LESSON TWELVE- Becoming Righteous Men and Women

“For Facilitators: Seek the Spirit

During your preparation, the spirit can inspire and direct you to the doctrines and principles that will bless the lives of those who participate in the discussion. The spirit will also help you in developing questions for your lesson.

PURPOSE
To increase understanding of the qualities and attributes of righteous men and women.

Preparation
1. This lesson is designed to be approximately 20 minutes unless more time is available.
2. Seek the spirit in deciding which sections to emphasize. It is not critical that you cover all the material provided.
4. Consider the needs of the participants and prepare additional questions that promote discussion and connect the principles to apartment and family life.
5. Be prepared to bear your testimony throughout the lesson as the spirit prompts.

Doctrine

• “We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous and doing good to all men . . .” (Thirteenth Article of Faith).
• “When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things” (1 Corin. 13:11).

Discussion

SECTION ONE
Personal Righteousness

Activity: At All Times, In All Places

You may want to divide into two or more groups for the following discussion. Read the following verses in Proverbs and Doctrine and Covenants and identify what each of the qualities listed mean in modern days. For example, Proverbs 31:27 states: “She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.” In modern terms, this could mean she works hard to keep her house clean and prepare the meals for the family instead of spending too much time in front of the TV or on the Internet.

Read Proverbs 31:10-31 and identify the qualities of a virtuous woman. Read D&C 121:41-46 and identify the qualities of a righteous priesthood holder.

Have each group share what they learned from their readings and then create a discussion on how these particular qualities and attributes pertain to our attitudes and behaviors in the following areas:

• Dress and grooming appropriate for church and temple worship, work, and school;
• Being committed to our callings and loyal in attending the wards to which we are assigned;
• Helping our roommates understand and obey the Honor Code;
• Present and future roles within family relationships.

“We who hold the priesthood of God cannot afford to drift. We have work to do (see Moroni 9:6). We must arise from the dust of self-indulgence and be men! It is a wonderful inspiration for a boy to become a man—strong and capable; someone who can build and create things, run things; and someone who makes a difference in the world. It is a wonderful aspiration for those of us who are older to make the vision of true manhood a reality in our lives and be models for those who look to us for an example” (Elder D. Todd Christofferson, “Let Us Be Men,” Ensign, November 2006, 46-48).

“Women of God can never be like women of the world. The world has enough women who are tough; we need women who are tender. There are enough women who are coarse; we need women who are kind. There are enough women who are rude; we need women who are refined. We have enough women of fame and fortune; we need more women of faith. We have enough greed; we need more goodness. We have enough vanity; we need more virtue. We have enough popularity; we need more purity” (Margaret D. Nadauld, “The Joy of Womanhood,” Ensign, Nov 2000, 14-16).

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that counts, but that’s what worries me. Casual dress at holy places and events is a message about what is inside a person. It may be pride or rebellion or something else, but at a minimum it says, ‘I don’t get it. I don’t understand the difference between the sacred and the profane.’ In that condition they are easily drawn away from the Lord. They do not appreciate the value of what they have. I worry about them. Unless they can gain some understanding and capture some feeling for sacred things, they are at risk of eventually losing all that matters most. You are Saints of the great latter-day dispensation—look the part” (D. Todd Christofferson, “A Sense of the Sacred,” New Era, June 2006, 28–31).

SECTION TWO
Virtue . . . in all its forms
“We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men; indeed we may say that we follow the admonition of Paul—We believe all things, we hope all things, we have endured many things, and hope to be able to endure all things. If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things” (The Thirteenth Article of Faith).

• Topical Guide, “Virtue, Virtuous,” 557
• Doctrine and Covenants 4:6
• Doctrine and Covenants 46:33
• 2 Peter 1:3–8
• Doctrine and Covenants 121:45–46

Questions for discussion:
• Why do you think that virtue is mentioned twice in the list of qualities given in the Thirteenth Article of Faith?
• Why do you think virtue and chastity are listed separately?
• In what ways can having the quality of virtue bless the lives of those with whom you associate?

SECTION THREE
Casualness
As a missionary, Craig was blessed with answers to prayers and experiences that have led to a personal conversion to the gospel of Jesus Christ. As a result, he has made promises to himself and to God to live as a disciple of Christ should. Challenges have come and gone for Craig since he has been home from his mission. He has found that it is not as easy to have the same spiritual experiences he had before. These days he spends the majority of his discretionary time playing video games and hanging out with friends. Craig has turned a blind eye more than a few times to disobedience among friends and roommates. The valuable morning hours once used for personal revelation have now become hurried as he rushes to get ready for his morning class at school. When Sunday comes, Craig is always eager to attend church with friends. He loves to get compliments on his attire that has become somewhat bold with colorful shirts and ties. When church comes to an end, it’s back to the daily grind of life for Craig with work and school assignments.

Activity: Narrow the Distance
Have participants think of a time when they felt closest to our Heavenly Father, when life was at its best, and the influence of the Holy Ghost was strongest in their lives. Reflect on whether that was as a missionary or during a period of leadership, personal change, growth, etc.

Questions for discussion:
• What were some of the patterns you were living at that time?
• What do you think contributed to your feeling close to Heavenly Father?
• Why do we stop participating in behaviors that seem to be successful or bring joy or growth into our lives?
• How can we establish or re-commit to patterns that bring us closer to the Spirit?
• What does it take to truly live lives of virtue and honor?

Spencer W. Kimball said: “I find that when I get casual in my relationships with divinity and when it seems that no divine ear is listening and no divine voice is speaking, that I am far, far away. If I immerse myself in the scriptures the distance narrows and the spirituality returns. I find myself loving more intensely those whom I must love with all my heart and mind and strength, and loving them more, I find it easier to abide their counsel” (Garret H. Garff, “Spencer W. Kimball: Man of Action,” Ensign, Jan. 2007, 46–52).

Additional Resources
“Rise up, O men of God,” Hymn #324

Application
A lesson is not complete until a challenge or invitation is extended which inspires and motivates participants to apply what they have learned. “It’s in the doing, not just the thinking, that we accomplish our goals” (Thomas S. Monson, “A Royal Priesthood,” Ensign, Nov. 2007, 59–61).

As a result of the lesson, each participant should feel an increased desire to change an attitude or behavior and become a stronger disciple of Jesus Christ. Include the following steps as part of the application process:

1. Summarize what has been learned or ask a member of the group to do so.
2. Invite participants to write goals specific to what they have felt and learned. How will they apply the principles to their personal lives and apartment life (including roommate relationships)? How will they act on what they have learned as a means of preparation for marriage and family life? In short, what will they do about what they have learned?
3. Follow-up with participants on goals they have set. Regular and consistent follow-up will increase the likelihood that participants actually execute their plan.