

CHIEF VIRTUES & VICES

The Christian Teachings of Virtue (Series 3, Part 8, Teaching #24)

Instructions: Watch video, read aloud, underline what stands out to you most, discuss

Leader Guide...

See the back page for detailed facilitator instructions.

There are seven chief vices and seven chief virtues—two roads, two ways, two paths of life.

The seven chief vices are:

1. **Pride** — putting the will of self before the will of God.
2. **Envy** — sorrow toward another's good or joy at another's misfortune.
3. **Anger** — unjust wrath toward God, neighbor, or the good.
4. **Sloth** — laziness toward the pursuit of God and the good.
5. **Greed** — immoderate desire to possess worldly things over spiritual things.
6. **Gluttony** — immoderate or immoral consumption.
7. **Lust** — immoderate or immoral sexual desire.

7 VIRTUES

Faith
Hope
Charity
Prudence
Justice
Fortitude
Temperance

7 VICES

Pride
Envy
Anger
Sloth
Greed
Gluttony
Lust

These vices, and their many sub-vices, disfigure the soul—twisting it inward, disordered toward the self. They veil the light of truth, cloud the will, and pull the passions into rebellion. A soul ruled by vice cannot walk the narrow path, for the burdens of sin drag it from the way of life toward the way of destruction.

The seven chief virtues are:

1. **Faith** — to believe in and surrender to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, the Holy Trinity, Sacred Scripture, and all the truths God has revealed—for God Himself is Truth.
2. **Hope** — to trust in God and the promise of Christ for eternal life—divinely inspiring one to desire God's will on earth and union with God's love in Heaven as one's utmost happiness and ultimate end.
3. **Charity** — to love God above all things—moving one to love God, neighbor, and self, not for one's own sake, but for God's sake.
4. **Prudence** — to discern and direct what is right.
5. **Justice** — to do and uphold what is right.
6. **Fortitude** — to endure difficulties and trials.
7. **Temperance** — to moderate desires and temptations.

These virtues, and their many sub-virtues, bring order to the soul. They lift the sails of the spirit, that the wind of grace may fill them. They illuminate the intellect, strengthen the will, and rightly direct the passions—uniting the whole of your being with the will of God.

The difference is stark. Vice enslaves; virtue liberates. Vice veers off course; virtue walks the narrow path. Vice darkens the soul; virtue brings it to light. And so, the question is ever before you: Which will you pursue?

Scripture says, “As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God” (Psalm 42:1). That longing is not for what the world can offer—but for what only God can give. To pursue virtue is to quench the thirst of your soul at the wellspring of divine Truth. It is to drink deeply from the waters of wisdom and be made whole.

In the teachings to come, we will journey through each of these virtues and vices in depth—first learning to recognize and reject vice, for “to flee vice is the beginning of virtue” (Horace), and then to understand, embody, and grow in virtue through grace. For the virtuous life is not merely a noble ideal—it is the path to holiness. It is the life God wills for you. It is the life that fulfills.



Watch Video: Scan the QR code to access the video for this teaching as well as additional resources such as related Scripture, quotes, and more.
Or, visit horseandchariot.com/chiefly-virtues-vice

Every soul walks one of two paths: the way of vice or the way of virtue. Vice enslaves, darkens, and disfigures; virtue liberates, enlightens, and perfects. The choice is daily, even hourly: will you feed the vices that twist the soul inward, or cultivate the virtues that open it to God's grace?

1. Vice distorts. It enslaves passions and blinds truth. → Where has a vice quietly gained a foothold in your habits?

2. Virtue orders. It lifts the sails of the soul toward God. → Which virtue do you most need to strengthen right now?

3. Choices form character. Repeated acts, good or bad, shape who you become. → What repeated choice is forming you more into Christ—or pulling you away?

4. Vice drains; virtue fulfills. Sin promises freedom but delivers emptiness. → Where are you seeking satisfaction in what cannot fill your soul?

5. Grace empowers growth. You cannot escape vice or embody virtue on your own. → Are you relying on God's Spirit to transform your heart and habits?

CHARACTERISTICS OF A VIRTUOUS LIFE

Those who fight vice and embrace virtue exhibit these traits:

1. Clarity of Mind. Sees the good and desires it.

2. Strength of Will. Chooses rightly, even at cost.

3. Ordered Passions. Desires serve holiness, not hinder it.

4. Freedom in Christ. No longer enslaved to sin.

5. Love of God and Neighbor. Motivates every action.

6. Joy and Fulfillment. Flows from walking the narrow path with God.

Signs of a Soul Ruled by Vice...

