

Character quality:

ALERTNESS vs. UNAWARENESS

Verse of the day:

[38] Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." (Mark 14:38 ESV)

Discuss:

Keeping our focus on Jesus rather than ourselves during the Christmas season will help us not to fall into temptation. What are some practical steps you can take during advent to avoid areas of temptation in your life? Identify any particular areas that may be a source of temptation for you. Can this area of temptation be turned into a blessing for others? Be alert for opportunities to use acts of kindness to bless others.

Character quality:

WISDOM vs. FOOLISHNESS

Verse of the day:

[10] The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight. (Proverbs 9:10 ESV)

Discuss:

The bible tells us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and that if we know God we will have insight. Many people do not know God and Christmas is the perfect opportunity to spread the good news of the gospel. Hearts are open to hearing and talking about God in ways they may not be at other times of year. How can you reach out to others through acts of kindness that point to God?

Character quality:

RESOURCEFULNESS vs. WASTEFULNESS

Verse of the day:

[10] "One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. (Luke 16:10 ESV)

Discuss:

Blessing others need not cost a lot of money. We can use our time, talents and the resources we already have on hand to bless those around us. Take some time to identify ways you can show resourcefulness as you use what you already have to bless others today.

Character quality:

ORDERLINESS vs. DISORGANIZATION

Verse of the day:

[40] But all things should be done decently and in order. (1 Corinthians 14:40 ESV)

Discuss:

We can use our acts of kindness to bring order to a neighbour's garden or to the local community by picking up rubbish. We can also help a friend, sibling or parent bring order to an area of their house, car or garage. Who can you bless in this area today?

Character quality:

ATTENTIVENESS vs. UNCONCERN

Verse of the day:

[20] My son, be attentive to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. (Proverbs 4:20 ESV)

Discuss:

If we are attentive to the people around us we will begin to see opportunities to bless them everywhere we go. We can prepare ourselves ahead of time to be attentive to these needs as they come up, both in attitude and action. Perhaps this would be a good time to prepare a blessing box or bag to have on hand and keep it in the car for the needs we spot while out and about.

Character quality:

HOSPITALITY vs. UNFRIENDLINESS

Verse of the day:

[2] Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. (Hebrews 13:2 ESV)

Discuss:

Blessing others through hospitality does not require lavish preparation or expensive food. Simply inviting others into your home and life is showing hospitality. Entertainment is often done to impress, but true hospitality comes with it's own blessing regardless of how simple the affair. How can you show hospitality to someone today?

Character quality:

REVERENCE vs. DISRESPECT

Verse of the day:

[17] Let not your heart envy sinners, but continue in the fear of the LORD all the day. [18] Surely there is a future, and your hope will not be cut off. (Proverbs 23:17-18 ESV)

Discuss:

Take a mental check through your own Christmas traditions and practices for any that may not be reverent to God. Are you as a family putting the real meaning of Christmas at the centre of your focus or is Jesus peripheral to the preparations and celebrations?

Character quality:

THRIFTINESS vs. EXTRAVAGENCE

Verse of the day:

[11] If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? (Luke 16:11 ESV)

Discuss:

What wealth have we been entrusted with that we can use to bless others? Is there something we can give up today so that someone else can have what they need? Has God entrusted us with more than we need so that we are able to use our wealth to bless others? Is there a way that we can use our time and talents to make or do something to bless others today?

Character quality:

INITIATIVE vs. UNRESPONSIVENESS

Verse of the day:

[20] To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink... (Romans 12:20 ESV)

Discuss:

Even if we don't have any "enemies" (those we don't like or get along well with could fit in here), meeting the needs of those we come across is one way of following this verse. Who do we know of in our community that may be hungry or thirsty? It may be a more serious situation such as a homeless person, or just a short-term need such as a hot construction worker. We show initiative when we meet a need without being asked. How can you help someone in your community today?

