

BUILDING GODLY CHARACTER

31 DAYS OF CHARACTER

DEVOTIONS FOR THE FAMILY



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How to Use This Resource

The most important part of family devotions isn't the specifics of what you do or say or what passage you study. It is that you open God's Word as a family and give your children a spiritual insight from it.

In fact, simply reading a single verse and praying together as a family is better for your children than you waiting to ever start because you don't think you can develop as thorough a devotional time as you would like. There is something significant that occurs in the heart of a child simply by seeing Dad or Mom open God's Word and tell them how it is practical for their life.

Family devotions can be on any topic, so long as it is biblical. You could study the life of Christ, read through the book of Proverbs, or do word studies on particular topics. One of the most versatile topics (because it is easy to give application for children of various ages) is character traits. In this study, we look at thirty-one character traits with various Scripture passages you can use for each.

The devotion given for each day of this resource has more content available than would be practical to use. Here are the categories we've included, with an explanation of their purpose:

Tools

Each day begins with a couple of suggestions for what you could use as an attention-grabber or activity to start out with. If you choose to use this section, you'll probably just use one of these.

Blueprint

You will find three suggested Scripture texts to choose from—a single verse, a Bible story, or an example of how Jesus used that particular character quality. If you have very young children or more limited time, you may want to use the one verse that is listed. Elementary and older children would enjoy the Bible story or the illustration from the life of Christ. (You could even work through this guide three times, using a different passage each time.) The important thing is that your children see you open God's Word and help them apply it to their lives.

Start Building

This provides a brief application and possible discussion questions. Treat the discussion questions like the tools at the beginning—pick and choose which ones are good for your children. Some of the questions are geared more toward young children, and some are designed to be more thought-provoking for older children. Some days you may not even use the questions at all, and some days you may find they are a tool to help your children develop biblical thinking processes.

Talk to the Master Builder

Conclude your time together asking the Lord for His grace and help to apply what you have learned from His Word.

Use this guide as just that—a guide. Use as much or as little from it as is helpful to your family, and feel free to add your own ideas as well.



DAY 1

Obedience



Tools

Act It Out

Play “Mom/Dad Says” as a substitute for “Simon Says” Take turns allowing your children to be the leader.

Object Lesson

Make a batch of chocolate chip cookies together. When you get to the oil in the recipe, tell your children, “I just feel like doubling this.” (The cookies will not turn out right, but you will be able to eat them with ice cream.) Once it is obvious that not following the recipe didn’t work, discuss how going by what feels right instead of what we are instructed to do (either by God or by Mom or Dad) is not wise.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Ephesians 6:1
- **Bible Story:** 1 Samuel 15:1–23
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** Luke 2:42–52



Start Building

Application Summary

God commands us to not only obey Him, but to also obey the authorities which He has placed in our lives.

Discussion Questions

1. Are you supposed to obey every instruction anyone gives to you? Who are the current authorities in your life?
2. What should you do if an authority in your life tells you to do something that is sinful or against what the Bible says?
3. Sometimes we think of obedience as a children's word, but who are some of the authorities adults are supposed to obey? (Examples include God, government leaders, police officers, employers, etc.) Do you think that learning to obey when you are young makes it easier to obey these other authorities?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for the authorities He has placed in the lives of you and your children. Ask Him to help them obey cheerfully that day. If they have authorities they find it difficult to submit to (such as a school teacher or difficult boss), pray in particular for that person and for your child to be able submit that day.



DAY **2**

Contentment



Tools

Object Lesson

Count your blessings—literally. Bring a blank sheet of paper and a pen. (If you have a large whiteboard or chalkboard, that's even better.) Ask your children to begin naming the things they have to be grateful for. If you run out of time or space for your family list, challenge each child to create a list of their own to be shared with the rest of the family at an upcoming mealtime.

Snack

Prepare a simple tray with a small amount of basic food—perhaps plain slices of bread or little bowls of rice. (It's best if you can make something your children actually do like and will eat.) Point out that in many parts of the world, children will go an entire day (or more) with about this much food. Discuss the difference between needs and wants and how we can be content when our basic needs are met.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** 1 Timothy 6:6
- **Bible Story:** Numbers 11:4–35
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** Matthew 8:19–20



Start Building

Application Summary

God provides for all of our needs, and He desires that we would be satisfied with what He has given to us.

Discussion Questions

1. How much does a person need to be happy?
2. How do you feel when you want something but can't have it? Is it possible to feel happy without getting what you want?
3. Have you ever gotten something you really wanted but then discovered it didn't give you the happiness you hoped it would? Why do you think that happens?
4. Who do you know who doesn't have as much as you have but is happy?
5. What is the difference between a need and a want? Can you give a few examples? Is it wrong to want something that isn't a need? How can we be sure we don't cross a line of discontentment?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for His goodness and provision in your life. Ask God to help you see discontentment or covetousness as it comes into your life. Thank Him for specific needs He has met.



DAY 3

Respect



Tools

Act It Out

Practice some expressions of respect: listening when other people are talking, using “sir” and “ma’am,” saying “excuse me,” a man standing for a lady or opening the door or offering his seat to her, placing your hand over your heart for the national anthem, etc.

