

LESSON 6

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

BEFORE YOU TEACH

Mount Sinai

The location of this mountain is uncertain. Some say that Mount Sinai is located near the southern point of the Peninsula of Sinai. The Sinai Peninsula is triangular in shape and is situated between the two northern arms of the Red Sea. Others place Mount Sinai approximately 40 kilometers east of the midpoint of the northwestern arm of the Red Sea. Sinai is also referred to as Horeb in the Old Testament.

The Ten Commandments

These commandments form the basis of moral law. The first four commandments are concerned with our relationship with God (vertical relationship). The last six deal with our relationships with our fellow man (horizontal relationships).

The Ten Commandments were written by the finger of God on two stone tablets, which were later placed in the ark of the covenant. These commandments express the core of what God requires of people who wish to live in a covenant relationship with Him. The Ten Commandments also reflect the moral character of God.

Thus we know more of what God is like by examining the way of life He requires. Jesus condensed the Ten Commandments into two: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind" and "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Mt 22:37-40). They are complete in addressing all aspects of morality during our earthly lives.

Moreover, living in fear and obedience to God is the whole purpose and duty of man no matter what courses our lives take (Eccl 12:13-14).

The Relational Purpose of the Ten Commandments

We were created for relationships with God and with others, so the Ten Commandments address our relationships them.

Commandments Addressing Our Relationship with God

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. No other gods | 2. No idols |
| 3. Keep God's name holy | 4. Keep Sabbath holy |

Commandments Addressing Our Relationship with Others

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| 5. Honor parents | 6. Do not murder |
| 7. Do not commit adultery | 8. Do not steal |
| 9. Do not give false testimony | 10. Do not covet |

BIBLE TEXT

Exodus 19:1-20:21

BIBLE TRUTH

We are to live differently from the people around us by following the commands of God.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To understand that God showed His love for us by giving us His commandments.
2. To obey God's commandments by demonstrating our fear of God and our love for Him.
3. To understand that fearing God and obeying His commandments are the whole duties of our life.
4. To follow His commandments with courage and faith.

MEMORY VERSE

"I may live and keep Your word.

(Psalm 119:17b)

PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. Lord, we thank You for guiding us here today on Your holy Sabbath. We have come here to learn all the wonderful things You want us to know about how to live good and blessed lives. We know that everything You have commanded us to do is good and also good for us. Please give us the strength and courage to always do what You have commanded. May we always bring honor to Your name. Hallelujah! Amen.

The Importance of Keeping the Ten Commandments

In Matthew 4:4, "every word" of God includes the Ten Commandments. We are to live by every word. In Matthew 19:16-17, Jesus Christ tells us to keep the commandments and names some of those commandments in verses 18 and 19.

Matthew chapter 5 begins the sermon on the mount. Christ starts with the Beatitudes. Then in verse 17 He says that He did not come to destroy the law but to fulfill. Read verses 18 and 19. We are not only to avoid breaking the commandments, but also to do and teach them. Christ gave the spiritual intent of the law in verses 21 and 22 and verses 27 and 28. He taught that besides keeping the

commandment against murder in the letter of the law, we must not be angry without cause or look down on people. Besides not physically committing adultery, we must not even lust after a person. This would also be breaking the commandment. Christ did not do away with the Ten Commandments. He set a standard by explaining that we must not only keep them in the letter but also in the intent.

Apostle John also mentioned this in 1 John 2:3-4. These are strong words about anyone who does not keep God's commandments. 1 John 3:22 tells us that God answers the prayers of those who keep His commandments.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

The students in your class are probably used to rules and boundaries that are set at home, school, or church. They should be familiar with having to follow rules and know that disobeying rules may mean getting punished by their parents or teacher.

In the same way, the Ten Commandments were set by God, who knows our every need. God gave His people these commandments for their own good (Deut 10:13) so that they could lead peaceful and joyful lives. When we obey God's commandments, He will bless us.

What your students may not understand is that rules and boundaries, as well as the Ten Commandments, are given to them out of love and goodness for their well-being, whether from their parents, teachers, or God Himself.

Remind your students of the love that God has shown them. Prompt and encourage them to recall God's love for them. Ask your students to recall instances of God's love in their lives. Explain to your students that obeying God's commandments is one way they can show God that they love and fear Him.

Have any of your students been laughed at or bullied because they chose to do what is right? Maybe they were the only ones to say grace before eating their lunch.

Maybe other kids made fun of them because they chose to listen to hymns instead of rock or pop music. Maybe your students chose to go to church on Sabbath instead of a birthday party.