- You justify pride, envy, anger, or other vices as “just who I am.”
- You chase worldly things while neglecting spiritual life.
- Your emotions frequently rule your choices.
- You feel spiritually stagnant, restless, or empty.
- You pursue pleasure before faithfulness.
- You avoid prayer, truth, or accountability, drifting from God.

Think: Two roads lie before me: one of vice, one of virtue. One enslaves; the other frees. One distorts; the other perfects. One leads to destruction; the other to holiness. My soul longs not for what the world offers, but for God Himself. Each choice I make draws me nearer to Him—or further away.

Pray: Lord, reveal to me the vices that hold me captive and give me the grace to reject them. Strengthen me in virtue by Your Spirit. Fill my mind with truth, my will with courage, and my passions with holy desire. May every thought, word, and deed glorify You—and may my soul walk the path of light, not darkness. Amen.

SELF-EVALUATION & ACTION STEP

Of the areas you underlined throughout this teaching, which stood out to you most and why?
(Reflect, write down, discuss)

Rate yourself from 1-10

1 = My life is clouded by vice

10 = My life is consistently ordered by virtue

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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(avoid 5)



Why did you give yourself this rating?
(Which of the seven chief vices do you most struggle with right now?)

Which opposing virtue do you most need to cultivate, and how will you practice it this week?

What habit or pattern is forming your soul toward vice instead of virtue—and how will you replace it?

How will you rely on God's grace, not just your willpower, to pursue the virtuous path?

Daily Affirmation: Today, I will reject the path of vice and choose the path of virtue. By grace, my mind will be enlightened, my will strengthened, and my passions ordered—so that my soul may walk in freedom, light, and holiness with God.

FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS

Courageous Facilitator,

Your willingness to step forward and lead is a gift of grace to your community and a brave act of faith. God bless you for answering the call to inspire others to grow in virtue and pursue the character of Christ.

The Holy Spirit thrives in fellowship and community, working powerfully through the connections and shared experiences of small groups. That's why these lesson plans are designed to cultivate genuine relationships, inspire meaningful conversations, and foster a spirit of transformation through shared wisdom and grace.

Facilitating these lessons is both simple and impactful. While many forms of teaching rely on one-way communication, where one person speaks and others listen, true transformation happens through two-way communication. In this format, ideas aren't merely taught—they're explored together. You'll guide, but everyone will share and learn from one another, creating a rich environment where the Holy Spirit can move and grow each mind, heart, and soul.

These lesson plans succeed because they:

- **Encourage connection** in a collaborative small group setting that fosters action and accountability
- **Empower every voice** with opportunities for each participant to share and contribute
- **Inspire growth** through educational, inspirational, and transformational teachings

Your role as a facilitator is to:

- **Follow the instructions and trust the process**—the wheel is already built, you're here to guide it.
- **Honor the schedule** by being punctual and respecting the time of your group.
- **Lead with love** and rely on God's grace to inspire, guide, and uplift everyone in the group.

Your courage to create a space for growth and fellowship will not only bless others but will deepen your own journey of faith and virtue. Together, with God's help, lives will be transformed.

To God be the glory!

FACILITATOR CHECKLIST

1. Getting Started (5-10 mins)

- ☐ Give everyone a few minutes to join before getting started. Be friendly and greet people as they arrive. Get them talking! Come prepared with some good ice-breaker questions you can ask during this time.
- ☐ 3-5 minutes in, do quick introductions for anyone new to the group. What brought them to the group? Spend a moment getting to know them.
- ☐ Open with a short prayer (facilitator or volunteer).

2. Watch & Read the Teaching (5-10 mins)

- ☐ Watch the video of the teaching as a group.
- ☐ Have a volunteer read all of page 1. Have others follow along and underline what stands out to them most.

3. How it Applies (5-10 mins)

- ☐ Have a volunteer read all of page 2. Have others follow along and underline what stands out to them most.

4. Reflection & Discussion (20-30 mins)

- ☐ Have everyone quietly take 5 minutes to complete the "Self-Evaluation & Action Step" on page 3.
- ☐ Then, going around the group, have each person take a minute to share what stood out to them most about the teaching and why.
- ☐ If time allows, continue the discussion using the remaining self-evaluation questions as a guide.

5. Wrap Up (5 mins)

- ☐ Remind everyone to do the daily affirmation until you meet again next time.
- ☐ Ask for any prayer requests from the group.
- ☐ Close with a short prayer (facilitator or volunteer).