Character

Lesson Introduction

Character development is a lifelong process. Character is not like a light to be turned on and off at will. It is tragically easy to find people lacking in good character. A person of strong and godly character is of high value. If you have a friend who has godly character count yourself blessed. If *you* have a strong and godly character you have worked hard to develop it.

The best way to grow godly character is to start the process in the heart of a child. As they grow in God so will their character grow in godly measure. A child will look to a loving teacher as their example. The child will often grow in direct proportion to what is set before them as a pattern. You 'teacher' are that pattern. God help you to stand tall, walk straight, and loving before your little ones.

Character is not found simply in head knowledge. What a person does in public is not proof of good character. Character is found in the heart. It is best revealed when no one is watching. Godly character is worked out in the secret places of the heart.

An person lacking in character has not grown in the area of his life that is the most important. At our lifes end, God will weigh each one of us to test what we are made of.

Flash Point

Character: It's not there. It's not there. It's there!

LESSON FOURTEEN

Memory Verse

Flash Point
Character: It's not there. It's not there. It's there!

PREPARATION LIST

Prepare all songs and story pictures. Trace and color the songs and pictures onto transparencies or larger pieces of paper. If any items are not available, attempt to locate acceptable substitutions.

Welcome: Mad Scientist (MS) could be played by a puppet
National Anthem: National flag
Game #1: Watermelon slices, available fruit etc.
Game #2: List of items
Special Emphasis:
Offering: Containers for the offering
Announcements: Flyers for next meeting
Lesson Introduction: Cupcake and chocolate frosting
Memory Verse: Basket of fruit, one rotten or with a worm
Bible Story: Material to make a tent. Bucket
Object Lesson #1: Play money or small coins.
Object Lesson #2: A clay vase, torn pieces of paper (confetti) black spray paint if available
Object Lesson #3: A broken vase, torn pieces of paper (confetti) gold spray paint
Object Lesson #4: Large bottle of cola, cups

Kids Club Rally

Welcome:
KIDS Rules
Prayer _____
National Anthem _____
Theme Song _____
Praise Songs _____
Review Questions #1 _____
Game #1 Save 'd' Seeds
Review Questions #2 _____
Game #2 Bring Me
Special Emphasis
Offering _____
Worship _____

Special Ministry _____
Announcements _____
Lesson Introduction Mad Scientist Returns
Flash Point:
Memory Verse I Corinthians 15:33
Bible Story Super Man-Mighty Warrior-Not!
Object lesson #1 Two Coin Purses
Object lesson #2 The Clay Vase
Object lesson #3 The Golden Treasure
Object lesson #4 The Real Thing
Story Time Why Monkey Around
Ending Prayer

Welcome

Props: Mad Scientist (MS) costume could be played by a puppet.
Preparation: Dress a volunteer to look like a mad scientist. (Be creative. See Clip art above.)
Leader: (Whisper) "I have a secret to tell you." I'm whispering because I know there might be somebody who won't understand it and I don't want them to hear what I have to tell you. It's a secret!" Today's lesson is about learning about "character."
Mad Scientist: Comes out (laughing loudly) interrupting the lesson saying, "Here I am!" **Leader:** "What? What are you talking about?" **MS:** You were talking about me, so here I am. **Leader:** What do you mean? All I was telling the kids is what we are going to be studying about today.
MS: Yes I know, that's why I'm here. Leader: Who are you? **MS:** That should be obvious. All of you should be able to look at me and know I am... a character.
Leader: Thank you for coming today but that isn't what I meant by character. Why don't you run along and let me teach the kids what I mean by character. **MS:** Well OK. If you don't mind I'm going to act like a spaceship. **Leader:** How do you do that? **MS:** (Laughing and running in a circle.) By blasting off, see you later kids. **MS:** Exits.
Leader: Whispering. See what I mean. (Laughing) Yes he sure was a character, but that's not what I mean. We are going to learn the meaning of having good character, not just being a character.

Keys to Success

The ability to creatively teach children does not depend on a big budget. Nor does it depend on lots of gadgets or tools. An effective teacher uses what is available. When we lack something turn to the King and creatively ask, seek, knock, until you receive what is needed. While you ask, seek, and knock, continues teaching. Use what you have. If you lack, He knows how best to supply our needs.

