

Building Character – Lesson 1, Being a Person of Your Word

Intro. - Can you think of a time when someone didn't keep their promise to you or lied to you?

1. Tell about the class about it if you like.
2. How did you feel?

I. Lying

A. Read the following texts and answer the questions

1. Ephesians. 4:22-25

a. According to verse 22, what should we have put off (take off) if we are Christians? _____

b. According to verse 24, what should we put on? _____

* **Thought question** – How do you like this figure of taking off old clothes (the old sinful man) and putting on new clothes? Why is this illustration appropriate?

c. According to verse 25, What should we put off? _____ How should we speak to others?

* **Thought question:** When you take off dirty, smelly clothes and take a bath, do you like to put the dirty clothes back on? How is continuing to lie after becoming a Christian like putting smelly clothes back on?

2. Rev. 21:8 - Where will all liars go? _____

3. Prov. 6:16-19 - What is God's attitude towards "a lying tongue?" _____

B. Why do people lie?

1. Write down all the reasons you can think of that tempt people to lie. _____

2. Which one tempts you the most? (be honest!) _____

C. How to overcome it?

* "Louella" (not her real name) is a Christian, but in her work and relationships she began to exaggerate and lie. After several years, she said she has lied so much that she doesn't know when she's telling the truth and lying. She wants to stop lying but says that lying is so much a part of her life, that she doesn't know how to stop.

* **Thought question** – Can lying become like an addiction? In what ways?

1. How would you advise Louella? What are some specific things you think she could do to stop the habit of lying?

2. Some more ideas: (http://www.essortment.com/lifestyle/howstoplying_scvk.htm) Grade the following suggestions on a scale of 1-5 (1, won't help much, 5, will help a lot)

a. Check your feelings. When you start to respond to someone with false information, you may feel physiological symptoms. Your gaze may drop, your heart may pump harder, your face may redden, and your hands may clench. Become aware of these and other symptoms, and the next time you're tempted to lie, check to see if your physical condition reflects this internal agitation. Use those symptoms as a boundary that will not let you go further in falsehood. Catch yourself and change your wording to reflect greater accuracy instead of deception. **Grade 1-5** _____

b. Avoid situations where you're tempted to tell a lie. Grade 1-5 _____

* What are some situations where people are tempted to lie?

c. Practice apologizing. When you catch yourself in a lie, make a point of correcting your words as soon as possible, even with a few seconds. "I'm sorry. That isn't quite right. What I meant to say is" "No, I didn't actually get the work done, to be honest. But I expect to finish it up today." **Grade 1-5** _____

d. Get an accountability partner. Ask a close friend or family member to hold you accountable for your efforts to stop lying. Call and every few days and talk about how you're doing. **Grade 1-5** _____

e. Constant prayer - Grade 1-5 _____

II. Keeping promises

A. Have you ever had someone tell you they would do something (meet you in a certain place for Bible study, call to help with a problem, etc.) and then not follow through. Then when you ask them about it, they laugh it off and act like it's no big deal. How does it feel when someone does this?

A. Texts

1. Read Ecclesiastes 5:4-6 (A vow is similar to a solemn promise. We'll apply it to promises.)

a. What should we do if we make a promise to God? _____

b. What is better than making a vow (promise) and not fulfilling it? _____

c. What are some promises we make to God when we become Christians, when we sing, etc.?

* **Thought question** – Could this text apply indirectly to keeping our promises to other people?

2. Proverbs 26:18,19

- a. One who deceives someone else and then says "it's no big deal, I was joking," is like what shooting what?

* Thought question - Whenever we don't keep a promise, it's tempting to brush it off by saying, "It's no big deal," or "I was just kidding." Why is this wrong?

B. Situations where we may be tempted to not keep an agreement or our word.

- 1. Being on time. An appointment implies an agreement to be there on time if possible.

- a. What are some appointments that you are almost always on time for?

- b. What are some appointments that you sometimes don't take seriously and are late for?

Thought questions Does your answer to number 1b include worship services or Bible study? What does that say about the importance you give to the things of God?

- c. Why are you usually late for such appointments? Give the two main reasons and be honest!

- d. Occasionally (not 80% of the time!), something will come up that will make it impossible for us to make an appointment on time. What should we do then?

