Ten Commandments

Children

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Introduction

Big Idea: God gave the Ten Commandments to His people because He loved them and wanted them to know how to love Him and love others.

Bible Passage: Exodus 20:1-17

Memory Verse: "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery." (Exodus 20:2)

Lesson Aim

Children will learn that God's commands are not mean rules. They are loving instructions from the God who saves, cares for, and guides His people.

Opening Activity: Good Rules Help Us

Ask the children to name some good rules they know: look both ways before crossing the street, do not touch a hot stove, wear a seat belt, listen to parents, or take turns. Then ask, "Are those rules meant to hurt us or help us?" Explain that good rules protect us and help us know what is right.

Bible Story

Read Exodus 20:1-2

> *"And God spoke all these words, saying, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery."* (Exodus 20:1-2 ESV)

God's people, the Israelites, had been slaves in Egypt. They were not strong enough to rescue themselves, but God loved them and saved them. He brought them out of Egypt and led them through the wilderness. Then God brought them to Mount Sinai, where He gave them the Ten Commandments.

Before God gave the commands, He reminded His people, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt." God was telling them, "I loved you first. I rescued you. Now I will show you how to live as My people."

The Ten Commandments teach us how to love God and love other people. They show us that God should be first in our hearts. They teach us to respect God's name,

honor our parents, tell the truth, keep our promises, and not take what belongs to someone else.

God did not give these commands so people could earn His love. God already loved them. He gave the commands to help them know what pleases Him and what is good for them.

Simple Explanation

- **God's commands are like a mirror.** They show us that we have sinned and need Jesus.

Read Romans 3:20.

> *"For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin."* (Romans 3:20 ESV)

- By looking at the law we see what sin is and that we have sinned.

Illustration: What do you see when you look in the mirror? Do you ever see dirt on your face? Do you ever see toothpaste in your hair? The Law is like a mirror. It shows us where we have sinned.

- **God's commands help people live together.** When people tell the truth, obey parents, and do not steal, families and communities are safer.
- **God's commands show us what pleases Him.** We obey God because we love Him, not because we are trying to make Him love us.

Jesus Connection

None of us obey God perfectly. We have all sinned. But Jesus obeyed God perfectly for us. Jesus died on the cross for our sins and rose again. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives us and helps us grow in love and obedience.

Discussion Questions

- Why do parents give rules to their children?
- Why did God remind His people that He rescued them before giving the Ten Commandments?
- How do God's commands show us that we need Jesus?

- What is one way you can obey God this week because you love Him?

Activity: Loving Rules Cards

Give each child an index card or half sheet of paper. Ask them to write or draw one good rule from God that helps us love Him or love others. Examples: "Tell the truth," "Honor your parents," "Do not steal," or "Put God first." Let the children share their cards with the class.

Review Statement

"God loved His people. God rescued His people. God gave good commands to help His people love Him and love others."

The First Commandment

You shall have no other gods before Me. (Exodus 20:3)

Big Idea: God is the one true God, so He should be first in our hearts, our worship, our trust, and our choices.

Supplies: Bible, paper hearts, crayons or markers, a shoebox or basket, and small slips of paper.

Memory Verse: *You shall have no other gods before Me.* (Exodus 20:3)

Opening Activity

What Comes First?

Ask the children to name things that are important to them, such as family, friends, toys, games, sports, school, or favorite foods. Then ask, "Can good things become too important?" Explain that many things in life are good gifts from God, but none of them should take God's place. God made us, loves us, saves us, and deserves to be first.

Bible Truth

Read Exodus 20:2-3 aloud: *"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. "You shall have no other gods before Me."* (Exodus 20:2-3)

Explain that God rescued His people and then taught them how to live as His people. The first commandment teaches us that God alone deserves first place.

Teacher Talk

God's first commandment is not just about saying no to statues or false gods. It is also about saying yes to God with our whole lives. We worship Him, trust Him, obey Him, and remember that everything we have belongs to Him. If we love, fear, serve, or trust anything more than God, that thing has become too important. God wants our hearts because He is the one true God and because He loves us.