Kids Rules
Opening Prayer

Select a child to pray. (Remember this is another tool that is effective for training godly leaders.
Suggested prayer: Dear Jesus, Please help us to have fun and to learn the truth about character. Thank you Jesus. And Jesus is anyone is not feeling good today please heal them. Thanks. Amen.

National Anthem

Select children willing to hold the flag and another child to lead the children in singing the National Anthem or pledge.

Keys to Success

Action songs assist the children in praising the Lord and in reducing excess energy that might otherwise distract later in the lesson. This is an excellent tool to help the children listen attentively to the lessons.

Keys to Success

Successfully answering the review questions allow the children to qualify to play in the games. The child's natural desire to compete, is a powerful tool to help motivate them to learn and remember. Each week the lessons contain two games giving the children opportunity to review and remember important lessons taught in previous lessons.
We recommend a reward for the game players. It could be prizes or even a system of points for a period of time after which the prizes are distributed. Whatever system you use we trust you and the children will enjoy this part of each lesson. Review and repetition, two excellent tools for the teachers tool box.

LESSON FOURTEEN

Praise Songs
Review Questions

1. What is one of your favorite verses?
2. Who loves Jesus and will tell me why?
3. Last weeks Flash Point.
4. Last weeks Memory Verse.

Game #1
Save 'd' Seeds

Props: Watermelon slices, available fruit or acceptable substitute. Two buckets, two clear containers.
Preparation: After cutting, divide the watermelon equally onto two trays. Have cleanup supplies and helpers on hand.
Players: Two groups. Size to your choice. We enjoy making it for the entire group if possible.
Playing: Line contestants up in two lines. On the signal to go they are to quickly take a piece of watermelon. As they eat it they need to save their seeds and place them in the buckets.
The game is over thirty seconds after the last piece of watermelon has been served to the contestants.
As the game is concluded quickly pour the seeds into the see through containers and measure to see who is the winner. (Helpers and teachers may participate in the contest. ;-)

Game #2
Bring Me

Props: List of items.
Preparation: Have a fun time thinking of items for your group to locate and bring to you. (Sample list included.)
Players: Audience.
Playing: First one to bring the item as it is called wins that round.

Sample "Bring Me" list:
1. One black shoe.
2. Comb.
3. Smallest coin.
4. False tooth.
5. Belt.
6 Someone with red in their shirt.
7. Birthday person (nearest).
9. Someone whose name starts with 'D'.
10. Someone who has pink shoes.
12. Hair clip.
13. Wallet.
14. Someone with a Bandaid or needs a bandaid.

Offering
Worship
Children in Special Ministry
Announcements

Lesson Introduction
Mad Scientist Returns

Preparation: Cupcake and chocolate frosting. Have cleaning supplies available as needed. (Feel free to substitute whatever you need.)
Presentation: The MS comes in, he is very excited. He has the cupcake in his hand and is waving it around. (Laughing) He reaches into one of his pockets and pulls out the chocolate frosting. He searches through his pockets for a knife to spread the frosting. Instead he pulls out a large piece of paper. It reads, "You forgot the knife." He laughs and shouts, "Who needs a knife?" He quickly in a sloppy manner reaches with his fingers and spreads the frosting on the cake with his fingers. He then looks at it as if extremely hungry and with great exaggeration opens his mouth and as if by accident misses and gives himself a chocolate covered cheek or eye. Not giving up he finally succeeds after several tries.
Leader: Steps in and ushers the MS off stage.
Ask audience. Is he a character? The answer is yes, (with a laugh) he really is a character. But not the kind that we want to be. Listen carefully to today's lesson. Today's lesson if applied successfully to our lives is worth more than money.