- 2. What are some other types of promises people may be tempted not to keep?

- 3. What are some practical things you can do to help yourself become a person of your word regarding promises?

III, Swearing to your own hurt and not changing

- A. Read the 15th Psalm. This is a great description of a person with character.

- B. Focus now on the last part of verse 4. Read it from several translations if possible.

- 1. The principle idea is that a person of character is one who makes a promise (an oath) that doesn't turn out to be to his advantage, but he still keeps it!

- C. An example: Mortimer needs money and has a 1996 Toyota Corolla that he thinks he can sell for about \$2000. He puts an ad in autotrader.com and gets a few callers but no one seems to want to buy the car. Finally, someone comes and offers to buy the car for \$1500. He won't go up on the offer and so finally Mortimer tells him grudgingly, "OK, I'll sell it to you for \$1500." The man says he needs to go to the bank and get the money. Five minutes after the first buyer leaves, someone else shows up with \$2000 in cash and wants to give it to Mortimer to drive the car away.

- 1. What should Mortimer do?

a. Tell the second buyer that the car is already promised to someone else and sell it to the first man for \$1500 thus losing \$500.

b. There has been no paperwork. Therefore he can sell it to the second buyer for \$2000.

c. Sell it to the second buyer for \$2000, but then give the first buyer \$100 for his trouble.

- D. One more application - marriage

- 1. What are some things that couples promise each other when they marry?

* Thought question - Have you heard the term, "for better or for worse"? What is implied in it?

* Thought question - There have been cases where after marriage, because of an accident or illness, the wife became physically and even mentally incapacitated.

- In many cases, the husband leaves the wife, saying he can't tolerate the situation.

- In a few cases, a husband has faithfully cared for his incapacitated wife for years.

- Why is the latter type of husband a man of character and the first isn't?

- 2. Remember when you marry, it will be for "better or for worse, in sickness or in health."

- 3. Be a person of your word, one who "swears to his own hurt and doesn't change!"

Conclusion:

- 1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how are you at being a person of your word? (1 - always lying, 10 - perfect like Jesus) _____ What are you going to do to improve yourself?

Building character Lesson 2

Building healthy attitudes towards work and money

Introduction

A. Think of an occasion where you really felt good about a job or project you did for school, for your parents or someone else. Write it down and talk about it if you like. _____

1. What made you feel good about it?

I. Scriptures about work – Read them and answer the questions

A. Ephesians 4:28

1. What reasons does Paul give here for working? _____

B. 1 Thessalonians 4:11

1. What two reasons did Paul give for commanding the Thessalonians to be busy and work? _____

* **Thought question** - How does society in general view those who refuse to work?

C. 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12

1. If anyone doesn't work, neither should they _____

* **Thought question** – Why isn't this concept very popular among some people?

2. Whose bread should we eat? _____

D. Proverbs 26:13,14

1. What excuse did the lazy person give in verse 13 as to why he shouldn't go out and work?

* *What are some idiotic excuses that some give today to avoid work?*

2. What does the writer say is like a door turning on its hinges? _____

* *Do you have problem's getting to school on time or going to services because you can't get out of bed? What are some solutions to this problem?*

E. Titus 2:4, 5

1. Where is an important place for younger women to be "workers?" _____

* **Thought question** *Is it good when younger women can dedicate much of their time to working in the home? Do people of the world sometimes look down on homemakers? Do people in the church? Why is this wrong?*

II. Concepts that erode the concept of honorable work

A. "I want something for nothing!"

Thought question: *Have you ever heard someone bragging about winning some money in the lottery? How does their attitude reflect the "something for nothing" concept?*

1. What are some other things (besides the lottery) that people do when they want "something for nothing?"

Thought questions:

* *What if everyone in the world wanted something for nothing? How would it function?*

* *There is an old saying, "There's no such thing as a free lunch." Why is that true?*

B. "Let someone else do it for me."

Thought questions:

* **Without naming names**, tell of someone you know who always wants someone else to carry their load and do their work for them.

* *Why do parents sometimes do everything around the house for their children? (make up their beds, clean up their rooms, etc.) Why is this unhealthy for children when they grow older?*

C. "Work's not fun!"

* The misconception behind this whiney excuse is that the biggest goal in life that can make it meaningful is to be constantly amused, i.e. "have fun."

