalonians chapter 4? You read this a couple of days ago. Now look in verse 3 again. See what God's will for you is? What is that word again? _____

TRUTH TIME: God saved your soul, but your mind He left the way He found it. He did though give you all of the tools you need to clean it up. Jesus expects us to work diligently to wash our dirty minds so He can use us. He refuses to work through a dirty vessel. Let's clean it up!

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Four

Day Four

Date: _____

How you deal with the trials of life says a great deal about your true character. What do you do when the odds are against you? Where do you turn when all hope seems lost? How do you react when faced with tough decisions and hard choices? Turn to II Chronicles chapter 20. Read verses 1 through 30 first, then answer the following questions.

How did Jehoshaphat feel when he first heard about the invading army? _____

What did he first resolve to do? _____

What can you learn from this first reaction? _____

What significance did a first play in his strategy? _____

In verse 4, where did Jehoshaphat find additional strength? _____

Look closely at verse 9. What did Jehoshaphat declare to the Lord? _____

And what did Jehoshaphat believe God would do? _____

In verse 12, Jehoshaphat makes a tough admission. What did he confess to God? _____

Who then did God choose to speak through? _____

What two human emotions were they supposed to throw off? _____

It first appeared that the men of Judah has to fight for their very survival, but who did God say would fight for them? _____

In verse 17 there were three kings that the men of Judah were told by God to do. What were they? _____

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Four

Day Five

Date: _____

Yesterday we were studying the plight of Jehoshaphat when he was confronted with a vast attacking army. We were last in II Chronicles chapter 20 and we begin now with verse 17. Now think of this. They are going out the next morning to face a monstrous army that far outnumbered Judah's troops. They were to go against them without fear or discouragement and completely trust God.

In verse 18 and 19, what was the reaction of the people of Judah when they heard of God's plan?

What was the one element that was required of the people of Judah for this plan to succeed?

There was one curious thing Jehoshaphat did when they readied to leave. Who did he appoint to lead the men towards the battle?

When they arrived for the confrontation they found only dead bodies. What happened to the enemy army?

In verse 22, who caused this? _____

Were there any survivors from the combined enemy forces? _____

How long did it take the men of Judah to haul off all the loot? _____

What was the ongoing reaction of the people of Judah after this great victory?

What can you learn regarding the trials and impossible odds you face by reading this story?

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Four

Day Six

Date: _____

VERSION ONE

VERSION ONE NOTE: If you have a relationship with your father in any form, this is the version of this day's study that you are to complete. If you do not have a relationship with your father, turn to the next page and complete Version two of this study.

How would you best describe, in the space below, the relationship you have with your father?

Would you describe the two of you as "close"? _____

Is it an honest open relationship? _____

Is your father physically affectionate towards you? _____

What can you say about you know about your father's father?

Do you think they were/are close? _____

In what ways do you see yourself most like your father?

What traits of your father do you most hope to have in your life?

What do you need to work on personally to improve the relationship you have with your father?

Describe the kind of father you want to be one day to your own kids.

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Four

Day Six

Date: _____

VERSION TWO

VERSION TWO NOTE: This version of the Week Four, Day Six worksheet is for residents that have never had a significant relationship with their fathers. If you have had a relationship with your father, whether it was positive or otherwise, use Version One on the proceedings page.

Write in the space provided below, a brief description of what you do know about your father.

As far as you know, is he still alive? _____

What was the relationship like between your mother and your father?

What reason do you suppose there is for your father not being involved in your life?

Are you angry that you were apparently abandoned by your father? _____

NOTE: You have every right to be angry. You must though talk it out with your counselor and process these emotions. It may be alright to be angry now, but it is not right for you to stay that way. It is truly possible for you to be free of this hurt. You must trust the Youth-Reach staff to help you walk through this issue.

How do you feel when you see other residents your age with their fathers?

Do you realize that statistically you will repeat this and one day abandon your own kids? Are you ready to defy statistics and be a wonderful and involved father to your kids? _____

Describe below the kind of father you want to be for your own children.