Object Lesson: The First-Place Heart

Give each child a paper heart. Ask them to write or draw things they love on the heart. Then place a larger paper labeled "God" in the center of the room. Say, "These things can be good, but God must be first." Have the children place their hearts near the "God" paper as a reminder that every good thing should be loved under God, not above God.

Activity: Put God First Choices

- A friend wants you to skip church because they are having a party. What would it look like to put God first?
- You are worried about something at school. What would it look like to trust God first?
- You really want a toy or game, but your heart is becoming selfish. What would it look like to love God more than stuff?
- You have money or time you could use to help someone. What would it look like to remember that everything belongs to God?

Discussion Questions

- How many true gods are there?
- What does it mean to put God first?
- Can good things become too important? How?
- Where should we turn when we are afraid or need help?

Memory Verse

"You shall have no other gods before Me." (Exodus 20:3)

Craft: God First Reminder

Have each child draw a large number 1 on a sheet of paper and write "God First" inside it. Around the number, they can draw ways to put God first: praying, reading Scripture, worshiping, obeying parents, sharing, telling the truth, and helping others.

The Second Commandment

"You shall not make for yourself a carved image." (Exodus 20:4)

Main Idea: God tells us how to worship Him, and we should worship Him the way He says.

Lesson Text: Exodus 20:4-6; Exodus 32:1-6

Memory Verse: "You shall not make for yourself a carved image." (Exodus 20:4)

Lesson Goal

Children will learn that God alone deserves worship and that He teaches us in His Word how He wants to be worshipped.

Opening Activity: Follow the Instructions

Give the children simple step-by-step instructions for drawing a house, building a small block tower, or completing a short craft. Afterward, ask what happened when they followed the instructions and what might have happened if they ignored them. Explain that worship is even more important than a craft: God lovingly tells us how to worship Him.

Teach the Bible Story

Read: Exodus 20:4-6

> *"You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. 'You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments."* (Exodus 20:4-6)

After God rescued His people from Egypt, He gave them the Ten Commandments. The First Commandment taught them to worship only the one true God. The Second Commandment taught them not to make images or idols for worship. God did not

want His people to worship Him in whatever way they imagined. He wanted them to listen to His Word and worship Him as He commanded.

Read Exodus 32:1-6

> *"Now when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people assembled about Aaron and said to him, "Come, make us a god who will go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." Aaron said to them, "Tear off the gold rings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring [them] to me." Then all the people tore off the gold rings which were in their ears and brought [them] to Aaron. He took [this] from their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool and made it into a molten calf; and they said, "This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt." Now when Aaron saw [this,] he built an altar before it; and Aaron made a proclamation and said, "Tomorrow [shall be] a feast to the LORD." So the next day they rose early and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play."* (Exodus 32:1-6)

Sadly, while Moses was on the mountain, the people became impatient and asked Aaron to make them something they could see. Aaron made a golden calf, and the people treated it like something to worship. They may have thought they were honoring the God who rescued them, but they were worshipping in a way God had forbidden. This shows us that good intentions are not enough. We must worship God according to His Word.

Three Truths to Remember

1. **God is the only one we worship.** He rescued His people, and He alone is worthy of praise.
2. **God tells us how to worship Him.** We do not get to invent worship for ourselves.
3. **God shows us who He is in Scripture.** We learn to think rightly about God by listening to His Word.

Discussion Questions

- Who did God command His people to worship?

- What did the Israelites make while Moses was on the mountain?
- Why was the golden calf wrong?
- Where do we learn who God is and how He wants us to worship Him?

Kid-Friendly Illustration

Ask the children to imagine giving a friend a gift they specifically said they did not want. Even if the gift was expensive or shiny, it would not be loving to ignore what the friend said. In an even greater way, we show love for God by listening to what He says about worship.

Application

When we pray, sing, listen to Scripture, and obey God, we are learning to worship Him His way. We should not make up our own ideas about God. Instead, we should ask, "What has God told us in the Bible?"

The Third Commandment

"'You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain." (Exodus 20:7)

Big Idea: God's name is holy, so we should speak His name with honor and live in a way that honors Him.