Memory Verse

Do not be fooled: Bad company corrupts good character.
I Corinthians 15:33

Props: Basket of fruit. One rotten or with a worm.
Preparation: Make scripture poster or transparency.
Presentation: Holding up the basket of fruit. Would you like to have an apple (Insert name of fruit)? Act as if you are going to give one away. Stop (Act like you just saw the spoiled part of the fruit). Exclaim, "Oh no! This one has a worm and is rotten. Are you sure you want this one? Or would you rather one of these other ones that are not spoiled?" (Allow for a response).
What would happen if I took the rotten fruit and left it in a basket of good fruit. Would it become good or would the good become rotten because of contact with the rotten? (Wait for response). If you do not want to eat a rotten piece of fruit, what do you think about God? Does He want you to be good in character or bad? The answer is obvious. Hold up the good fruit. God wants you to have good character. Practice the memory verse. Award the fruit to those who successfully memorize the verse.

Flash Point

Character: It's not there.
It's not there. It's there!

Flash Point

Learn and teach the Flash Point with accompanying actions.
Character: Character is the good or godly actions that come from our heart. It is **not** just what we know. (Point to your head.) Some people know how to work hard, but that does not mean they have good character. What we do does not necessarily show our character. (Point to hands).

(Point to your head, meaning what we do. Shaking your head no.) **It's not there.**

Character is not found in what we know. (Point to your hand, *meaning knowledge*. Shaking your head no.) **It's not there.**

Good character comes from the heart. (Point to your heart. Shaking your head yes.) If you have godly character it comes from knowing and serving God. Having God in your heart and following Him is the best way to develop good character. (Point to your heart. Nodding, yes.) Good character comes from the heart. **It's there!**

Quiet Seat Time

Bible Story

Super Man - Mighty Warrior - Not!

Judges 6 - Drama

Preparation: Read today's scripture in order to familiarize yourself with Gideon's character.
Props: Material to make a tent. Bucket, grain, wood to stir or crush the grain. Substitutions are appropriate. Appropriate clothing for the characters.
Presentation: A child (playing Gideon) is hiding in the tent. They should be visible to the audience. The child is acting afraid, though working at crushing the grain in the bucket. They crush the grain, speaking into the bucket says, "Shh I can't let anyone hear me. The child continues crushng the grain.

After a few moments of working on the grain and fearfully checking around a loud voice interrupts the child and his work. “The Lord is with you You mighty warrior! Gideon (the child) turns around and sees a helper or volunteer who comes in dressed like a warrior angel.

He says, “Who me?” Angel, “Yes you!” Child: Not me! Angel: Yes you! Child: No! Angel: Yes! Child: If the Lord is with us why is there so many problems. (Mention a current national or area crisis.) Angel: You need to go as strong as you are and save your people (insert name of nation or city). Gideon: But Lord, How can I? I am just a little child? Angel: Putting his arms around the child. Come on, I will go with you and we will save them together. Exit.

Leader: Gideon was a young man. When God first called Gideon, he was hiding. God saw what Gideon could be with His help. God also sees you. Even if you think you are to young, or too small if you follow God, He can use you. God takes the little we have then multiplies it with His presence and you become everything you need to be. Without God your character is weak and worthless. With God your character can become strong enough to defeat all your problems and enemies. Repeat **Flash Point**.

Object Lesson #1
Two Coin Purses

Props: Play money, or small coins. Two small coin purses.

Preparation: Fill one inexpensive coin purse with small value coins. Place a ring or gold item representing great value in the other duplicate container.

Presentation: Hold up both containers. Tell the audience that both containers have items of value inside.

Hold up the container with the small value coins. This one is filled with pennies. Dump out the coins. Toss coins to the audience or onto the floor. If one of these coins fall to the ground many people will not even reach down to pick them up. Why? (Encourage response.) It’s because they are of little value.

Hold up the second container. Pour out the valuable item inside. This item is worth a lot. It is small and yet if it fell to the ground we would be certain to pick it up. In the same way God looks into your heart. He sees your character. Even if you are small, if you love God and try to obey Him, He sees you as very valuable. **Flash Point: Character: It’s not there.** (It’s not what you know.) **It’s not there.** (It’s not what you do.) **It’s there!** (It’s in your heart!)

Don’t be thrown away because you have nothing of value in your heart. Give care to build valuable character in you heart.

Object Lesson #2
The Clay Vase

Props: A clay vase, torn pieces of paper (confetti) black spray paint if available.