Thought questions: *Is it possible for people to be constantly amused and yet not be satisfied with their lives? Give some names of some celebrities who probably have lots of fun, but obviously have messed up their lives and aren't satisfied with them.*

1. Read Ecclesiastes 5:12 – How is the sleep of a laboring (working) man? _____

Thought question: *Why is his sleep sweet? Because he's had fun all day or because he has accomplished something? What brings on satisfaction and sweet sleep? Amusement or accomplishment?*



III. Preparing yourself to enjoy work

A. Work at home!

1. All parents should give work to their children (even if they whine!)
* On a scale of 1-10 (1 – no work, 10 all the work) how much work do you do at home? _____
2. What are some good “chores” for children and teens to do around the house?

* *Suggestion – Even if your parents don’t “make you” do chores, pick out one or two of these and get in the habit of doing them. Teach your parents that you can work!*

* *Suggestion #2 – When you have children, give them chores that will take them 15-45 minutes each day to complete. Praise them when they do them well!*

* **Thought question:** A study was made of teenagers who were high achievers to see what made them that way. All were raised quite differently with only one thing in common – their parents made them work around the house! Why do you think learning to work around the house is such an essential element for raising successful children?

B. Give importance now to your education

* **Thought questions:** Why does giving importance to your education have a direct effect on your attitude towards work in the future?

* *Is education always “fun”? How can we deal with it when it’s “boring?”* * More about this in lesson 5



IV. Careful with your money!

A. Read Proverbs 18:9 – **Thought question** - Why is wasting money related to not wanting to work?

B. Ways to waste money – Write down a list of ways people waste money. Include ways that teens waste money. _____ _____

(Someone better have “junk food” on the above list!)

1. Which of these tempts you the most? (be honest!) _____
* *Calculate – If you spend \$5.00 a week on junk food and decide to spend only \$2 and save the rest, how much money will you have saved in a year? _____ (You could pay for most of camp!)*

C. Why do people waste money? Write down reasons _____ _____

1. Which of these tempts you the most? (be honest!) _____
2. Can parents influence their children to waste money? How? _____

D. Learn to budget! The Bible says we are “stewards” of what gives us. We have to manage it! * A budget is simply a plan. You decide how much money will be coming in and then write down how much you need for various necessities – clothing, food, etc. Then, don’t spend above what you have budgeted for each item! (You may have to make a few adjustments.)

1. What are some expenses that should be included in an adult’s budget? _____

2. What are some expenses that should be included in teenager’s budget? _____

Conclusion:

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how are your attitudes about work? (1 – I want to live on welfare all my life, 10 – perfect like Jesus) _____
2. What are you going to do to improve yourself?

Building Character Lesson 3
Thoughtfulness of Others, Common Courtesy, Be a Giver not a Taker!

Intro. **No names please!** Think of someone you know who is a completely self-absorbed taker and thinks only of what he/she wants.

1. How is that individual when there is a call to eat lunch? Does he let others go first? Or, does he try to be first?
2. How is he/she at church services? Thinking of others? Greeting others?
3. How courteous is that person?
4. Is that person loved and respected? Is he/she happy?

I. Bible texts

- A. 1 Corinthians 10:24 – What should we seek? _____
- B. Romans 12:10 - Who should we prefer in our actions? _____
- C. Philippians 2:1-8 -
 1. According to verse 3, we should do nothing out of what? _____
 2. According to the last part of verse 3, how should consider others? _____
 3. According to verse 5, who gives us the best example of that unselfish spirit? _____
 4. What did he give up to come to earth to die for us? _____
 5. What was the eventual result of Christ’s love and obedience? _____

How can we develop that selflessness? It helps to work on seemingly small acts of courtesy and kindness!

II. Avoiding thoughtless acts:

- A. Place a number on a scale of 1-10 by each action on the basis of how selfish you think it is - “1” not bad at all - 10 “completely selfish” Discuss
 - ____ 1. Throwing garbage down on the ground.
 - ____ 2. Talking with a loud voice after lights out when others are trying to sleep.
 - ____ 3. Making uncomplimentary remarks to others about some unflattering aspect of their physical appearance - :”fat,” “skinny,” “you have zits,” etc.