Bible Passage: "'You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain." (Exodus 20:7)

Lesson Goals

- Children will understand that God's name is special because God Himself is holy and glorious.
- Children will identify wrong ways to use God's name, including careless speech, angry speech, lying while using God's name, and claiming God said something He did not say.
- Children will practice ways to honor God's name with their words and actions.

Supplies Needed

- Bible
- A heavy object and a light object, such as a book and a feather or paper
- Paper, crayons, markers, or pencils
- Optional: index cards for the memory verse game

Opening Activity: Heavy or Empty?

Hold up the heavy object and the light object. Ask: "Which one feels weighty? Which one feels light or almost empty?" Explain that the Bible helps us think of God's glory as weighty and important. God's name should never be treated as light, empty, silly, or unimportant.

Teach the Commandment

Say: "Today we are learning the Third Commandment. God says, 'You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.' That means we must not use God's name in a careless, empty, joking, angry, or disrespectful way. God's name is holy because God is holy. When we say God's name, talk about Him, pray to Him, sing to Him, or tell others we belong to Him, we should do it with love, truth, and honor."

Read: "'You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain." (Exodus 20:7)

Say: "Taking God's name in vain is not only saying His name in the wrong way. It can also mean saying that God said something when He did not say it, making promises to God that we do not intend to keep, or calling ourselves Christians while choosing to live in a way that dishonors Him."

Examples

- Wrong use: saying God's name because you are surprised, angry, or trying to be funny.
- Right use: saying God's name when you pray, worship, thank Him, or speak truthfully about who He is.
- Wrong use: saying, "God told me," when God has not said that in His Word.
- Right use: saying, "The Bible teaches," and then carefully explaining what Scripture says.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is God's name special?
2. What are some good ways we can use God's name?
3. Why should we be careful before saying, "God told me"?
4. How can our actions honor or dishonor God's name?

Activity: Name Honor Poster

Give each child a sheet of paper. Have them write, "God's Name Is Holy" at the top. Then ask them to draw or list three ways they can honor God's name this week. Examples: pray respectfully, sing praise, tell the truth, read the Bible carefully, and speak kindly about God.

Gospel Connection

Say: "We have all sinned with our words, but Jesus never sinned. Jesus always honored His Father. He died and rose again so sinners can be forgiven. When we

confess our sins, God forgives us through Jesus and helps us use our words to honor Him."

The Fourth Commandment

"'Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; [in it] you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. 'For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy." (Exodus 20:9-11)

Big Idea: God teaches us to trust Jesus for true rest, gather with His people for worship, and use our time and energy to work faithfully.

Teacher Goal: Help children understand that the Fourth Commandment points us to rest in Christ, worship with God's people, and honor God through faithful work.

Key Scriptures

- Exodus 20:9–11 — God commanded His people to remember the Sabbath day.

  "'Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; [in it] you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. 'For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy." (Exodus 20:9-11)

- Matthew 11:28 — Jesus invites weary people to come to Him for rest.

  "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)

- Hebrews 10:24–25 — God's people should not neglect gathering together.

"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging [one another;] and all the more as you see the day drawing near." (Hebrews 10:23-25)

Opening Activity: Stop, Gather, Go

Tell the children that you will call out three words: "Stop," "Gather," and "Go." When you say "Stop," they freeze and take a deep breath. When you say "Gather," they stand close together in a circle. When you say "Go," they gently march in place like they are ready to work. After a few rounds, explain that today's lesson is about three gifts God teaches us: resting in Jesus, gathering with God's people, and working faithfully.

Lesson Outline

1. **God made us to rest.** Read Exodus 20:6-11.

   "'Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; [in it] you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. 'For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy." (Exodus 20:9-11)

   1. Explain that God told His people to stop their regular work one day each week. This reminded them that God takes care of them. We do not have to act like everything depends on us.
2. **Jesus gives the greatest rest.** Read Matthew 11:28.

   "'Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)

   1. Tell the children that Jesus does not only give tired bodies rest; He gives our hearts rest. We cannot earn God's love by being good enough. We rest in what Jesus has done for us.
      1. Gospel

3. **God calls us to gather for worship.** Read Hebrews 10:23-25

   > *"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging [one another;] and all the more as you see the day drawing near."* (Hebrews 10:23-25)

   1. Explain that God's people are not meant to follow Him alone. The church gathers to sing, pray, hear God's Word, encourage one another, and remember Jesus.
4. **God calls us to work faithfully.** Read Exodus 20:9-11.

