

IDEALS

Speaker: Resource

Time: Saturday 1:00 p.m.

Length: 15–20 minutes

Purpose:

To encourage the TECites to think about where they are “coming from” and where they are going in life (not their future vocations but their personal characteristics and qualities).

Although we use words, new TECites will not trust what is said at this time; therefore, the words must be genuine and true for you—personal experiences you want to share—in order to allow the new TECites to relate to your words. This talk will allow new TECites to use words to look at themselves and to think about their own ideals (personal characteristics and qualities) in life.

God and religion are not mentioned in this first talk; we simply ask the TECites to clarify their own *ideals* (and goals) in life.

Outline: Begin Your Talk Here

Introduction:

Who (or what) is a role model in your life? Who is an adult “ideal” role model for you? Today, this may be someone different from when you were a child. The role models we pick might be figures from TV, sports, or movies, or people we know personally such as teachers, parents, family, etc. (*Provide someone from your own life as an example.*)

Write down in your ARISE BOOK two ideal role models in your life.

The model people we choose reflect our ideals. If we choose fictional characters (childhood heroes, cartoon characters, etc.) as our ideals, we have a limited ideal.

Why did you pick the people you did as an ideal? Because of his or her status, popularity, money, or physical appeal? Because he or she meets your idea of a “real” man or woman? Sometimes we pick role models for what they do and the role they play in life and work. **In reality, these are goals for which we work, not the ideals of who we can be inside (our characteristics and qualities).** An **ideal** is not status or job or what you do. **An ideal is who you are inside.**

I. Ideals or Goals?

- A. **Ideals:** An honorable or worthy principle or value (not a status or job), considered the best of its kind. A quality for which you strive. (When you have to make a decision or do something, your ideal enables you to make the decision for yourself so that it has a positive outcome.)
- B. **Goals:** Short-term objectives; the outcome toward which effort is directed. For example, goals in life might be to go to college, get a job, get married, have children, and so on.
- C. **Goals vs. Ideals:** If your goal is to be a friend, your ideal is to be trustworthy, loyal, and supportive. If your goal is to be a college student, your ideal is to be hardworking and curious. (*Include a personal example to help distinguish ideals and goals.*)

II. Personal Ideals

- A. We have different ideals at different stages in our lives, and sometimes, we don't even know they change. You may not realize that the goals you make are tied to the ideals that you have. As a small child, we may have wanted to be a *brave* police officer or a *caring* nurse. As an older child, we may have wanted to be a *popular* hero, actor, or model. We may not realize it, but these ideals can affect how we act and how we treat others.
- B. Some ideals can be used in negative ways. Someone may want to be physically strong but try to prove it by bullying. Someone may want to be popular, but they may try to put others down to make themselves so. We can end up distorting our ideals and causing others to misunderstand who we truly are and want to be.
- C. Some positive ideals include the following attributes: honest, respectful, loving, caring, understanding, wise, self-controlled, sacrificing, giving. (*You may want people to list in their Arise Books as many positive qualities as they can think of and then share with the table.*)

III. Problems That Prevent Us from Achieving Positive Ideals

- A. Self-centeredness (because we think we're more important than others)
- B. Envy (discontent, covetousness)
- C. Rebellion (disrespectful toward authority)
- D. Preoccupation with instant gratification (wanting it "now")
- E. Hypocrisy ("two-faced"; being "bad" to get approval from others)

IV. Ways to Set Healthy Ideals

- A. Attitudes toward self:
 - 1. Desire to achieve the ideal (an inner, driving need)
 - 2. Discipline to sacrifice something to achieve the ideal
 - 3. Delay of self-gratification (in order to achieve the greater satisfaction of reaching the ideal; putting off immediate pleasure)
- B. Attitudes toward others:
 - 1. Honor who others are, even though their actions may not be honorable. You can hate the sin and love the sinner. But also honor others for who they are, not just who they are to you. (In other words, accept self and others as persons, not as things or images. For example, your mother is a person, not just a mother.)
 - 2. Honesty toward and with yourself first (accepting strengths and weaknesses); then show this same honesty toward and with others.

Conclusion:

I'm not asking you to tell me your ideals or that you choose someone else's ideals, just that you hear and identify your own. If you need help in identifying your ideals, ask yourself the following questions (*suggest they write these down*):

- 1. What do you think about most of the time? What occupies your thoughts?
- 2. What do you like to do in most of your free time?

3. What do you like to spend most of your spare money on?

4. What gives you the greatest satisfaction in life?

How you answer these questions helps you recognize the ideals you have and to move toward the ideals you want to reach.

QUESTION (asked by Lay Director following this talk):

Am I moving toward the ideals that I really want to reach? Why or why not?