Preparation: Pray and ask the Lord to give you the words of testimony to impact. Or ask some to give their testimony. Optional: Spray some confetti with black paint. Place it in the vase to represent the bad inside ones heart.

Presentation: Authors sample testimony. When I was younger, I was not the kind of child most kids would have wanted to play with. I did not tell the truth. If someone ask me a question I would most often lie, without even needing a reason. I was full of garbage, ungodly character. It was all I had and I freely dumped it on everyone I could. I had a brother who liked to take good care of his toys. When he wasn’t looking I’d grab his toys and go somewhere to play with them. Often I’d take a rock and pound on his toys, breaking them to pieces.

I remember one day picking up a rock. I threw it at a window and broke it. When someone came to check on the sound of breaking glass they ask me, “Did you do it?” I lied and said, “No!” That is only part of the bad things I did. I was a character, a bad character.

Flash Point: Character: It’s not there. (It’s not what you do.) **It’s not there.** (It’s not what you know.) **It’s there!** (It’s in your heart!)

Object Lesson #3
The Golden Treasure
Part 2

Props: A broken vase, torn pieces of paper (confetti) gold spray paint.
Preparation: Give equal time. Explain what happened when you gave your life to Jesus. Optional: Spray some confetti with gold paint. Secretly place it in the cracked vase to represent the transformation that came into your heart. Sample testimony included.
Presentation: Authors testimony continues. When I was about eight years old I had a series of dreams, (perhaps nightmares). Through the dreams I experienced something of what it must be like to die and be in hell. It was a sad, lonely, hopeless place with no escape.
I began to pray and I found Jesus love for me and my new love for Him began to change my life. (Start scattering the golden confetti.) Instead of fighting and breaking things I learned to be helpful and kind to others. I learned to hunger for Gods presence and leading in my life. I found godly character began to grow in my life.
I am now changed. I love serving God and I never want to go back to the way I used to be.
Flash Point: Character: It's not there. (It's not what you know.) **It's not there.** (It's not what you do.) **It's there!** (It's in your heart!)
I understand that one day, (Hold up the clay vase.) God will give me a new body. But God has written in the Bible that it is not the clay vase that is important, but it is the treasure that is inside. If you are growing in God your treasure is growing. Finish by distributing the remaining gold confetti.

Object Lesson #4
The Real Thing

Props: Large bottle of cola, cups.
Preparation: Chill the cola.
Presentation: Advertisers would like to tell you that this is, "The Real Thing."
God tells us that He is the one and only Real God. All else is only fake, false and imitation. Open the cola and ask for volunteers to sample.
Is it the real thing? Is it really cola?
Yes it is. You saw me open it. For those who tasted it they can tell you, "Yes, It is the Real thing." Do you believe them? Are you satisfied or happy with just them being the ones to taste "The Real Thing?" Or would you be happier if you were to sample it your self? Holding out the bottle of cola, offer it to the audience.
The truth is, godly character, is only good for the one who grows in God. If you do not follow God you will never find out what godly character is like. Sipping the cola. You will never find out how good God is until you try Him for yourself. God says, "Taste and see that the Lord is good."
Will you be like a coin purse filled with play money or small coins, of little value. Or will you follow God and find great treasure hidden in your heart?
Flash Point: Character: It's not there. (It's not what you know.) **It's not there.** (It's not what you do.) **It's there!** (It's in your heart!)

Keys to Success

Feet

One third of the world is made up of children. The Bible gives specific instructions for godly living for all people.
Following God should start with the young. There is no shoe size specified for the feet of those who are to follow Him.
Small feet can follow Him just as well as big feet. "Go and make disciples." This includes making disciples of the children.
From the lips of children and infants He has ordained praise.
Matthew 21:16

LESSON FOURTEEN

Story Time
Why Monkey Around

Based on research done with monkeys.
Picture 14:1 Four monkeys must have thought they were gods. They lived in a special home provided for them by a group of researchers. Everything the monkeys needed was provided. They had enough food and water. The temperature of their home was always just right. If they ever were sick a special doctor was ready to care for them. The monkeys could not see the researchers watching them because they were on the other side of a special one way mirror.