   > *"'Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; [in it] you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. 'For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy."* (Exodus 20:9-11)

   1. The commandment also says, "Six days you shall labor." Work is good. Children can honor God by helping at home, doing schoolwork carefully, serving others, and finishing responsibilities with a cheerful heart.

Object Lesson: The Backpack of Burdens

Bring a backpack with a few heavy books inside. Let one child wear it briefly. Ask, "Does this feel light or heavy?" Then remove the books one by one. Explain that sin, guilt, worry, and trying to earn God's love are like heavy burdens. Jesus tells us to come to Him for rest. He carries what we cannot carry and gives us peace with God.

Discussion Questions

- What are some ways people get tired besides being sleepy?
- Why can't we earn God's love by doing enough good things?
- Why is it good for Christians to gather together at church?
- What is one job or responsibility you can do this week to honor God?

Memory Verse

> *"Come to Me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."* (Matthew 11:28)

Take-Home Challenge

Ask each child to choose one way to practice the lesson this week: rest by praying when worried, gather by coming ready to worship with the church, or work by completing one responsibility with a joyful attitude.

The Fifth Commandment

"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you." (Exodus 20:12)

Theme: Children are to honor their parents by obeying them, respecting them, and learning to listen to the authorities He has placed in their lives.

Main Scripture:

> *"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you."* (Exodus 20:12)

Big Idea: Honoring parents means listening, obeying, speaking respectfully, and showing love because God says this is right.

Lesson Goals

- Children will understand that the Fifth Commandment tells them to honor their father and mother.
- Children will learn that honor includes obedience, respect, thankfulness, and love.
- Children will name one specific way they can honor their parents or guardians this week.

Opening Activity: The Quick Listener Game

Give children simple instructions such as "touch your head," "stand up," "sit down," or "fold your hands." After a few rounds, explain that listening quickly and obeying right away is one way children can honor their parents. Ask: "Was it easier to obey when you listened carefully?"

Teaching Outline

1. **God Gives Children Parents to Love and Lead Them – Read Ephesians 6:1-3)**

> *"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (which is the first commandment with a promise), SO THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH."* (Ephesians 6:1-3)

God made families, and He gives children parents, guardians, or caring adults to help them grow, learn, and stay safe. Parents are not perfect, but God calls children to listen to them and treat them with respect.

2. **Honor Means More Than Just Obeying – Read Leviticus 19:3**

> *"'Every one of you shall reverence his mother and his father, and you shall keep My sabbaths; I am the LORD your God."* (Leviticus 19:3)

To honor someone means to treat that person as valuable. Children can honor their parents by obeying, speaking kindly, saying thank you, helping when asked, and not complaining when they are told to do something good.

3. **Obeying Parents Helps Children Learn to Respect Authority**

When children learn to obey their parents, they are also learning how to listen to teachers, church leaders, and other proper authorities. God uses obedience at home to help children grow in wisdom and self-control.

4. **Jesus Forgives Us When We Fail**

No child obeys perfectly. Everyone sins, including children and adults. When we disobey, we should confess our sin, ask forgiveness, and trust Jesus, who died and rose again to save sinners.

> *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* (1 John 1:9)

Object Lesson: The Circle of Blessing

Place a rope, tape circle, or hula hoop on the floor. Have a child stand inside the circle. Explain that obeying parents is like staying in a safe place where God teaches us to grow. Stepping outside the circle represents disobedience, which often brings

trouble. Remind the children that the circle is only a picture; our true safety is in trusting and following the Lord.

Discussion Questions

- What does it mean to honor your father and mother?
- What are some ways children can obey quickly and cheerfully?
- Why is it wrong to obey with a bad attitude?
- What should we do when we disobey our parents?
- Who are some older people in church that we can show honor to?