- B. List some other similar acts that indicate thoughtless selfishness

* Which of these might occasionally characterize your own actions? Be honest!

III. Learning small acts of courtesy, kindness and thoughtfulness

- A. Thank you – gratitude
 1. Read Luke 17:11-19
 - a. How many were healed of the horrible disease? _____
 - b. How many returned to give thanks! _____
 2. When are you most often like the nine? Be honest _____
 3. What are some ways we can thank others?

 4. Who are some people we need to thank?

* **Thought questions:** * *How good are you at writing “thank you notes?” Why are “thank you notes” such a nice way of saying thank you? How many thank you notes have you written to some of the people mentioned in question #3?*

* *How much do you tell your parents “thank you?”*

4. On a scale of 1 to 10, how are you thanking others? (1 – never thank others, 10 – perfect like Jesus) _____
5. What are you going to do to improve yourself?

B. Greeting others, especially other Christians

1. Read 1 Peter 5:14 (other texts like Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 16:20; 1 Thess. 5:26, say the same)

a. How should Christians greet each other? _____

* I don't think this passage is demanding a kiss (which was a custom) but it is demanding affectionate greetings!

* Some cultures are better at this – i.e. The Dominican culture! The North American culture can sometimes be cold and aloof.

Thought questions –

* *Have you visited a congregation where people greet each other affectionately, and then been to another that has been rather cold and formal? What's the difference? How would a visitor feel at each place?*

* *Why is it important that teens and children greet others at services?*

2. Have you ever seen children and young people that when greeted by adults, ignore them and keep on walking? How does that look? Do you ever do it? Why?

3. On a scale of 1 to 10, how are you at greeting others, especially adults? (1 – cold, never do it, 10 – perfect like Jesus) _____

4. On a scale of 1 to 10, how are you at greeting visitors to services? _____

5. What are you going to do to improve yourself?

* Don't let the fact that you're shy be an excuse. Most of us are! We have to push ourselves to greet others warmly. You push yourself to do so!

C. Small acts of courtesy and kindness

1. Read 1 Timothy 5:9, 10 What were some acts of courtesy and service for widows in the Bible?

2. Read Matthew 10:42

a. What small act of kindness does Jesus mention here? _____

b. What will one receive who concerns himself with small acts of kindness? _____

3. Letting others go first! (Pay attention 10 and 11 year olds!)

a. On a scale of 1-10 how good are you at letting others go first for lunch or other activities?

4. What are some others ways we can show courtesy and service for others today?

5. On a scale of 1 to 10, how are you at small acts of courtesy for others? (1 – never, I always put myself first, 10 – perfect) _____

6. What are you going to do to improve yourself?

Conclusion – Giving people will by nature become thoughtful and courteous in their actions. Takers by nature will be self-absorbed, distracted and thoughtless.

A. Practical suggestions to become more thoughtful and courteous! Grade the following suggestions on a scale of 1-5. (1 – Not helpful at all, 5 – life changing)

1. Ask your parents what you can do to be more thoughtful and courteous. Grade _____

2. Ask your counselors here what you can do to be more thoughtful and courteous. Grade _____

3. Ask your friends here how you can be more thoughtful and courteous. Grade _____

Warning – The three suggestions above may be painful, but will probably be helpful!

4. Pray _____

B. Put suggestions into practice!

Building Character Lesson 4

Learning to wait

Intro. In a study which Stanford University psychology researcher Michael Mischel began in the 1960s, he offered hungry 4-year-olds a marshmallow, but told them that if they could wait for the experimenter to return after running an errand, they could have two marshmallows.

About one-third of the children grabbed the single marshmallow right away while some waited a little longer, and about one-third were able to wait 15 or 20 minutes for the researcher to return.

Years later when the children graduated from high school, the differences between the two groups were dramatic: those who were able to wait for two marshmallows were more positive, self-motivating, persistent in the face of difficulties, and able to delay gratification in pursuit of their goals. They had the habits of successful people which resulted in more successful marriages, higher incomes, greater career satisfaction, better health, and more fulfilling lives than most of the population.