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Four

Day Seven

Date: _____

Again are you born-again? Are you truly saved? This is the biggest question you will ever answer. Don't be too hasty here. Many people have been deceived when it comes to the salvation of their souls. After all, the name "Satan" means "Deceiver". More than any other lie he desires to allow religious people to believe what they have is enough. False conversions are a big part of his bag of tricks. Check out the questions below, then ask yourself, "Am I truly born again?"

Is it enough to just believe in God? _____
(See James 2:19) Here it says that even demons believe in God! Believing in the existence of God or Jesus is not enough.)

Is it important to recognize that we are sinners? (See Romans 3:23) _____

Is it also important to recognize that on our own we cannot change or save ourselves?

In spite of our total sinfulness, what did Jesus choose to do for us? (Check out Romans 5:8)

Is it possible to sin too much for God to forgive? (Read Romans 5:20)

How are we to live if we have truly given our lives to Jesus? (Before you answer, read Romans 6:1-4)

Is this the way you live today? _____

What do you really deserve for the way you have lived in the past?

(Look at Romans 6:23)

If one is born-again, does sin have mastery over them? _____ (Refer to Romans 8:5-10)
What then gives them victory over sin? _____

What punishment awaits those that are deceived and do not really have Christ in their heart?

(Read Revelation chapter 20:11-15)

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Five

Day One

Date: _____

At this point, if you are doing well, you should have at least four merits on your way towards the required six to be advanced to Level Two where you will qualify to enter the Stage Two home. If you are lagging behind a bit, maybe it would be a good idea for you to meet with your assigned counselor and ask him what you need to work on to get back on track.

In a couple of days, you are going to have the opportunity to write out your testimony. First though we will learn why or testimony is important and how it is best presented. NOTE: if by chance, you are not a professing Christian at this point in your life, you may skip this lesson entirely and inform your counselor that you are doing so.

Go to Revelation chapter 12 and read verses 10:11. Who is referred to here as “the accuser of our brothers?”

What did these saints use to overcome him?

How significant is an actual eyewitness testimony in a court of law? _____

Why? _____

What is the difference between the testimony of an eyewitness and simple “hearsay” as evidence?

CHECK IT OUT: In our American courts, the clear testimony of an actual eyewitness to an event or crime is admissible (allowed) in court. In contrast, the testimony of someone that just heard about the event or crime is judged to be “hearsay” and is not usually admitted into the court records as true evidence. You have to have been affected by the event audibly or visually to be a pertinent witness. As Christians, the event of our conversion from lost to saved was clearly witnessed by us. The evidence is a changed life. We are therefore credible eyewitnesses and our testimony is valid.

How do you feel your testimony will affect your friends and family members?

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Five

Day Two

Date: _____

We are studying the proper way to give the testimony of our changed lives and the effect our testimony may have on others. Let's look at some powerful early testimonies.

Below, briefly describe the testimonies of the people listed here and then explain the effort that their testimony had on those that heard it:

Peter: (Read Acts 2:15-36 for his testimony and verses 37-47 for the reaction of the people)

Stephen: (Read Acts 6:8 through 7:53 for his testimony. Then read 7:54-60 for the reaction of the people that heard it)

Paul (formally Saul): (Now read Acts 9:1-29 to see one incredible testimony. Do you see the effect it had on those that heard it)

You have a testimony too. Tomorrow, you will write it!

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Five

Day Three

Date: _____

Here we go! It is time now for you to write out your testimony. Believe it or not, your testimony is just as important as Peter's, Stephen's, and Paul's. It is your validation that you are born again and that you are an eyewitness of a changed life, yours! Now, without embellishment or exaggeration, briefly describe the following...

What your life was like before you gave your life to Jesus?

What made you think about your need for Jesus?

What actually happened to make the change?

Where were you when this happened?

Who was with you, or were you by yourself? _____

Was there someone there that led you to Jesus? _____ Who? _____

Do you know the date? _____

What is your life like now that you are a Christian?