Object Lesson

Bring a pair of smelly socks that have been neatly folded. Hand them to your children to wear. When they notice the smell and protest, point out that the socks show the difference between obedience (doing the right thing) and respect (doing it in a right way). While socks are appropriate to wear, they are unpleasant if they are not clean. Even so, obedience with a bad attitude is unpleasant to everyone.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Ephesians 6:2
- **Bible Story:** 2 Kings 2:23–25
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** Mark 12:13–17



Start Building

Application Summary

The Bible often uses the word honor for respect. Learning to respect others is a step beyond obedience and is essential for healthy relationships with authorities and others in our lives.

Discussion Questions

1. Ephesians 6:2 says that honoring your parents is the first command “with promise.” What is the promise attached to it? (See Exodus 20:12 and Ephesians 6:3.)
2. Do you think it is important to show respect to people besides your parents? Why?
3. What are some of the ways we show others that we value them by showing them respect?
4. The highest level of respect is worship, and God is worthy of our utmost respect. How do we show respect to Him? What are some of the ways we are to worship Him?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for the people He has placed in your lives. Ask Him to help your children show others how they value and appreciate those people by developing habits of respectfulness.



DAY 4

Honesty



Tools

Act It Out

Play “Truth or Lie,” giving age-appropriate examples of both true and untrue statements and asking your children to say which ones are true and which ones are a lie. For example, “The sun is the closest star” and “The sun revolves around the earth.” Or, “Dogs have four legs” and “Dogs say ‘meow.’” You can also give statements based on your actions, such as dumping a box of toys and saying, “I didn’t touch the toys” or “I’m sorry, I dumped out the toys.” Explain that saying something that is not true is called a lie. Not only is it wrong, but it causes others to mistrust us in the future.

Snack

Put regular chips and salt and vinegar chips into two separate bowls. Let your children take chips from both bowls. Point out that although they look the same, there is a difference in their taste. We can say something that makes people believe something that is not true, but eventually, the truth will come out, and the lie will be exposed.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Proverbs 12:22
- **Bible Story:** Acts 5:1–11
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** John 1:14



Start Building

Application Summary

The foundation of honesty is simply telling the truth, and it is one of the most important lessons children can learn.

Discussion Questions

1. Has someone ever told you a lie that you believed? How did you feel when you found out it wasn't true? Did you have a hard time trusting that person in the future?
2. When is it easier to lie than it is to tell the truth? How does telling a lie now make it harder in the future?
3. What are ways that people lie without saying anything?
4. How does telling other people the truth about who Jesus is help them?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for revealing the truth of who He is in the Bible. Ask Him to help your children tell the truth today and every day and to have opportunities to tell other people about Him.



DAY 5

Diligence



Tools

Act It Out

Do a household chore (perhaps cleaning the kitchen after dinner) together as a family. Point out that every job—whether it is easy or hard—deserves our diligence. Discuss the various chores or responsibilities various members of the family have and how doing those jobs thoroughly benefits the rest of the family.

Snack

Make a treat ahead of time in which you “accidentally” leave out one of the key ingredients (such as chocolate chips from chocolate chip cookies). Ask your children if they notice anything missing. Discuss the importance of details and attentiveness. Point out that even when you make a mistake it still affects others who are counting on you.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Ecclesiastes 9:10
- **Bible Story:** Ruth 2
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** John 8:39



Start Building

Application Summary

To be diligent is to take whatever task the Lord places before us and to do it with our whole heart. It is being willing to assume responsibility and doing our best.

Discussion Questions

1. What are some responsibilities you have? Which ones are easy for you to do with diligence and which ones are hard? What does Ecclesiastes 9:10 say about which jobs you should do with diligence?
2. Whose diligence do you benefit from—who does their responsibilities with diligence in a way that helps you? (Examples would be parents, teachers, police officers, store managers or employees, and many others.)
3. Is there a difference between diligence and success? Can someone fail at a goal but still be diligent? Which attribute does God reward?
4. Who is someone you have learned about from history whose diligence in a difficult task brought benefit to others?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for the blessing of work and responsibility. Ask Him to help your children to do their best in every responsibility put before them that day.



DAY 6

Courage



Tools

Act It Out

Act out the story of David and Goliath, assigning various people to be David, Goliath, Saul, David's brothers, Israeli army, etc., giving everyone a role. You can act it out multiple times switching roles.

Snack

Make no bake cookies, brownie balls, or cake balls, pretending they are the stones David used to fight Goliath.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Joshua 1:9
- **Bible Story:** 1 Samuel 17:1–53
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** John 11:1–45



Start Building

Application Summary

Anyone who accomplishes something of value for others will encounter obstacles and fears. Courage is not the absence of fear, but the commitment to a cause greater than our fear.