Those having grabbed the marshmallow were more troubled, stubborn and indecisive, mistrustful, less self-confident, and still could not put off gratification. They had trouble subordinating immediate impulses to achieve long-range goals. When it was time to study for the big test, they tended to get distracted into doing activities that brought instant gratification. This impulse followed them throughout their lives and resulted in unsuccessful marriages, low job satisfaction and income, bad health, and frustrating lives.

*** Thought questions**

1. If I offered you \$5 of candy money now or \$20 at the end of the week, would you be tempted to take the \$5 now? (Be honest!)
2. Why is it so important to learn to sacrifice short-term pleasure for long-term benefits?
3. On a scale of 1-10, how good are you at sacrificing short-term pleasures for long-term benefits? _____

I. Thinking of Bible texts and examples

A. Psalm 37 – Waiting for justice (Read verses 1-9)

1. According to verse 1, what is it easy to get upset (fret) about? _____
2. What should we do when we consider how evil people seem to prosper or “get by?”
 - a. vs. 3 _____
 - b. vs. 4 _____
 - c. vs. 5 _____
 - d. vs. 7 First words of the verse _____
 - e. vs. 7 “and _____ for him.”
 - f. vs. 8 – three things _____

*** Thought question** – When are some times we are tempted not to wait on God’s justice but want to seek vengeance for ourselves?

- a. Someone insults you
- b. Someone hits you
- c. Someone laughs at you
- d. Someone takes advantage of you

*** Which of these tests your ability to “wait” on God’s justice more than any other?**

B. Read James 5:7, 8

1. Does a farmer receive his crop instantly after planting? _____

*** How does this illustration of a farmer compare with our waiting for God?**

C. Isaiah 40:28-31 Waiting for the strength that comes from God. (A beautiful passage)

1. According to verse 28, what does God not do that always happens to man? _____
2. According to verse 29, what does he do to help us “wait.” _____
3. According to verse 31, what will happen to those who wait on (hope in) Jehovah? _____

*** Thought question** – What images (spiritual and otherwise) come to your mind when thinking of soaring like an eagle. How does an eaglet (baby eagle) have to wait to soar? What happens to an eaglet if it tries to “soar” too soon?

D. Hebrews 11:8-16 Sacrificing and waiting for eternal blessings

1. What did Abraham and Sarah do that would have been disagreeable according to verses 8-10? _____

2. Why were they willing to do it? _____
3. According to verse 13, did they receive what they were looking for on this earth? _____
4. What did they consider themselves to be on this earth? (vs. 13) _____
5. What were they seeking? _____

*** Thought question** - Why is it important to understand that we are pilgrims and strangers on the earth to help us wait for better things in heaven?

II. Waiting for material blessings

A. Lurlene and Ronaldo get married when they're only 21. He's just started to work at his company and she works as a waitress and they hope they can save enough money to be able to have children in a few years and have her stay home with them. However, Lurlene had a big screen HD TV at her parents' house and since she's used to watching that, they feel they need to have one. Since they both have a job, Circuit City sells them a nice one on credit. Then, of course, they need high-speed digital cable service because what good is it to have a nice HD TV without that?

How are they going to get to work? Maybe he could drop her off on the way to his work, but then she would have to wait two hours before work started. They both need dependable cars and since they don't have any money, Screaming Bob's Used Cars sells them two nice cars (a 2006 and a 2005) on credit at 25% APR. The payments for both are pretty high, but they need transportation don't they?

They have a hard time paying for their cars and TV. Finally, they can't. They haven't saved anything, they owe \$25,000 and don't know what to do?

* *Thought questions*

- What is the biggest problem Lurlene and Ronaldo have?
- What would you tell them if you could talk to them?
- Are you ever like them? How can you avoid being like them?

B. Mackey, Lindley and Ian all have 8GB iPods with video and Xbox 360's. Mackey has Lebron Zoom V shoes, Lindley has Nike Airposite and Ian has Air Jordans. Lukie only has an old 100 mb mp3 player and Kmart special shoes. He feels depressed and inferior since his parents can't buy him so much.

* *Thought questions*

- What is the biggest problem Lukie has?
- What would you tell him if you could talk to them?
- Are you ever like him? Be honest!