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Five

Day Four

Date: _____

It's Bible Trivia Day! Yipppee! Alright, calm down now. Today there has been provided below a list of questions that have answers right in your Bible. You are allowed to use your Bible, but you are not allowed to cheat by looking at the manuals of others or by obtaining the answers from other residents, and we hope at this point we can trust you. If you get them all right, you qualify for day off with absolutely no chores. All answers must be complete, accurate and accomplished by the scripture where it was found. Are you ready?

In what city were the followers of Jesus first referred to as "Christians"?

Where do we see the only standing ovation given by Jesus and to whom was it given?

What and where is the shortest verse in the Bible? _____

During Noah's day, how long was the earth flooded? _____

Jonathan was the son of King Saul. Who was Jonathan's son? _____

Give the name of Moses' wife. _____

The Third Bowl Judgment is: _____

What is the longest chapter in the Bible? _____

The first disciple to enter the empty tomb was: _____

Mordecai's niece: _____

His name means "I bore him in pain": _____

The final number of Gideon's army: _____

The adulterous wife of Hosea: _____

The Apostle Paul's occupation: _____

Now take this to your counselor!

Counselor Initials _____

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Five

Day Five

Date: _____

Enough of that trivial stuff! Let's get to the important things; like rooting sin out of our lives. Do you realize how much trouble we get into because our human nature is so self-seeking, conceited and selfish? Just imagine how great life could be if we could deal with all of this and get it out of our character. We would be more like Jesus. Now that's a thought...

Turn to the trusty old Book of Proverbs. Go to chapter 18:1. What two other things can be said about the man who pursues selfish ends?

Now flip way over to Romans chapter 2:8. What can a man expect from God if he is self-seeking?

In your daily life, how does Romans 12:16 apply to you?

Now read Romans 12:3. How then should we think of ourselves?

In Galatians chapter 5:26, what seems to come along with being conceited?

How should we then consider others? (Check out Phillipians 2:3&4)

Now go to Phillipians 2:5-8. How did Jesus provide an example in this area?

It's true! Jesus provided us with a strong example. He left Heaven, humbled himself to the Lord's will and came to earth as a servant of man. That's humility; and He's God! If He could do this, why do we find it so easy to be puffed up and full of pride? We need to follow the example of Jesus and prefer others before ourselves and get a healthy view of who we are.

Wow! Check out James chapter 3:13-16. Where does it say that selfish ambition come from?

And if there is selfish ambition in our lives, what else is sure to exist?

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Five

Day Six

Date: _____

Today we are going to dissect love. We are going to cut away the foolish, sickly way the world looks at love and see how God views it. All of us have heard the word love instead, heck we've done it ourselves. Now let's get this critical thing straightened out.

Open your Bible to I Corinthians chapter 13. This chapter is commonly referred to as the "love" chapter because in it God so clearly defines what love really is... and what it is not. Read verses 1-8 before we begin.

In verses 1-3, it describes a pretty religious person that seems to have a lot going on. What though is the judgment of the author if this person has all this but lacks true love?

Think of love as in a relationship (husband and wife, close friends, etc...). If the relationship is like what we see described in verses 4-7, what would that relationship be like?

Have you ever been in, or witnessed a relationship where an accurate record of failures is kept by someone? _____ Is this destructive to the health of a relationship? _____

CHECK IT OUT: The list of what love is and what love is not in verses 4-7 should be kept close by for years to come. You should use this to accurately judge any relationship you get into, and if your future marriage plans cannot pass this test, dump those plans and run for the hills!

When does true love fail? _____

NOTE: Look at verse 13 in this chapter. Pretty cool huh? Love, real love is very powerful.

What is the greatest demonstration of love that is possible?

If you don't already know, look at John chapter 15:13.

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Five

Day Seven

Date: _____

Yesterday we were looking at the subject of love. Now let's expand our study to look at how God loves you. Turn first to the familiar verse of John 3:16.

First off, read this verse aloud. When you come to the words "the world", substitute your name and when you come to "whoever", again say your name. Like this...

For God so loved _____, that He gave His one and only Son, so that when _____ believes in Him he would not perish, but have eternal life."