Discussion Questions

1. What scares you the most?
2. When have you done something hard that you knew was right? Did it become easier or harder after you started doing it?
3. Can someone show courage even if he is afraid?
4. Who do you know who has courage? How do you see them use it?
5. What cultural changes have been brought about by leaders with courage? (An example would be the end of slavery in England due to the courage of William Wilberforce.) How do you hope to impact your world for good, and what kind of courage will you need to do it?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for His continual presence with us even in our times of fear. Ask Him to help your children respond to the challenges that come that day—and in the future—with courage and a commitment to honor Him.



DAY **7**

Generosity



Tools

Act It Out

Give each child \$1 (or more, depending on their age), assigning them to use it in some way to help someone else. This could be by directly giving the money to someone else, or it could be by purchasing a gift or an object that will help them minister to someone else. Set an upcoming mealtime during which everyone will be asked to share how they used their opportunity to give.

Object Lesson

Read to your family a recent prayer letter of a missionary your church supports. Discuss together the benefits of giving to support worldwide evangelism and the spread of the gospel.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Acts 20:35
- **Bible Story:** 2 Samuel 17:26–29
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** Luke 14:12–14



Start Building

Application Summary

We tend to think it is better to get than to give, but the Bible tells us the opposite is true—it is better to give than to receive. Learning to give is a mark of maturity that brings with it great joy.

Discussion Questions

1. What are some ways that you can give even without giving money?
2. Has someone ever given you a gift that you know took sacrifice for them to be able to give it?
3. Have you ever been really excited to give something to someone? Did you have to sacrifice to be able to give it?
4. What are some things that God has given to us?
5. How can you give of yourself to someone today?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for His many gifts to you, especially the gift of salvation. Ask Him to help each member of your family to see people in need today and to help you see how you can meet those needs.



DAY 8

Integrity



Tools

Object Lesson

Show your children two different pieces of jewelry—one that is a genuine metal and one that simply appears to be genuine. Explain that while they may both look pretty, only one is valuable, and a jeweler is able to tell the difference. (Another idea is to purchase or show a picture of a piece of pyrite, “fool’s gold,” and explain how although it looks shiny, it has practically no value.)

Snack

Have jelly-filled donuts (or chocolates), without your children knowing there is filling inside. After they take a bite, ask them if they were surprised or disappointed that the inside wasn’t the same as the outside. Discuss what it is like when someone appears to be honest and caring on the outside, but has a heart just for self-advancement.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Proverbs 20:7
- **Bible Story:** Genesis 39
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** Matthew 4:1–10



Start Building

Application Summary

Integrity is doing right even when no one else sees your choices. It is being real—not just on the surface, but all the way through.

Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever bought a toy that looked fun to play with, but when you did it was cheap and fell apart? How did you feel about having spent your money on it?
2. Has someone ever tricked you in a way that made you not trust them again? Why do you have to be careful about playing practical jokes on people?
3. When are times that you are tempted to do wrong that no one would know what you did? How does doing right then show integrity? How would doing wrong then start a process of crumbling your integrity?
4. How can you know that you will always be able to trust the Lord? What are things you know to be true about God no matter how the circumstances look?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for His victory over temptation in the wilderness. Ask Him to help each of your children be victorious over the private temptations in their lives and to seek your help when they are struggling.



DAY 9

Kindness



Tools

Act It Out

Teach your children the “ripple effect” of kindness by filling the kitchen sink with water. Drop a small object into the water, and notice how the ripples spread. Then drop something heavier. Continue to drop increasingly heavier objects, noting the larger ripples. Talk about the ripples of benefit to others that come by acts of kindness—the larger the acts of kindness, the more people who benefit. Tell your children about someone who was kind to you years ago and how that has impacted your life and thus impacted them.

Object Lesson

To illustrate the importance of using kind words, bring a tube of toothpaste and squeeze a long strand of it out on a piece of paper. Give your children toothpicks, allowing them to try to get the toothpaste back in the tube. Explain that the toothpaste represents the words we say to others, and that we must be careful to use kind words, because we can never take our words back.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Ephesians 4:32
- **Bible Story:** 2 Samuel 9
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** John 8:1–11



Start Building

Application Summary

All of us have a tendency to be harsh when things are not going our way or to people who cannot help us. Kindness is having a tender heart for others, especially the underdog, and being willing to help them in practical, tangible ways

Discussion Questions

1. Who is someone you know who isn't normally shown kindness (perhaps someone in your class who is picked on by others)? How can you show kindness to them?
2. What are some ways you can show kindness to people in your own family?
3. Who do you know at church who could use some encouragement? How can you show kindness to them as a family?
4. Is there a particular person to whom you have found it hard to respond with kindness? Or is there a time when you find it hard to respond with kindness? How can you prepare ahead to have a kind answer ready?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for His kindness in coming to earth and dying on the cross, as well as for the good gifts He gives every day. Ask Him to help your children show kindness to others that day.



DAY 10

Patience



Tools

Object Lesson

Use a rubber band to demonstrate how we feel stretched by people who make life difficult for us. Sometimes we think we deserve to be able to “snap” at them or at others around us. But just as when a rubber band stretched in your hands snaps it hurts you, so when a person snaps at others it always hurts people around them.