Picture 14:2 One day the four monkeys woke to see something new had been added to their cage, while they were asleep. There was a batch of bananas placed in the top of the imitation banana tree in the middle of their cage. The four monkeys stood around the tree a moment wondering why the bananas were up in the tree and not in their food bowl which was the normal way they were fed. The monkeys were excited about the bananas even if they were strangely stuck up in the top of the tree.

Picture 14:3 The bravest monkey named Ricky, quickly raced up the tree and reached out and grabbed a banana. Ricky had the biggest, excited smile on his face. He chattered and shouted down to his buddies below and said, “This is going to be great! Yum! I love bananas!”

As he jerked on the banana something terrible happened. Can you guess what it was?...

Picture 14:4 A trap door opened in the ceiling above the fake banana tree. All of a sudden a bucket of icy cold water came splashing down on Ricky. It even splashed some on the other three excited monkeys below.
What a naughty trick those researchers had played on the four monkeys. Ricky and the other monkeys ran away from the pool of cold water and stayed as far away from the fake banana tree as they could.

Picture 14:5 The next day, the cold water was gone but the bananas were still up in the tree. Ricky and his three friends refused to even try to get the bananas. They were completely content eating the food they were provided. They did not understand why trying to get the bananas had gotten them wet, but they had quickly learned to leave the bananas alone. They were smart monkeys.

Picture 14:6 The following day one of Ricky's friends was gone, replaced by a new monkey. When the new monkey saw the bananas in the top of the banana tree he tried to get them. Ricky reached out and pulled the new monkey down before he even was able to touch the bananas. Ricky's two friends joined him in screaming at the new monkey to stay away from the banana tree. They were screaming and chattering monkey talk not even letting the new monkey get close to the bananas. Soon the new monkey stopped trying to get the bananas.

Picture 14:7 The next night while the monkeys slept the researchers took the second monkey. Now there were two new monkeys. Neither of them had ever seen the trap door in the ceiling nor had they been splashed with the cold water. In the morning the newest monkey saw the bananas on the top of the banana tree. He too tried to get the bananas. Ricky and his friend and the other new monkey screamed at him to stop and pulled the new monkey back away from the tree.

Picture 14:8 Soon the researchers took the third monkey, the last friend Ricky had left from the original group. When the newest monkey saw the bananas and tried to get them, once again the other three screamed and stopped him. Only Ricky really remembered why they should not climb the tree. That is because his friends had all been replaced by new monkeys.

The new monkeys did not know why they were not allowed to get the bananas but they learned to stop any new monkey from getting the bananas in the middle of the room.

Picture 14:9 One night while the monkeys slept the researchers took Ricky out of the monkey cage. They placed a fourth new monkey into the cage. Now none of the monkeys had ever seen the trap door. None of them had ever been splashed with the cold water. But when the new monkey tried to climb the banana tree, the other three screamed and chattered holding the monkey back from the bananas in the top of the tree. None of the monkeys knew why, but now none of them would try to get the bananas.

Picture 14:10 The story of the monkeys is true. It is equally true that today there are people who will yell and scream at you, and even try to grab you, to stop you from doing what is right. There are people in the world who want to control you. They want you to obey them. Those people are not people of character. They do not want you to be a person of character either.

All you have to do is look around you to see the evil that is in the world. Evil can be found on TV, on the bill boards and in your own neighborhood and school or job. The Devil would like to make a monkey out of you. Ungodly people will grab you and encourage you to lie, steal, cheat, sniff rugby (glue or whatever local addiction is a problem). The ungodly people may not know that they are being controlled by the Devil, but the result is the same. You will never be a person of godly character unless you decide follow the voice of God and to give your heart to God. We need to stop listening to anyone who would lead us away from God. You are not a monkey you are a person created in the image of God.

Wrap Up

How many of you want to give your heart to God. How many of you want to follow Him and live with godly character. Raise your hand if you want to follow and obey God. Thank you. Now please pray with me.

Closing Prayer

Dear Jesus, I admit I have been guilty of not always following you. Please forgive me of my sins and please help me to live like you want to me. I want to be a person of godly character. Thank you God for hearing and answering my prayer. In Jesus name. Amen.