Practice This Week

Ask each child to choose one way to honor their parents or guardians this week. Examples: obey the first time, say "yes, ma'am" or "yes, sir," help with a chore without complaining, thank a parent for caring for them, or pray for their parents.

The Sixth Commandment

"You shall not murder." (Exodus 20:13)

Main Idea: God made every person in His image, so every life is special and valuable. The Sixth Commandment teaches us to protect life, treat others with kindness, help those in need, and not hold hatred in our hearts.

Materials Needed

- Bible
- Simple heart cutouts or paper hearts (one per child)
- Markers/crayons
- Optional: small mirror or reflective surface
- Optional craft: "People Are Special" collage materials (magazines or printed people pictures, glue, paper)

Lesson Outline

1. Welcome & Opening Greet the children warmly. Ask: "What makes someone special?" (Let a few share.) Say: "Today we're learning about one of God's important rules. It's the Sixth Commandment: 'Do not murder.' That sounds serious, but it teaches us something wonderful about how special people are!"

2. Icebreaker Activity: "Special Mirror" Hold up a small mirror (or have children look at their reflection in a phone/camera if available). Ask: "When you look in a mirror, what do you see? Yourself! The Bible says we are made to reflect something even more amazing—God's image."

Read:

> *"Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."* (Genesis 1:26-27)

Explain simply: "Being made in God's image means every person—every age, every color, every ability—is valuable because God made them. We are like little mirrors that can show some of God's goodness to the world (kindness, creativity, fairness). That's why life is so precious!"

3. Teaching Time: What the Commandment Really Means (10–12 minutes)

Read: "You shall not murder." (Exodus 20:13)

Say: "This is not just 'don't kill people.' God wants us to protect and value life. Let's look at some ways the Bible shows this."

Key points (keep short and concrete):

- **People are special** – Because we are made in God's image.

  > *"Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."* (Genesis 1:26-27)
  >
  > *"Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed, For in the image of God He made man."* (Genesis 9:6)

- **Help others** – The Bible says even if someone is mean to you, help them if their donkey (or anything they need) is in trouble (Exodus 23:5; Deuteronomy 22:3-4). Protecting life includes being helpful and kind.

  > *"If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying [helpless] under its load, you shall refrain from leaving it to him, you shall surely release [it] with him."* (Exodus 23:5)
  >
  > *"Thus you shall do with his donkey, and you shall do the same with his garment, and you shall do likewise with anything lost by your countryman, which he has lost and you have found. You are not allowed to neglect [them.] "You shall not see your countryman's donkey or his ox fallen down on the way, and pay no attention to them; you shall certainly help him to raise [them] up."* (Deuteronomy 22:3-4)

- **No cruelty** – Don't hurt or make fun of people who can't protect themselves (Leviticus 19:14 – deaf or blind people). Treat everyone with respect.

'You shall not curse a deaf man, nor place a stumbling block before the blind, but you shall revere your God; I am the LORD." (Leviticus 19:14)

- **Hatred is like murder in the heart** – Jesus said in Matthew 5:21-22 that being angry and calling people names is serious. Leviticus 19:17-18 says don't hate people in your heart—love your neighbor. Hatred is wanting someone gone; that's the opposite of protecting life.

  "You have heard that the ancients were told, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.' "But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty [enough to go] into the fiery hell." (Matthew 5:21-22)

  "'You shall not hate your fellow countryman in your heart; you may surely reprove your neighbor, but shall not incur sin because of him. 'You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the LORD." (Leviticus 19:17-18)

Keep it age-appropriate: Focus on kindness, helping, and not hating rather than complex adult topics.

4. Discussion Questions Use these to get kids talking (adapt to age):

- Why is every person special to God?
- How can we protect life and show that people matter (examples: helping a friend who is sad, being kind to someone who is different, not leaving someone out)?
- Have you ever felt angry at someone? What does Jesus want us to do instead of staying angry or hating?
- What is one way you can show someone this week that their life is valuable?

5. Activity / Craft Option A – Heart Craft (quick & simple) Give each child a paper heart. On one side write or draw: "God made me special." On the other side: "I will protect and care for others." They can decorate and take it home as a reminder.