You see, God wants you to know, really know, that He loves you unconditionally and totally. Jesus came to show you how much God truly loves you. He also came so you could have something else. Look at John 10:10. Because He loves you, what else does He want for you to have?

Jesus humbled himself to show his disciples how much He loved them. In John chapter 13, what did Jesus do to demonstrate His love for them?

Verse 21 of chapter 14 says a lot. How do we prove that we love the Father?

And what then is His promise to us? _____

When we love someone, we want to take care of them. God feels the same way about you. Look back to Matthew chapter 6. Read verses 25-34. After reading this, how do you think God feels about you?

Does He want to? _____

How did God demonstrate His love for you? (See Romans 5:5)

THINK OF IT! Could you do this? Could you send your son to die for people that, for the most part, did not care about Him? Could you let your little boy be beaten, mocked and crucified? God loves you! He loves you! Don't you ever forget it. Don't you ever doubt it!

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Six

Day One

Date: _____

In this lesson we are going to take a good look at confession and forgiveness. This may not seem valuable at first glance, but without the forgiveness that is possible through Jesus our final destination would be a bit warm.

We can never earn or think that we deserve God's forgiveness. Take a look at Romans 6:23. How does God package our forgiveness and eternal life?

Read Matthew 26:28 and Hebrew 9:22. What human physical element was necessary to provide your forgiveness?

For thousands of years men could only acquire forgiveness by following the Law and through the elaborate rules of the blood sacrifice system. Who finally brought the final blood sacrifice? (See Acts 13:38-29 and Ephesians 1:7)

NOTE: It is rarely stated, but everyone is forgiven. Jesus forgave all of the sins of the human race while on the cross. The main point is though that each person must repent then accept and receive that forgiveness, or it can never be theirs.

Go to I John 1:9. You can see here the key to unlock forgiveness. What must you do to have God forgive you sins?

Go to Psalm 32. Now look at verse 5. How did David acquire God's forgiveness and have the guilt of his sin removed?

How should we feel about unconfessed sin? (Read how David felt about it in Psalm 38:17-18)

David was very consistent in praying for God's forgiveness and confessing his sins. In Psalms 139:23-24, what does David do to root out any forgotten sins?

Sometimes it is helpful for us to talk to someone about our weakness or failures and have them hold us accountable and pray for us. Read James 5:16. Here is shared another benefit of confessing our sins to one another. What is it?

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Six

Day Two

Date: _____

We are going to look today at persecution. Funny isn't it? We appreciate Jesus suffering for us, but few of us are willing to suffer for Jesus. We don't even want to be a little embarrassed. What does the Bible say? Let's see.

There is a wonderful promise in II Timothy 3:12. What is it?

Go to Matthew chapter 5. Read verses 10-12. What does this say you are if you are persecuted?

Most people would whine and complain, but what is to be our reaction?

Read John 15:20-21. If we truly live for Jesus, what will we share with Him?

Go now to I Corinthians chapter 4:12-13. When we are persecuted and slandered, how does it say here we are to behave?

Is there any persecution that can pull us away from Jesus? (See Romans 8:35-39)

Here's a tough one. Go to Romans chapter 12 and verse 14. How does the Bible tell us here we are to treat those that choose to persecute us?

Turn to Hebrews chapter 11. This chapter is many times referred to as "The Roll Call of Faith" and it chronicles many that were persecuted and even killed for the cause of Christ. Start reading at verse 32 and read through chapter 12:4. What happened to some of these listed in verses 35 through 38?

What very unusual choice do you see in verse 35? _____

Since these great heroes of our faith are watching us now, how are we expected to live our lives? (12:1)

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Six

Day Three

Date: _____

In yesterday's study we learned more about confession and forgiveness. We also noted that without forgiveness we cannot enter Heaven; which then means there is only one other destination for us when we die. But is hell for real? Is it an actual geographical location? What does the Bible say about hell? What did Jesus say about hell? Open your Bible to Matthew chapter 10. Look at verse 28.

Who does it say here is in charge of who gets thrown into hell? _____

Read Matthew 18:8. How long will those thrown into hell suffer there? _____

Go now to Luke 16. Now read verses 19-31. How do these verses describe the suffering of the rich man in hell?

