

Lesson Plan for Lesson 23

Introduction to Christian Morality

Preparation and Supplies

- Study chapter 23, “Introduction to Christian Morality,” in the handbook.
- Make copies of the handout “Morally Good or Morally Suspect?” (Document #: TX003405), one for each small group.
- Have a Bible available.
- Prepare three sheets of newsprint to display, each with one of the following headings written at the top: “Action,” “Intent,” and “Circumstances.” Then write the following questions under each heading:
 - Under “Action” write: Does this action promote well-being for me and for others? Does the action show respect for God, for me, and for others?
 - Under “Intent” write: What do you hope to accomplish by making this choice? What is the underlying “good” you are trying to achieve? Does that good reflect what God wants for you?
 - Under “Circumstances” write: What influences are causing you to consider this action? How free are you to choose not to do it?

Pray It! (5 minutes)

Tell the participants that class is going to begin with a passage from the Bible called the Beatitudes. It is where Jesus teaches his followers about morality. **Select** a volunteer to read Matthew 5:3–12. **Direct** the young people to the Pray It! “Dear God,” on page 261 in the handbook, and pray the prayer together.

Study It! (35 to 45 minutes, depending on your class length)

A. Living as a Beatitude Person

1. **Conduct** a brainstorming session on the following question: What are some of the most difficult moral issues that teens face today? **Write** the issues on the board as the participants mention them.
2. **Direct** the young people to read the chapter introduction and the section “Living as a Beatitude Person,” on pages 253–256 in the handbook. The content covers points 1 through 5 on the handout “Lesson 23 Summary” (Document #: TX003404).
3. **(Optional)** **Direct** the young people to the Reflect questions on page 256 in the handbook, and **lead** a discussion on the questions.



B. Human Freedom and Moral Choice

1. **Direct** the participants to form groups of three or four, and have them brainstorm the qualities that a mature person might possess. Some examples are the capacity to accept failure, the ability to draw out the best in people, a sense of humor, and the acceptance of personal responsibility. You might pose a challenge to see which group can come up with the most qualities. Ask one person from each group to share the group's list with the rest of the class.
2. **Direct** the participants to read the sections "Human Freedom and Moral Choice" and "What Makes Something Moral?" on pages 257–260 in the handbook. The content covers point 6 on the handout "Lesson 23 Summary."
3. (**Optional**) **Direct** the participants to form seven groups. **Assign** each group one of the seven deadly sins listed in the Did You Know? "The Seven Deadly Sins," on page 257 in the handbook. **Tell** the groups to answer the question in the Reflect directions on page 256 in response to the sin they have been assigned. **Ask** one person from each group to report the group's results to the rest of the class. **Conduct** a discussion on how the seven deadly sins can lead to other sins.

C. Sin

Direct students to read the section "Sin," on pages 260–263 in the handbook. The content covers points 7 through 9 on the handout "Lesson 23 Summary."

Note: If you are running short on time, you may wish to just briefly summarize this section of the handbook.

Live It! (15 to 20 minutes)

1. **Direct** the participants to form pairs or groups of four. **Distribute** a copy of the handout "Morally Good or Morally Suspect?" (Document #: TX003405) to each pair or group of four and **point out** the three sheets of newsprint you prepared earlier that you have displayed prominently in the room.

Explain the task as follows:

- The goal is to explore whether particular activities are moral, based on an analysis of the three factors that determine the morality of any human action: the action itself, the intent, and the circumstances.
- The handout presents a series of moral dilemmas. You have an opportunity to decide whether the action is good, neutral, or bad; whether the intent is good; and whether any circumstances limit the freedom to decide whether to do the action.
- The questions on the sheets of newsprint will help you to make these determinations.

Walk the participants through the first question to set an example of how they will need to proceed.

2. When the groups have completed the handout, **discuss** each question as a class. If the groups don't agree on the analysis of a particular situation, **talk** through the differences. Then have the class determine whether the person should do the act. Consider asking the participants for alternative actions if they determine that the person should not do the act. **Refer to** the questions on the newsprint as necessary.



3. Conclude by **reviewing** the last three points on the handout “Lesson 23 Summary.”

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Following any announcements, **lead** the participants in an examination of conscience using the questions in the Pray It! “Examination of Conscience,” on page 256 in the handbook. **Pause** after each question to give the young people time to reflect. Close by **proclaiming** Ephesians 3:14–21.