Option B – "People Are Special" Collage Children glue or draw pictures of different people (families, kids of different ages/abilities, helpers, etc.) on a large paper titled "Made in God's Image." Discuss how every face shows that life is valuable.

While they work, reinforce: "When we help, include, or speak kindly, we are obeying the heart of this commandment."

6. Application & Closing Review the main idea together: "God made every person special. We protect life by being kind, helping others, and not holding hatred in our hearts."

Challenge for the week: "This week, do one kind thing for someone (especially someone you don't usually talk to) and tell God you're thankful He made that person special."

The Seventh Commandment

"You shall not commit adultery." (Exodus 20:14)

Goal

Help children understand that God designed marriage as a special, lifelong gift between one man and one woman, and that the Seventh Commandment protects that gift. We honor God by treating our bodies and others with respect and saving special closeness for marriage.

Materials

- Bible
- Whiteboard or large paper + markers
- Simple heart or ring cutouts / paper & crayons for craft
- Optional: short picture book or illustrated Bible story of Adam & Eve's marriage, or a simple wedding photo of a Christian couple
- Discussion question cards or list
- Memory verse cards or board

Lesson

Welcome & Opening

Greet the kids. Ask: "What is something special that belongs only to a married husband and wife?" (Keep answers light and age-appropriate: a home together, a last name, rings, etc.)

Say: "God gave us Ten Commandments to show us the best way to live. Today we're looking at the Seventh Commandment. It protects something very precious to God—marriage."

Read: "You shall not commit adultery. (Exodus 20:14)

Positive side (Hebrews 13:4, simplified): "Marriage should be honored by everyone, and the marriage bed kept pure."

> *"Marriage [is to be held] in honor among all, and the [marriage] bed [is to be] undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge."* (Hebrews 13:4)

Bible Truth & Story

God made the first marriage in the garden—Adam and Eve. One man and one woman. They were to stay together for life. That is still God's good design. The Seventh Commandment says "Do not break that special promise." Anything that tries to copy or break God's design for marriage is not part of His plan.

Read Genesis 2:18-24

> *"Then the LORD God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.' Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought [them] to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. The man said, 'This is now bone of my bones, And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man.' For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh."* (Genesis 2:18-24)

God saw that Adam was alone and said it wasn't good. He made Eve from Adam's side and brought her to him. Adam was so happy! God joined them together. Jesus later said that what God joins, no one should separate (Matthew 19).

> *"So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate."* (Matthew 19:6)

Emphasize for children:

- Marriage is a lifelong promise between one husband and one wife.

Discussion & Activity

Use these age-adjusted discussion questions (choose 3–4):

- Why do you think God wants marriage to be between one man and one woman for life?
- How can we show honor to marriage even if we are still kids? (Examples: speak kindly about married people, pray for marriages)
- What happens when people treat marriage like it's not important? (Families can get hurt; God's good plan is ignored.)

4. Application & Craft

Application talk: "God's command is like a fence around a beautiful garden. The fence keeps the good things safe. When we obey the Seventh Commandment, we are protecting the gift of marriage."

The Eighth Commandment

"You shall not steal." (Exodus 20:15)

Theme: God gives us things to take care of and share kindly. We do not take what belongs to someone else.

Main Verse: "You shall not steal. (Exodus 20:15)

Goal: Kids will understand that stealing is wrong, that God wants us to be honest and kind with what we have, and that we can trust Jesus when we mess up.

Opening

Welcome the children. Ask:

- Have you ever had something that belonged to you taken without permission? How did that feel?
- Have you ever been tempted to take something that wasn't yours?

Read

"You shall not steal." (Exodus 20:15)

Bible Teaching

1. God says we should not take what is not ours. God gives people the right to own things (toys, clothes, money, a home). Taking them without permission is stealing. Stealing hurts people and makes it hard for everyone to live together happily.

2. Be kind with what God has given you. Tell the story of Ruth (Ruth 2). Ruth was poor and needed food. She went to a field and picked up leftover grain that the owner had left on purpose for people who needed it. The owner, Boaz, was kind and left some for her. She still had to work by gathering it herself.

God told His people: When you harvest, leave some for the hungry. Be generous, but don't let people just take everything that is yours.