Snack

Prepare a delicious snack which you set out at the beginning of your devotions time, but tell your children they need to wait until the end to eat it. Just as you prepare to eat it, bring out an additional treat they didn't know about as a reward for their patience. Tell them that God often rewards our patience in ways we can't even anticipate.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Ephesians 4:2
- **Bible Story:** Luke 2:25–28
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** Hebrews 12:2–3



Start Building

Application Summary

Sometimes God allows difficult situations or people in our lives. During those times, we need to be willing to wait on the Lord and let Him accomplish His purposes in us and through us.

Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever felt like quitting something that was hard? What will you lose if you give up?
2. What skills do you admire that take time to develop? What are the difficulties people have to endure to become proficient in those areas?
3. How can God's promises help us to be patient during difficult times? What is your favorite verse that is a promise?
4. Are there particular people around whom you tend to feel impatient? What can you do to help you remember to show extra patience to them?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for His patience in enduring the cross for us and His ongoing patience with us. Ask Him to help each of your children to wait on Him for help, and to look to Him when they begin to feel frustrated with other people or with their circumstances.



DAY **11**

Faith



Tools

Object Lesson

Ask for a volunteer whom you then send out of the room. Once he is out, the rest of the family sets up obstacles around the room. Before bringing the child back in, blindfold him, and then lead him through the obstacles. Discuss how the one who is blindfolded has to trust the knowledge and good intentions of the person leading them. When we walk by faith, we trust God to know what is best for us and to guide our steps.

Snack

Serve grapes and milk, discussing the ten spies in Numbers 13 who saw the bounty of the Promised Land, but refused to believe God could lead them in. Point out that when the spies brought back the grapes, the Israelites all saw with their own eyes what good things God had in store for them, but because they wouldn't trust God to help them get into the Promised Land, they missed out.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Hebrews 11:6
- **Bible Story:** Numbers 13
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** Matthew 17:14-21



Start Building

Application Summary

Faith is the essential element of the Christian life. It is how we come to salvation, and it is how we grow as Christians. Faith is believing God is who He says He is and trusting Him to fulfill His Word.

Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever trusted someone and they let you down? How do we know that God will never let us down?
2. Hebrews 11:6 tells us that one of the ways we express faith is by believing “that He is.” How does knowing more about who God is help you to trust Him more?
3. Who in the Bible trusted God and saw God provide? (Hint: There is an entire collection of examples in Hebrews 11.)
4. What is your favorite promise from God in the Bible?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for His trustworthiness, and ask Him to help your children learn to trust Him more every day. If you are going through a difficult trial as a family, pray specifically about that situation, expressing to the Lord your trust in Him.



DAY 12

Responsibility



Tools

Act It Out

Create a chore chart or list with a reward system for responsibly finishing chores each day or week. If you already have such a system in place, make this a “Double Responsibility Rewards” week for all chores completed without being reminded.

Object Lesson

Make a list of the various responsibilities of each member of the family. Discuss what would happen if these responsibilities were neglected—for one day, for a week, for a month. You could also list responsibilities of other leaders—the President of the United States, your city mayor, your pastor, your boss, etc. Discuss the correlation between leadership and responsibility.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Colossians 3:23
- **Bible Story:** 1 Samuel 17:15–20, 34–36
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** John 19:25–27



Start Building

Application Summary

One of the greatest motivators for following through on areas of responsibility is remembering that what we do is for the Lord, not just for others. Remembering Him encourages us to put our whole heart into what we have been given.

Discussion Questions

1. What have you been given the responsibility to do every day? What responsibilities are the hardest for you to do?
2. Is there anything that you have noticed needs to be done and have thought someone else should do it? Is it something that you could volunteer to be responsible for?
3. How do responsibility and trust relate to each other? Can you trust people who aren't responsible?
4. Who can you think of in the Bible who had a hard responsibility but was faithful to do it? Who can you think of who did something hard that wasn't their responsibility?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for His grace to do the jobs He's given us. Ask Him to help your children remember His presence and do their jobs as unto Him.



DAY 13

Sincerity



Tools

Act It Out

Demonstrate the difference between being real and fake. Tell one child “privately” (but so the others hear) that you like her shirt or shoes or something. When she goes back to her seat and “can’t hear,” tell another child that you really don’t like it at all. Talk about flattery and how it is wrong to tell someone something just to make them like you while telling others the opposite. Practice giving sincere compliments.

Snack

Purchase a package each of M&Ms, Skittles, and Reeses Pieces, and mix together in a single bowl. Point out that they all look similar on the outside but are very different on the inside. We can appear to love God or care about others, but if that is not what is in our hearts, it will eventually show.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Romans 12:9
- **Bible Story:** Acts 20:17–27
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** John 18:19–23



Start Building

Application Summary

To be sincere is to be real. But it isn't just about allowing your rough edges to show; it is about allowing the Lord to make you genuine in your love for Him and your love and care for others.

Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever had someone pretend to be nice to you to your face but then learned they said mean things about you behind your back? Have you ever seen someone do that about someone else? Should you stop them?
2. Have you ever wanted someone to think something about you that really wasn't true? Why is it better to be what you want people to think you are, rather than to just pretend?
3. Is being sincere the same thing as being trustworthy? How are they the same? How are they different?
4. Since Christians represent Christ to unsaved people, do you think that when other people discover a Christian has been insincere it makes it harder for them to trust Christ?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for His ability to change our hearts to make us Christlike. Ask Him to help your children become more like Him from the heart.



DAY 14

Tenacity



Tools

Act It Out

Read aloud or tell the story *The Little Engine that Could*. Discuss the importance of not giving up before we have given our best effort.

Object Lesson

Give a volunteer a small weight or a jar of canned food (something that seems light and easy to hold) to hold above their head during devotions. Halfway through or at the end (depending on the age and endurance of whichever child volunteered), point out that even something that is easy becomes difficult after a while. Discuss the importance of tenacity even when something appears easy.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** 2 Timothy 2:3
- **Bible Story:** 2 Timothy 4:6–8
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** Hebrews 12:1–3



Start Building

Application Summary

It's often easy or exciting to begin something, but it takes tenacity to stick with it even when finishing becomes more difficult than we first thought it would be.

Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever started a project that you thought would be easy but turned out to be hard? How do you decide if you should finish it or move on to something else?
2. What is the hardest thing you have ever finished? Are you glad you did? What is something you have started that feels difficult right now, but you will be happy when it is finished? What do you look forward to when it is finished?
3. What are three goals you have for this week? This year? What are some of the difficulties you see might come up, and how are you going to persevere through them?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for His endurance on the cross and for the tenacity of people like the Apostle Paul. Ask Him to help your children today to give their best to every responsibility and project they are given. Ask Him to help them build endurance throughout their lives and to accomplish great things for His glory.



DAY 15

Trustworthiness



Tools

Act It Out

Let your children take turns standing with their backs to you and falling straight back in a free fall for you to catch them. Point out that we want others to be able to have this level of trust in us—that they don't have to wonder if we will do what we've said we will do or be who we appear to be.

Object Lesson

Break a glass or ceramic object, and then try to glue it back together. Discuss what happens when a reputation is broken and how difficult it is to repair.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Proverbs 22:1
- **Bible Story:** 1 Kings 20:26–43
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** John 4:46–53



Start Building

Application Summary

Your reputation is one of the most valuable things you have. And, to a great extent, your reputation hinges on your trustworthiness.

Discussion Questions

1. Who do you think of when you hear the word trustworthy? Do you think anyone else would think of your name?
2. Have you ever counted on someone to finish something, but they didn't come through? Is there a job you have been given that someone is currently waiting on you to finish?
3. If you could choose between being wealthy or being trusted, which would you choose? Why do you think that is better than the other?
4. Read Proverbs 22:1. Do you think that “a good name” and “lovingkindness” are likely to be found in the same person? Is it possible to have a good reputation but not be kind?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for His trustworthy character and that you never have to wonder if He will change. Ask Him to help your children to build solid reputations of trustworthiness throughout their lives.



DAY 16

Compassion



Tools

Act It Out

Act out the story of the Good Samaritan to help your children understand the importance of helping people who cannot help them back. Point out the sacrifice of the Samaritan for a man he didn't even know.

Object Lesson

Make plans as a family to go to a community shelter and serve. Use this as an opportunity to teach your children what real compassion is.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Matthew 9:36
- **Bible Story:** Luke 10:25–37
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** Matthew 20:29–34



Start Building

Application Summary

Compassion is more than simple pity—it is taking action to meet the needs of others.

Discussion Questions

1. Using a Bible app or online search tool, look up the phrase “moved with compassion” in the Bible. In what ways did compassion move Jesus to a specific action?
2. If Jesus was moved by compassion, is it important for us to be moved with compassion as well?
3. What are some ways that we should be moved by compassion? What can we do to help people in need?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for His compassion that He exercised toward us. Ask Him to help your children to have opportunities today to show compassion to others.



DAY 17

Discretion



Tools

Act It Out

Play the game Stranger Danger. Pretend you are someone your children don't know, and ask them questions they shouldn't answer. Practice what they should and shouldn't say to strangers. (You could expand this exercise to online conversations as well.)

Object Lesson

Show a picture of a pig, and point out how ridiculous it would be to put a valuable ring in its snout. Point out that just as a ring doesn't belong on a pig, so we can be nice and sweet but say things that don't belong to that conversation or that shouldn't be said to those people.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Proverbs 11:22
- **Bible Story:** 1 Samuel 25:14–35
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** Luke 20:19–40



Start Building

Application Summary

Discretion is having the wisdom to understand individual people and situations and to know what is necessary or helpful in various settings.

Discussion Questions

1. How did Jesus show discretion when the Sadducees tried to trap Him in questions? How do you think He knew what was happening?
2. Have you ever said something that was true, but it was the wrong time or place to say it? How could having discretion help you keep from doing that in the future?
3. Can you think of situations when it would hurt other people for someone to say something that is true, but without discretion?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for giving us such a vivid example of discretion. Ask Him to help you and your children to have wisdom today in knowing what to say when.