Character quality:

SENSITIVITY vs. CALLOUSNESS

Verse of the day:

[15] Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. (Romans 12:15 ESV)

Discuss:

Sometimes we can easily see the joy or pain of those close to us, but is there someone in your church/school/sporting club etc. whom you can celebrate with or who has suffered and could do with your support? Think back a little way – sometimes a lot of support is given immediately after a tragedy (such as a husband or wife passing away) but tapers off over time, often well before the person involved has come to terms with it. Is there a new Mother you can celebrate with or someone who has lost a family or friend who would appreciate your company during the Christmas season? Is your brother or sister upset and in need of your sensitivity? Who can you rejoice or weep with as you show sensitivity today?

Character quality:

GENEROSITY vs. STINGINESS

Verse of the day:

The Cheerful Giver

[6] The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. [7] Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (2 Corinthians 9:6-7 ESV)

Discuss:

Are you a cheerful giver? Do you share generously with others out of the abundance that God has blessed you with? Are you generous with friends but stingy with your siblings? Do you share only when Mum or Dad says you have to? Decide in your heart to show generosity to someone today.

Character quality:

DILIGENCE vs. SLOTHFULNESS

Verse of the day:

[23] Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, (Colossians 3:23 ESV)

Discuss:

Have you been using your time well during this Christmas period? How is your attitude? If God were giving you your daily tasks/chores etc. directly, would you be approaching them differently? Are there any acts of blessing you can do today that will demonstrate diligence with a great attitude?

Character quality:

CONTENTMENT vs. COVETOUSNESS

Verse of the day:

[6] But godliness with contentment is great gain, [7] for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. [8] But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. (1 Timothy 6:6-8 ESV)

Discuss:

We can easily be caught up in a whirlwind of covetousness during the Christmas season. What will help you to be more contented this year? Perhaps it will be throwing out all the junk mail without flipping through it to add to your mental wish list or steering clear of the shopping malls. Jesus was given 3 gifts at his birth. Some families choose to make this a tradition for themselves and give only 3 gifts per person; gold (bigger/want), myrrh (something to wear) and frankincense (spiritual) or perhaps this little poem; Something you need, something you want and something to read. Perhaps you could cut back on your Christmas spending and use the money saved to help someone less fortunate than yourself. What can you do to remember that it is Jesus' birth that we are celebrating, not your own?

Character quality:

COMPASSION vs. INDIFFERENCE

Verse of the day:

[17] But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? [18] Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth. (1 John 3:17-18 ESV)

Discuss:

Who have we seen or heard about who is in need? They may be close by (a neighbor, friend, family or church) or somewhere on the other side of the world in a struggling country. Sometimes meeting a physical need with an act of kindness will open up the door to share God's love with someone who would not normally be interested. How can you show compassion to someone in need today?

Character quality:

BOLDNESS vs. FEARFULNESS

Verse of the day:

[1] The wicked flee when no one pursues, but the righteous are bold as a lion.
(Proverbs 28:1 ESV)

Discuss:

Christmas gives us a great opportunity to be bold as a lion as we proclaim the gospel to friends, family, neighbours and community members. Performing acts of kindness for others often opens up the doors for sharing God's love. What blessing can you take into the community today that will help you tell others about God's love for them and bring some joy to their day? Perhaps you will need to step out of your comfort zone and show boldness as you do this.

Character quality:

LOVE vs. SELFISHNESS

Verse of the day:

The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:31 ESV)

Discuss:

We all like to be blessed don't we? Think of some of the things that you love about the Christmas period. Perhaps something that makes Christmas special for you would also be a blessing to a neighbour. As you plan your act of kindness for today, think about how you can best show love to the recipient.

Character quality:

GENTLENESS vs. HARSHNESS

Verse of the day:

[6] Nor did we seek glory from people, whether from you or from others, though we could have made demands as apostles of Christ. [7] But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. (1 Thessalonians 2:6-7 ESV)

Discuss:

Sometimes we are very good at being kind and gentle to those outside our family, but what about those closest to us? Take some time today to bless your brothers, sisters, Mum, Dad or other close family member. Something as simple as a kind note or a job around the home can be a big blessing to them, especially if you do not seek to be recognized or rewarded for it. Don't seek any "glory" for your kindness today.