> *"'When you reap the harvest of your land, moreover, you shall not reap to the very corners of your field nor gather the gleaning of your harvest; you are to leave them for the needy and the alien. I am the LORD your God.'"* (Leviticus 23:22)

3. Work is good, and honesty matters.

Read

> *"For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either."* (2 Thessalonians 3:10)

If someone is not willing to work, he should not eat. God likes it when we work and help others in ways that encourage them to work too when they can.

Also talk about honesty in everyday things:

Read

> *"'You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie to one another. 'You shall not swear falsely by My name, so as to profane the name of your God; I am the LORD. 'You shall not oppress your neighbor, nor rob [him.] The wages of a hired man are not to remain with you all night until morning."* (Leviticus 19:11-13)

- Paying people what you promised.
- Give people what you promised to give them. And don't cheat the amount.

These are also ways of stealing.

4. When we steal, we need to make it right and ask forgiveness. In Bible times, a thief had to give back what was taken plus extra so the person was made whole. Today we should still try to make things right. Best of all, Jesus forgives us when we turn to Him.

Read

> *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* (1John 1:9)

Discussion Questions

- How does it feel when someone takes something that belongs to you?
- What's the difference between sharing generously and letting someone take what isn't theirs?
- How can we help people who are hungry or need help while still encouraging work?
- What are some modern ways kids might be tempted to steal or cheat (taking a friend's toy, copying answers, not paying for something, etc.)?
- How can Jesus help us when we have stolen or been dishonest?

Activity

Act out short scenes: returning a found item, asking before borrowing, choosing not to copy someone's work, giving back something taken, etc.

Application & Closing

Ask each child to think of one way they can obey this commandment this week (be honest at school, share kindly, return something, thank God for what they have).

The Ninth Commandment

"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor." (Exodus 20:16)

Tell the Truth

Big Idea: God wants us to tell the truth and be honest with others.

Scripture:

"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor." (Exodus 20:16)

Opening Activity

True or Not True?

Play a quick game. Read each sentence and have the children stand up if they think it is TRUE or sit down if it is NOT TRUE.

- God made the world. (True)
- Elephants can fly. (Not true)
- Jesus loves you. (True)
- It is okay to lie if it makes someone feel better. (Talk about this later!)
- Telling the truth is important to God. (True)

Bible Teaching

What is the Ninth Commandment?

God gave His people ten special rules called the Ten Commandments. The ninth one says: "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor." That means: Don't tell lies about other people. Tell the truth!

God cares a lot about truth because He is the God of truth. When we tell the truth, we are acting like Him. When we lie or spread stories that aren't true, we hurt people and make God sad.

Two Brave Bible Stories

Sometimes people had to protect others from danger. God showed that saving a life is very important.

Story 1: The Brave Midwives (Exodus 1)

A mean king ordered the Hebrew midwives (helpers who helped babies be born) to hurt the baby boys. But the midwives feared God and protected the babies instead. When the king asked why the boys were alive, they said the mothers were so strong that the babies came before the midwives arrived. God was pleased with the midwives because they protected the little ones. He even blessed them!

Story 2: Rahab Helps the Spies (Joshua 2 & Hebrews 11:31)

Rahab lived in the city of Jericho. She hid two of God's spies on her roof so the king's soldiers couldn't find them. When the soldiers asked where the men were, she said they had already left the city. Because of her faith and her brave actions, God protected Rahab and her family. The Bible says she is an example of faith!

What do these stories teach us?

God cares deeply about protecting people. In ordinary life, though, God wants us to tell the truth. We should never lie just to get out of trouble or to make ourselves look better. Lies hurt people and break trust.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think God wants us to tell the truth?
2. Have you ever told a lie? How did it make you feel afterward?
3. Why is it important to check if a story is true before you tell it to someone else?

4. How can spreading a rumor (a story you don't know is true) hurt someone's feelings?
5. What should you do if a friend asks you to keep a secret that involves lying?

Activity: Truth Builders

Materials: Index cards or paper, markers, tape or magnets for a wall/board.