DAY 18

Thoughtfulness



Tools

Act It Out

Play the game, “I Spy.” Point out to your children that part of being thoughtful is being observant. When you are observant, you notice who needs encouragement and how you can be a blessing.

Object Lesson

Bring some notes and have your children write several notes of encouragement to an individual (grandparent, pastor, teacher, etc.) letting them know you appreciate them. Write some notes as a family to widows or others who are going through a trial.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Matthew 22:39
- **Bible Story:** Acts 9:36–42
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** Luke 19:1–10



Start Building

Application Summary

Thoughtfulness is taking time to notice the needs of other people and then do something to meet those needs.

Discussion Questions

1. What are some ways that other people have been thoughtful to you? Why have they meant so much?
2. Who do you know who is going through a hard time right now? What can you do to encourage them?
3. In what way can you express thoughtfulness on a regular basis?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for how He sees our every need and cares about us. Thank Him for specific people who have been a special blessing to your family, and ask Him to help each of you see and meet someone else's need today.



DAY 19

Forgiveness



Tools

Act It Out

Demonstrate right and wrong ways to ask people for forgiveness. (Right ways include saying specifically what you did to hurt them and actually asking them to forgive you. Wrong ways include making excuses for what you did or blaming the other person.) Create made up scenarios, and role play asking each other to forgive, as well as graciously saying, “I forgive you.”

Object Lesson

Using a whiteboard or chalkboard, list some of the things we do that are wrong, making a tally mark for each as you talk. Then explain that forgiveness is “wiping the slate clean” as you erase it all. Repeat the exercise listing some of the things others do to us. Let your children help you with the list and with wiping it clean.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Ephesians 4:32
- **Bible Story:** Genesis 50:15–21
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** Luke 23:34



Start Building

Application Summary

Because of what Jesus did for us on the cross, God forgives us for all of our sins against Him when we ask Him. He asks us to likewise forgive others who sin against us.

Discussion Questions

1. If God kept track of everything wrong we did against Him, could we ever “make up for it”?
2. How does remembering God’s forgiveness for us make it easier to forgive others?
3. Is there someone you have hurt who you need to apologize to and ask for forgiveness?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for forgiving us of our sins. Ask Him to help each of your children have a tender heart toward others and to always be ready to forgive when they are wronged.



DAY 20

Thriftiness



Tools

Act It Out

Show your children how to make a budget. Use monopoly money and envelopes to demonstrate the importance of planning where you spend your money and how once it is spent, there is no more to spend.

Object Lesson

To demonstrate how little areas of waste add up, do the math together of how much money accumulates over the course of a year by saving just one soft drink or coffee.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Proverbs 21:20
- **Bible Story:** Proverbs 31:10–31
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** Matthew 14:15–21



Start Building

Application Summary

Thriftiness is being a wise steward of what God has given you. It helps you guard against wasting and be able to best use what God has entrusted to you for His glory.

Discussion Questions

1. What is something that is important to you to save money for? How can you save money for it that you are currently spending?
2. Do you think the motive in being thrifty matters? How would thriftiness look different in someone who had a motive to hoard, someone who had a motive to get more for themselves, or someone who had a motive to give more to others?
3. When Jesus fed five thousand people, he collected the twelve baskets that were extra at the end. Why do you think He did that when He could have just created more food?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for the material blessings He has given to you. Ask Him to help you and your children have the wisdom to use those blessings in ways that are honoring to Him.



DAY 21

Gentleness



Tools

Act It Out

Gentleness isn't just about what you say, but how you say it. Say phrases like "Excuse me" or "Can you help me?" in both harsh and gentle tones. (You could even write out several phrases on slips of paper ahead and let your children draw them and practice saying them both ways.) Point out that they should speak to others in the way they want to be spoken to.

Object Lesson

Pass a fragile object around, such as an egg or teacup. Discuss how we need to be gentle in our words and responses toward other people. Speaking harshly to others is like dropping the fragile object.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** James 3:17
- **Bible Story:** Psalm 23
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** Mark 10:13–16



Start Building

Application Summary

Gentleness is one of the marks of godliness. Just as the Lord is gentle in His dealings with us, when we are gentle in our spirit and actions toward others, we show that He is at work in our lives.

Discussion Questions

1. Who do you know who is always kind and gentle? Does that make you want to be around them more?
2. In what ways do you see the gentleness of a shepherd in Psalm 23? Why does a shepherd have to be so gentle? In what ways does this picture the Lord's gentleness to us?
3. When is it hardest for you to be gentle in your words? What can you do to help yourself at those times to remember to pause and answer gently?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for the gentleness He displays toward us. Ask Him to create a newfound gentleness in you and your children. Ask that every action you do and word you say be clothed in gentleness.



DAY 23

Humility



Tools

Act It Out

Assign each person in your family to find a way to serve someone else sometime over the next twenty-four hours. Once they have completed this they should tell Mom or Dad what they did.

Object Lesson

Bring a towel and basin to family devotions. Explain why Jesus would have washed His disciples feet and how humbling the job was.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** 1 Peter 5:5
- **Bible Story:** Daniel 4
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** John 13:3–5



Start Building

Application Summary

A humble person sees himself as needy of the grace of God. They value others and are willing to serve them.