Character quality:

AVAILABILITY vs. SELF-CENTREDNESS

Verse of the day:

[20] For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. [21] For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 2:20-21 ESV)

Discuss:

All of us can be guilty of seeking after our own interests rather than those of Jesus. Who are you seeking to bless this December? Are your decorations, party plans, gifts and other traditions designed to point towards Jesus or are they primarily for your own comfort and enjoyment? How can you make the most of the Christmas season for coming closer to God and serving Him in all you do? Spend some time praying today and ask God who He would have you bless and how He would have you do it.

Character quality:

CREATIVITY vs. UNDERACHIEVEMENT

Verse of the day:

[10] So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. (Galatians 6:10 ESV)

Discuss:

As we seek to do good it gives us an opportunity to put our creativity to work so that we can achieve our best in whatever blessing we pass on to those around us. Who can you think of from within your own household of faith (Pastor, Sunday School leader, youth group leader, bible study facilitator, your own family, church small group etc.) that you can bless today? Think about how you will use your creativity to create or organize this blessing.

Character quality:

DEFERENCE vs. OFFENSIVENESS

Verse of the day:

[4] Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant [5] or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; (1 Corinthians 13:4-5 ESV)

Discuss:

It is easy to get caught up in busyness and rushing about. Before we know it, the joy of the Christmas season leaks away and irritability and lack of love creeps in to our words and actions. Give yourself a "love" check-up. Are you being patient, kind, content, humble and polite? Are you quick to forgive, slow to anger and ready to put others first? With these aspects of love and deference in mind, choose a simple blessing that you can do in love and take the time to enjoy the recipient's response.

Character quality:

ENDURANCE vs. GIVING UP

Verse of the day:

[9] And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. [10] So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. (Galatians 6:9-10 ESV)

Discuss:

As we get closer to Christmas day it may be tempting to give up on blessing others. Look back over all the blessings you have given this season and discuss what a difference it has made to your Christmas and to those you have blessed. Focus on the household of faith as you choose your blessing for today. Pastors and other workers may also be feeling weary at this time. Perhaps your blessing today could do something to lighten their load and help them endure?

Character quality:

ENTHUSIASM vs. APATHY

Verse of the day:

[10] Then he said to them, "Go your way. Eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions to anyone who has nothing ready, for this day is holy to our Lord. And do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength." (Nehemiah 8:10 ESV)

Discuss:

Christmas is a time for parties, feasting and entertainment, but not everyone is blessed with an abundance at Christmas. Perhaps you can use your blessing today to send "portions" to those who have nothing ready or enthusiastically share your "feast" with friends, family or neighbours. Why not bake a special treat for someone who may not be able to do it for themselves.

Character quality:

GRATEFULNESS vs. UNTHANKFULNESS

Verse of the day:

[16] Rejoice always, [17] pray without ceasing, [18] give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 ESV)

Discuss:

Take some time today to brainstorm everything you are thankful for and let the people/person responsible know how grateful you are. Make and send cards, notes, small gifts or some other token of appreciation to someone who may not otherwise receive the recognition they deserve.

Character quality:

HUMILITY vs. PRIDE

Verse of the day:

[16] Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. (Romans 12:16 ESV)

Discuss:

Is there a job that you hate to do? A service position in your church that you hope someone else will take on? A household chore that is beneath you? A job in the community that you think "someone" should get done? Today might be the day to humble yourself and get your hands dirty. Choose a blessing that will help you to live in harmony with others.

Some other character qualities you may like to use:

DETERMINATION vs. FAINTHEARTEDNESS

GENTLENESS vs. HARSHNESS

JOYFULNESS vs. SELF-PITY

PATIENCE vs. RESTLESSNESS

RESOURCEFULNESS vs. WASTEFULNESS

THOROUGHNESS vs. INCOMPLETENESS