Instructions:

1. Give each child a card. On one side write "TRUTH" and on the other "LIE."
2. Read short scenarios (examples below). Kids hold up the side they think is right.
3. After each one, talk briefly about why that choice is better.
4. Optional: Write one way they can practice telling the truth this week on the back of their card to take home.

Sample Scenarios:

- You broke a plate and Mom asks what happened. Do you say "I don't know" or tell her the truth?
- A friend starts a mean rumor about another kid. Do you pass it on or stop it?
- You forgot to do your homework. Do you say the dog ate it, or admit you forgot?
- Someone asks if you like their new drawing and you don't. Can you still be kind while being honest? (Yes—say something kind and true, like "I can tell you worked hard on it!")

Application

Christians are called to be people of the truth. That means:

- We tell the truth even when it is hard.

- We do not spread stories we are not sure are true.
- We protect others and speak kindly.
- When we mess up and lie, we say sorry to God and to the person we hurt, and we try again.

Be careful with words online and at school too! Things we type or say can spread fast and hurt people just like spoken words.

The Tenth Commandment

"You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor."
(Exodus 20:17)

Be Content

Scripture

> *"You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor."* (Exodus 20:17)

Lesson Goal

Children will understand that coveting means wanting what belongs to someone else in a wrong way, that God cares about our hearts, and that we can learn to be thankful and content with what God has given us.

Memory Verse

> *"You shall not covet … anything that belongs to your neighbor."* — Exodus 20:17

Opening Activity

"What Do You Wish For?" Ask the children: "If you could have one thing that someone else has, what would it be?"

Let a few share (a friend's toy, a bigger house, a different bike, etc.). Then say: "Wanting things isn't always wrong. But when we want something so much that we stop being thankful for what we already have, or we feel mad that someone else has it—that's called **coveting**. Today we're going to learn what God says about that."

Bible Teaching

1. What is the Tenth Commandment? God gave Moses ten special rules to help people know how to live. The last one is: "You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor."

Coveting means:

- Wanting what someone else has
- Feeling unhappy because you don't have it
- Thinking, "I wish that was mine instead of theirs"

2. God cares about our hearts Sin doesn't just start when we *do* something wrong. It often starts with a wrong *want* inside our hearts.

Jesus taught that even anger in our hearts is serious (Matthew 5:21–22). In the same way, wanting something that belongs to someone else in a greedy way is already a problem in God's eyes.

> *"You have heard that the ancients were told, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.' "But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty [enough to go] into the fiery hell."* (Matthew 5:21-22)

3. Coveting shows we don't trust God When we keep wishing for what others have, we are saying (without words): "God, You didn't give me enough."

But God promises to take care of His children. He feeds the birds and clothes the flowers (Matthew 6). He will take care of us too.

> *"Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and [yet] your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?"* (Matthew 6:26)

4. The cure for coveting is contentment God doesn't say "never want anything." He says: "Be happy with what I have already given you, and trust Me for what you need."

Bible verses that help:

> *"You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever."* (Psalm 16:11)
>
> *"[Make sure that] your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,'"* (Hebrews 13:5)

Discussion Questions

1. What does "covet" mean in your own words?
2. Can you think of a time when you really wanted something someone else had? How did it make you feel?
3. Why do you think God cares about what we *want*, not just what we *do*?
4. What are some things God has already given you that you can be thankful for?
5. How can remembering that God will never leave us help us stop wanting what others have?

Object Lesson / Illustration

The Two Cups Show two cups: one empty, one filled with water (or juice).

- The empty cup is like a heart that keeps saying, "I need more… I wish I had what they have."
- The full cup is like a heart that says, "Thank You, God. What You have given me is good."

Ask: "Which cup would you rather have?" Explain that God wants to fill our hearts with thankfulness so there isn't room for greedy wanting.

Simple Activity

Thankfulness List Give each child a paper and have them write or draw 3–5 things God has already given them (family, home, friends, food, Jesus, etc.).

Application

This week, when you start to feel jealous or wish you had what someone else has:

1. Stop.
2. Thank God for one good thing He has already given you.
3. Ask Him to help your heart be happy with His gifts.

Remember: God sees your heart. He wants it to be full of thankfulness, not empty wanting.