Discussion Questions

1. Who can you think of in the Bible who showed humility by serving others when they could have expected others to serve them?
2. Jesus showed us that the best way to lead is to serve. What are some of the ways Jesus served His followers? How can leaders today—such as a boss, teacher, student leader, etc.—serve others?
3. How can all of us serve others? How can we serve each other in our family?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for humbling Himself to save us from our sins. Thank Him for the example of humility that He is to us. Ask Him to help each of you today to humble yourselves and look for ways to serve those around you.



DAY 24

Justice



Tools

Act It Out

Act out a cashier giving extra change to you, and you returning it. Explain how justice and honesty relate.

Object Lesson

Show a picture of a balance scale. Demonstrate and explain that a false balance would be if you were selling someone one pound of food, but you made the weight used to measure less than a pound. You could also illustrate by using a cup that is actually less than a one-cup measurement and showing the two amounts next to each other.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Proverbs 11:1
- **Bible Story:** Genesis 23
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** Isaiah 53: 10–12



Start Building

Application Summary

Justice is doing what is right—what is just. It is being fair in how we treat others and not cutting corners in our favor.

Discussion Questions

1. What would happen if authorities were not just, always letting people get away with wrong doings? Would that help the people who did wrong? Would that help other people?
2. Do you think justice and love are incompatible? How was Jesus' sacrifice on the cross an expression of both love and justice? Can it be just for you to forgive someone who has wronged you?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for His justice and the love that compelled Him to take our place on the cross. Ask Him to help you and your children to exercise justice in your daily lives.



DAY 25

Purity



Tools

Object Lesson

Bring your toothbrush to devotions and say, “I think I need to wash this. Will someone go rinse it in the toilet for me?” When your children react in disgust, explain that we can only clean our lives by that which is already clean—the Word of God.

Snack

If you have a pet, fill your pet’s water dish with clean water, and fill a clean glass with water. Ask your children which they would rather drink out of. Point out that even though it is the same water, the container that it is in makes some of the water unclean. (If you do not have a pet dish, substitute with a mug that’s been rolled in mud.) Explain that our lives are like the containers, and God wants us to keep ourselves clean to carry the Water of Life to others.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** 2 Timothy 2:21
- **Bible Story:** Genesis 39:7–20
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** Hebrews 7:26



Start Building

Application Summary

As temptations come into our lives, we need to be prepared to say no to sin so our lives are clean and can be used by God. When we do sin, we should ask the Lord for His forgiveness and thank Him for cleansing us with His blood.

Discussion Questions

1. What are some ways that you hope to be used by God this week? How about when you are an adult? What temptations do you need to guard against now so you will be available for God to use you?
2. When are some times that you know you will feel tempted to sin? How can you prepare ahead to say no to those temptations?
3. If Joseph had yielded to temptation when Potiphar's wife tempted him, would anyone have known? How do you think the rest of his life would have been different if he had not said "no"?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for His example of a separated life. Ask Him to help you protect your and your children's purity.



DAY 26

Joyfulness



Tools

Act It Out

Pretend your family was with Paul and Silas when they were beaten and jailed at Philippi and you are now sitting with them in stocks in the dungeon. Ask, “what do we know about God that we can rejoice in right now?” and go around the room each person saying one thing. Explain that no matter what is happening in our lives, even though we may feel sadness and pain, we can still rejoice in what is true and unchanging about God.

Snack

Prepare a snack your children especially love. Discuss how it is easy to rejoice when we get what we want, but even when we don't have what we want, we can always rejoice in who God is.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Philippians 4:4
- **Bible Story:** Acts 16:22–25
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** Hebrews 1:8–9



Start Building

Application Summary

As Christians, we can always have joy, because we always have Christ, and He never changes. We always have reason to rejoice *in the Lord*.

Discussion Questions

1. Who can you think of in the Bible, besides Paul and Silas, who were joyful even during hard times?
2. We could have joy no matter what happens in our lives, but what are some of the good gifts God has given us that we can rejoice in right now?
3. When bad things happen, do you think it is possible to feel sadness and joyfulness at the same time?
4. The Bible tells us that Paul and Silas sang praises to God. How does music about the Lord help lift our spirits?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for His gift of joy. Ask Him to give you and your children a joyful spirit even when circumstances are not going your way.



DAY 27

Meekness



Tools

Act It Out

Ask your children to give examples of unkind things that could be said, and practice how to respond with a “soft answer.” (You can even include practice for sibling rivalry here.)

Object Lesson

Strike a match or light a lighter to show the first unkind word said. Blow it out, demonstrating how a soft answer will usually end the situation. But use it to spread the fire onto newspaper to show how a harsh response further inflames what could have been easily put out.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Proverbs 15:1
- **Bible Story:** Numbers 12
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** 1 Peter 2:21–25



Start Building

Application Summary

Meekness is not being cowardly or running from a fight. It is the ability to stop one from escalating by how you react to those who hurt you.