C. Mortimer's parents are "rich" and want the best for him, so they buy him a brand new Toyota, the newest ipod, Xbox 360 and athletic shoes. Leron's parents are also "rich," but they tell him that he'll have to learn to save his own money and buy his own stuff. He works at Shoprite after school and finally has enough money to buy a 1985 Ford Tempo. His parents don't give him any money to help him

* *Thought questions*

- Are Leron's parents cruel for not buying him more things? They have the money!
- Are Mortimer's parents really doing him a favor by buying everything for him?
- What important lessons are Leron's parents teaching him?

III. Waiting for marriage (I know we studied these points almost every year, but they're important.)

A. Important points (a review of some of last year's material.)

1. Rule - Activities that stimulate sexual desire are only for marriage (Hebrews 13:4)
2. Read Matthew 5:27, 28
 - a. What sin does one commit who looks at a woman to lust after her? _____
 - b. Would the same principle apply to those who "touch" to lust? _____
3. "Watch your hands watch your hands what they do." (Did you ever sing this as a child?)
 - a. Why are people who are too "handsie" with their girlfriends/boyfriends playing with fire?
 - b. Frank talk for older campers - If you want to talk seriously, analyze the following question: Besides what is obviously wrong, where are some places that unmarried people should not put their hands on others of the opposite sex? Should they put their hands on each other's legs? Should guys carry girls by allowing them to straddle their necks? Should girls sit in guys laps?

B. Learn to wait! Don't take one marshmallow now, when by waiting you can receive so much more!

1. Keep your hands to yourself! Watch your eyes!

IV. Summary question: What are some other things Christians must learn to wait for?

Conclusion – The best things in life come to those who don't seek instant gratification, but learn to control themselves to obtain God's greater blessings that come through waiting.

- A. Have a prayer asking God to help all not to be deceived by the lie of instant gratification but to learn to wait for what is truly good in life.

Building Character Lesson 5- Learning Commitment, Working Towards Goals

Intro. There are two kinds of people in the world today that we'll illustrate with two fictional people: Mary Liveforthemoment and Beulah Makesomeplans

A. Mary is happy go lucky, for example, regarding camp. She hears about camp, but thinks, "No need to worry about it now, after all, Mr. Hall is a softie and will probably let me in at the last minute if I decide to go. After all it's still two months before camp." Even though she knows she ought to save some money for camp, she doesn't worry about it and continues to eat her five dollars worth of junk food every week. A month or so before camp, someone asks if she's going to camp, she says, "I don't know. Who else is going? I might just stay home and watch TV."

Then, a week before camp, she decides that she'll go (Everyone else is excited about it and she doesn't want to be left out.) but she doesn't even have \$20 to help with expenses. She begs her parent to give her a little to help. She's spent all the money she gets on junk food. She doesn't have her health form ready the Sunday before camp, but says she'll bring it to camp with her. She does bring it, but it's barely filled out and she forgot to have her mother to sign it.

Mary Liveforthemoment isn't a bad person. She just doesn't like to set goals and work towards them. She just drifts along, doing whatever she feels like doing on the spur of a moment. She plans little for the future.

B. Beulah Makesomeplans hears about camp and checks with her parents to see if she can go. Then, she checks her calendar, decides she can go and fills out her forms. She doesn't have much money to go to camp, but decides that if she saves the \$5.00 a week that she is given for cokes and candy that in the three months before camp she can save \$75 which, along with help from a sponsor, will pay her way. She sends in her application and health form, which is well filled out, two months before camp. Mr. Hall is very happy with Beulah!

C. Thought questions:

1. Which of the two young ladies will give more attention to homework? To Bible study?
2. Which will make better choices regarding their education?
3. Which will make better choices regarding their marriage?
 - a. Why will Mary probably make a bad mistake and marry someone who isn't good for her?
4. Which is more likely to go to heaven? Why?
5. Who are you more like? Mary Liveforthemoment or Beulah Makesomeplans?

* *Most of us are a combination, but probably need to work to be more like Beulah.*

I. Scriptures

A. Read Ecclesiastes 11:4

* **Thought question** - What is this text saying?

* **Thought question** When are you tempted to sometimes "watch the wind and the clouds" and not work to prepare for the future?

B. Read Luke 14:28-33 (A lesson about counting the costs to be Christ's followers)

1. What should one do before building a tower? What should a king do before making war?
2. What will happen if plans aren't made for the tower or for war?
3. Applications
 - a. What is the primary application of these illustrations regarding following Christ?