How does 2 Peter 2:4 describe hell? _____

In Jesus' parable of the wedding banquet in Matthew 22, how does He describe hell in verse 13?

Originally, what did God prepare hell for? (*Check out Matthew 25:41*)

NOTE: God did not originally make hell for us, but for the devil and those that choose to follow him. When someone rejects Jesus they are, in effect, choosing to follow their flesh and the ways of Satan. Therefore, they qualify for hell.

What else is said to describe hell in Revelation 19:20?

Now read about the judgment in Revelation chapter 20 verses 11-15. Is this place bad or what?

LET'S SUM IT UP! Alright, here's what we have discovered that hell is like. It is a place of utter darkness where you can see nothing. There is a lake of burning sulfur (interestingly, if you have studied the characteristics of sulfur in school you know that it burns very, very hot, but it gives off no light or visible flame when it burns. Wow!) that will never be quenched where those that rejected Jesus are thrown for eternal punishment. They will suffer the unbelievable agony and torment of being continually burned forever with no hope of ever being rescued.

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Six

Day Four

Date: _____

Now we are going to tackle the important subject of prayer. Without a consistent habit of prayer you will not survive as a healthy Christian. It is more than important, it is required. God does not want us to just pray when we are in trouble or have a big need. He also does not want us to pray because we feel like we should or because we have to. We should want to spend time with the Father simply because we love and trust Him. Anyone we love we want to spend time with. It is that simple. Go first to the book of Psalms.

In chapter 5:3, when is the best time to pray? _____

NOTE: The Bible refers to spending time with God as putting on your armor. No soldier puts on his armor before bed, but in the morning in anticipation of battle. It is great to start the morning with God and set a high spiritual tempo for the rest of the day.

What did we learn three days ago that is an essential part of prayer? _____

Why is this so important? (Read Psalm 66:18) What is God's reaction to unconfessed sin?

Read the following verses, then write down what you see as a common thing mentioned in all of them. Psalm 95:2, 100:4, Phillipians 4:6, and Hebrews 12:28.

CHECK IT OUT! Do you realize what a bummer it would be if your kids always asked you for stuff and after you gave it to them they never stopped to thank you for any of it? This must be how the Lord feels when He blesses us, yet we neglect to thank Him for all He does.

Now go to Psalm 150 and read the whole chapter. Also read Hebrews 13:15 and Psalm 95:6. What is common in these verses? _____

What is the difference between praise and worship?

CONFUSED? Here's help. Praise is what we do outwardly to recognize and bring glory to the name of Jesus. It includes singing, the playing of instruments, clapping, dancing, kneeling, shouting, and praising the Lord in a prayer language. Worship is more inward. It is the attitude of your heart as you yearn for more of God and seek to give honor, love and respect to the Lord.

Tomorrow we will learn even more about prayer!

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Six

Day Five

Date: _____

We are taking up today where we left off yesterday in our study on prayer. We have seen the importance so far of confession, thanksgiving and praise and worship in our prayers. Now let's go a bit further.

Here's a big word: "Intercession". It come from the word 'intercede' which means to come in between. There are many people out there that need prayer. They may be lost or they may be Christians that need your prayers. When you pray for them you "intercede" or make yourself a go-between by taking their need to God. This is what "intercession" is, you simply are going to God with the needs or requests of others.

Read Hebrews chapter 7 and verses 25 and 26. Who is our greatest intercessor? _____

NOTE: You see, Jesus is our chief intercessor. He came down and bridged a way for sinful man to reach a holy God. We as Christians, since we have been made holy through Christ's forgiveness, can do this for others.

Now go to I Timothy chapter 2. Who in particular does it say here we should intercede for?

Here's another big word for your growing vocabulary, "petition". It means to request something you want. When a group of people from and sign a petition, it is so they can communicate to an authority that everyone who signed the petition wants a specific request granted. When we bring our "petitions" to God, we are bringing to Him or personal requests, needs, and desires.