Discussion Questions

1. What do you feel like doing when someone says something unkind to you? How does giving a soft answer back to them help?
2. Do you think that Christians are only supposed to be meek to people who are not saved? What about to their friends? Their family?
3. How was Jesus' example of meekness different from the disciples when Jesus was crucified? Some of the disciples fought back, and some fled away. Was either of their responses meek?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for His example of meekness even in the face of His accusers. Ask Him to fill you and your children with the courage to be meek.



DAY 28

Accountability



Tools

Act It Out

Describe an aspect of your job in which you have to be accountable—filling out purchase orders for purchases, how you spend your time, etc. Ask your children if they think those areas of accountability mean other people don't trust you, or if they think being accountable helps increase trust.

Object Lesson

Prepare a scavenger hunt where your children have to bring the items back to you. Explain how when your children can back up what they say they did (like bringing an item to you that they say they saw), it increases their dependability.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Romans 14:12
- **Bible Story:** Luke 19:12–26
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** John 8:29



Start Building

Application Summary

Being willing to be accountable is a sign of maturity. It is recognizing the right others (especially authorities) have to know about how we are using the resources at our disposal. Ultimately, we will all give an account to the Lord at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Discussion Questions

1. Do you think being asked to give an account is just something for kids? How do adults have to practice it as well?
2. What happens if someone acts like they are being accountable but gives false information?
3. If you were in a position of leadership, would you ask others to be accountable for the jobs you gave them to do?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for the resources He has given you. Ask Him to help each of you use today in a way that you will be glad you did when you give account at the Judgment Seat of Christ.



DAY 29

Self-control



Tools

Object Lesson

Give each child a small amount of money (depending on their age). Tell them they are free to spend it, but if they save it (for a day or a week, again, depending on their age), you will double it. Point out that part of self-control is delaying immediate gratification for something better.

Snack

Set out a snack at the beginning of your devotional time, but tell your children that they can practice self-control by waiting to eat it until the end. At the end, just before giving it to them, bring out a surprise additional snack.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Philippians 4:5
- **Bible Story:** Jeremiah 35:3–19
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** Matthew 26:47–54



Start Building

Application Summary

Self-control is the ability to say no to one thing so you can say yes to something better.

Discussion Questions

1. What is the hardest area for you to have self-control? What is the “something better” that will happen if you learn self-control in that area? Do you think remembering your goal can help in the times when it is tough to use self-control?
2. Who in the Bible demonstrated self-control? Who did not? What were the results?
3. The Bible tells us that Jesus could have called angels to rescue Him from dying on the cross. Do you think it was difficult for Him not to do that? Why did He decide to suffer instead?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for being willing to suffer for our sins. Ask Him to help your children have God-honoring goals and the self-control to reach them.



DAY 30

Gratitude



Tools

Act It Out

Role play giving your child a gift and how they should respond after receiving it. (It's best if you use something that you really are giving them—even if it is small.)

Object Lesson

Write a few thank you notes as a family to people who have benefited your entire family—grandparents, a neighbor, your pastor, etc. Discuss what you can say to help them understand how thankful you are.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Psalm 136:1
- **Bible Story:** 1 Samuel 1–2:10
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** Matthew 15:32–38



Start Building

Application Summary

Gratitude is a lifestyle of thankfulness. It is a daily, consistent decision to be grateful regardless of circumstances.

Discussion Questions

1. What are ten things for which you are most thankful?
2. Sometimes we feel grateful, but don't actually thank the person who benefited us. Who is someone who you feel thankful for, and how can you thank them for their investment in your life?
3. What are some things that God has given you that you've never thanked Him for?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for some of His specific blessings—including other people who have been a blessing to you and your family. Ask Him to help you and your children live lives of gratitude.



DAY 31

Wisdom



Tools

Object Lesson

Act out the story of Solomon and the baby (perhaps using a favorite toy of one of your children) as you read it from the Bible (1 Kings 3:16–28). If your children have never heard the story before, pause before finishing to ask them what they would have done if they were Solomon. Help them to understand how uncommonly insightful Solomon’s simple solution was.

Snack

Give each child a roll of Smarties candy. Discuss the difference between being merely smart and having the wisdom to apply what you know.



Blueprint

Scripture

Choose a verse, Bible story, or example from the life of Christ:

- **Verse:** Proverbs 9:10
- **Bible Story:** 1 Kings 3:16–28
- **As Seen in the Life of Jesus:** Matthew 21:23–27



Start Building

Application Summary

Although people spend large amounts of time and money to learn facts, we need wisdom from God to know how to use knowledge rightly. Wisdom helps us in making decisions, knowing how best to fulfill our responsibilities, and discerning what is true and right.

Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever made a wrong decision? When did you realize it was a mistake? Do you think learning from mistakes is one of the ways you can get wisdom?
2. Sometimes the wisest thing we can do is to ask someone else for counsel. How do you know when it's time to ask for help? How do you know who to ask?
3. Is there a decision you are making right now that you need wisdom for?



Talk to the Master Builder

Prayer Time

Thank the Lord for His infinite wisdom. Ask Him to help your children always seek wisdom and to always look in the right places—God's Word and godly Christians.