* **Thought question:** Should we be baptized if we're not really ready to give everything to Christ?
 - b. What are some secondary applications we can make from these illustrations regarding plans for...
 - i. School _____
 - ii. Marriage _____
 - iii. Having children? _____

II. Common sense ideas for making goals and working towards them

A. Write your goals down for life.

1. Write down the main goal. According to Matthew 6:20, What should be at the top of the list?

* **Thought question.** Why should every other goal reach towards this one?



2. What are some other goals in life that can help us attain that ultimate goal?

B. Write down goals for the next year that can help you attain your life goals?

C. Write down goals for the next week that can help you?

D. Write down some things you can do today that will help you reach the goals above

** Thought question - Why can writing down goals and tasks for the week and then checking them off when fulfilled, help us with our planning for and reaching goals? Why not start writing down daily goals as a checklist? You've just started. Keep it up!*

III. Preparing for living on this earth

A. Education

** Thought question - Do you know anyone who can't read? Can you imagine what it would be like not to read?*

2. How can these two verses be applied to our efforts to educate ourselves? Proverbs 16:16; Ecclesiastes 9:10?

** God has given us a wonderful world. Shouldn't we want to learn about it?*

3. Do you have any special goals for your education? Write them down

4. What are some intermediate things you can do to reach these goals?

B. Work – We've already studied the importance of work in lesson 2

1. What are some things you can do now to begin to prepare yourself to work to earn a living or to be a good homemaker?

2. Make sure you begin to think in terms of practical ways to earn a living.

** Mauriciano is in love with Laurina. She tells him that he needs to learn to make a living before she can think of marrying him. Mauriciano makes beautiful daisy chains and writes poetry and decides he wants to major in college in artistic daisy chains and poetry and making a living doing that.*

a. Is Mauriciano realistic in thinking he can make a living making daisy chains and writing poetry? What would you tell him?

b. Should Mauriciano learn something else (mechanics, carpentry, nursing, etc.) and enjoy his daisy chains and poetry on the side?

3. Suggestions on thinking of ways to make a living in the future. Which do you think is best?

a. Christians serve! Serving and giving satisfy (Acts 20:35). Think seriously of some work where you can serve the most: nursing, teaching, serving family (Home ec), EMT, evangelist, etc.

Thought question: What are some other jobs that by nature involve service?

b. Find something you enjoy doing that also can be of service to man and will allow you to feed yourself and others (not making daisy chains!)

c. What are some other ideas Christians should have in mind when thinking of preparing themselves to work?



C. But, these things shouldn't be the main priority!

1. Read Luke 12:16-21

a. What gave the rich man confidence? _____

b. Why was this confidence misplaced? _____

2. Someone asks very intelligent Louina what she's going to do and she responds this way:

"I'm taking honors courses now and have already been offered a scholarship to Cornelia State University as a Pre-med major, It's in the top 5% in the country. Then my professors have promised they'll help me get into grad school for the lucrative legal-medical-law enforcement practice. Positions in that field start at 100k a year!

a. What is Louina forgetting?

b. Have you ever talked like Louina? (Be honest!)

c. What does James 4:13-16 say about this attitude?

* *How can you change?*

D. Marriage - We talked about preparing for marriage last year, but as a review, what should be your goals and priorities for marriage be if you think you would like to get married according to God's plan?

a. What can you do to work towards these goals

b. What would be the goals of worldly people for marriage?

IV, Enemies of Planning and Commitment

A. Which of the following three qualities do you think most hinder most people in being committed people and good planners?

_____ 1. Laziness

_____ 3. Bad role models

_____ 2. Discouragement

_____ 4. other (discuss)

* *Which of these qualities hinder you the most in making good commitments?*

B. More questions

1. What do you think you can do to overcome that and learn to make goals and work towards them? Mark the ones you think can help most.

_____ a. Prayer

_____ c. Singing

_____ b. Encouragement from other Christians

_____ d. Hang around with better people

2. What specifically can your brethren here at camp do to help you?

Conclusion – Have a group prayer asking for God's help in reaching towards a genuine commitment to go to heaven as the ultimate goal, and being disciplined in working towards other intermediate goals.