Read again Phillipians 4:6. What should our attitude be like when we present our petition before the Lord?

Go now over to Hebrews chapter 5. Did Jesus lift His needs to the Father? _____

What was the attitude of His heart as he did this? _____

What is God's promise to us in regards to our needs? (Read Matthew 6:25-34, John 15:7, 16:23-24, Phillipians 4:19, and Luke 119:10) _____

What is one of the exceptions to this promise given to Mark 11:22-24?

And the other exception to these promises? (James 4:3) _____

The Pursuit of Character

Level One Curriculum

Week Six

Day Six

Date: _____

As we complete this study on prayer (really though this is far from a complete study on prayer. You should study ways to pray more effectively for the rest of your life), we are going to look to the life of one curious man in the Old Testament. Turn in your Bible now to I Chronicles chapter 4. Look at verse 9.

What does the name “Jabez” mean? _____

Does this sound like a man destined for greatness? _____

How did Jabez compare to his brothers? _____

What do you think it means to be more “honorable”? _____

NOTE: Jabez makes four separate requests in verse 10. We are going to look at them once at a time.

What was Jabez’s first request to God? _____

Is it alright to ask God to bless us? _____

CHECK IT OUT! For many of us, we feel uncomfortable asking God to bless us. We feel that we should not be selfish and that we should only ask for things for other people. This is misdirected thinking. God intensely wants to bless us, but He is patiently waiting for us to come to Him and ask.

What was Jabez’s second request? _____

Do you think he asked for this just so he could have more land? _____

What do you think he meant by asking for this? _____

What is his next request? _____

How important is it for God to be with us after He has blessed us? Explain. _____

What is his final request? _____

Compare this with verse 13 to Matthew chapter 6. Notice a similarity? It is interesting that he did not ask for strength to overcome evil, but asked to be kept from it completely. How could this prayer help you?

Did God honor and answer this prayer? _____ *Maybe you should write out and practice the Prayer of Jabez. Think you could use the blessing of God and His hand in your life?*

Counselor Initials _____

The Pursuit of Character

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Week Six

Day Seven

Date: _____

Do you hold grudges? How important is it to forgive? This is the study we are on today, so open your Bible to the Gospel of Mark chapter 11.

In verse 25, what is the effect on your prayers if we have not forgiven someone that has hurt us?

Now go to Matthew chapter 6. What is the trade-off in verse 12?

Look down to verses 14 and 15. Can God forgive you if you choose to not forgive others? Explain.

Can unforgiven sin prevent us from reaching Heaven? _____

Read the complete parable in Matthew chapter 18, verses 21-35. How much did the servant owe the king?

If you had to pay for all of your sins, what would your debt be like to God?

CHECK IT OUT! How many times have you sinned? How many evil thoughts have you had in your life? How many times have you done something you should not have done? How many times have you neglected to do something right and chose to do nothing? Wow! You're a sinner! But alas! God has forgiven! Now don't you think you owe Him enough to forgive others?

How much did the fellow servant owe the servant who had just been forgiven? _____

That's right-diddly! He was owed chump change and had just been forgiven a fortune of debt. What a selfish idiot!

Read verses 34-35. What did the king do and what will our Heavenly Father do to us if we choose not to forgive our fellow man from our hearts?

Is there someone that has hurt you? Can you forgive them? Is it a struggle to do so? Talk to your counselor about this. It is too much to live with. You can be free!

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Conclusion

You have now completed the Level One Curriculum. This is a major requirement that must be completed before you will be considered for Level Two. Completing this work has demonstrated a consistent attitude and a teachable spirit and for this you are to be commended. You must now turn this manual back in to your assigned counselor.

Now you await promotion to Level Two where you will be given curriculum that will probe deeper into the Word of God and learn more about how to be a man of honor and character. This next series of studies will focus on verse by verse study of the Bible and topical lessons on areas that will be critical to you in the future.

If you desire to continue to study and learn while you earn your remaining merits for advancement, ask your counselor for special materials. Don't get too comfortable; keep building up your prayer time and keep studying God's Word. We believe in you and we are proud of how far you have come. Press on!