Your students may feel like they want to stand up for God, but they may feel threatened by others who don't know Him. Let your students know that if they trust in God, He will give them the strength and courage to stand up for what is right, even when they feel sad and lonely.

God has said, "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will withhold you with My righteous right hand" (Isa 41:10).

We never have to be afraid to stand up for what is right, because we are never alone when we do. One plus God is always a majority. We can trust in God because He is stronger than the strongest enemy. He knows how to deal with those who give us a hard time because of our love for Him, and He will deal with them—in His time and in His way.

All we have to do is continue to obey God's commandments with courage and faith, knowing that He intends good things for those He loves.

VOCABULARY

priest: a person whose job it is to lead people to worship God

commandment: something that God wants us to follow

obey: to do what someone tells you to do

idol: a picture or statue that is worshiped as a god, or anything else that is worshiped instead of God

respect: to treat someone or something as being important

covet: to want something that does not belong to you

REVIEW

Students, do you remember how God took care of the Israelites while they were in the desert? The Israelites began to complain to Moses and Aaron. The Israelites had forgotten all about the miracles that God had performed to bring them out of Egypt. They had forgotten that God was on their side. What did they say? (There was no bread or meat for them to eat.) God heard their complaints and He wanted to show them His power. What did God do? (He rained down manna from heaven and brought quail into the camp.)

Everyone went and got as much manna as they needed for each day. On the sixth day, though, they were to do something different. God gave them a special command for the sixth day. What was that special command? That's right! They were to gather twice as much on the sixth day so they would have enough food to eat on the Sabbath, which was the day of rest. Why did God tell them to do this? (They were to rest on the seventh day, the holy Sabbath.)

What did we learn from this story? We ought to be happy with what God gives us. We don't need to worry about our needs because God will always take care of us. God does not want us to be as the Israelites were: grumbling, mumbling, and complaining. Instead, God is pleased when we remember He is always taking care of us and when we are thankful for what He has given us. God is pleased when we say, "Thank You for looking after us."

BIBLE STORY

[Prepare flash cards of the Ten Commandments by referring to the Activity sheet included in this lesson.]

The Israelites at Mount Sinai

The Israelites wandered for many days in the desert. Imagine what it was like for them! Shut your eyes and try to picture it. They walked and they walked. By day it was hot, dry, and dusty. The sun would beat down and the wind blew sand and dust everywhere. When the sun went down, the desert got very cold.

Looking all around them, all they could see was dry, bare land—hardly anything could grow. No buildings, no roads, no people. Who knew where they were? The desert looked the same, day after day, even though they had walked on for so long. But God knew where they were.

During the day He led them by a pillar of cloud. At night, the pillar of fire shone to give them light. God was leading them to a place where He was about to teach them something very important. He wanted His people to know what He was like, and how they could love Him and obey Him.

The Israelites came to a place near Mount Sinai and put up their tents at the bottom of the mountain. They were going to be staying there for a while. Moses went up the mountain to meet with God, who had a message for His people. God called Moses to speak to the people. What did God want Moses to tell the Israelites? Let us take out our Bibles and read Exodus 19:3-6.

Wow! God wanted them to know just how much He loved them and how special they were to Him.

Do you know what? God loves us in just the same way today. We are His special people, too, just as the Israelites were. Every day, God looks after us and guides us in

everything we do.

God told Moses to say to the people, "You saw what I, the Lord, did in Egypt. And you know how I brought you here to Me, just as a mighty eagle carries its young. Now if you will obey Me and be faithful to Me, you will be My own people. The whole world is Mine, but you will be My holy people and serve Me as priests."

And so, Moses came down from the mountain and told the leaders what God had said. All the people answered Moses, saying, "We will do everything God has said!" Then Moses went back and told God about this.

God said to Moses, "I will come to you in a thick cloud. When the people hear Me speak to you, they will trust you. Go and tell the people this." Once again, Moses told the people what God had said.

Once more God spoke to Moses and said, "Go back and tell the people they must get themselves ready to meet Me today and tomorrow. They must wash their clothes. I will come down on Mount Sinai where they can all see Me on the day after tomorrow. No person or animal is allowed to touch the mountain or else they will die. Be ready by the day after tomorrow, and I will come down from Mount Sinai and they will all see Me." God told the people this because He was holy and He did not want any one of His people to die. He told them these things so they would be ready to meet Him.

The Lord Comes to Mount Sinai

How was a great and holy God going to meet His people? Let's find out. Just as the Lord had said, on the morning of the third day God came to meet with His people. Boom! Boom! Boom!

Moses brought the people out of the camp, out from

where they were living in their tents, to meet God. They gathered together and stood at the bottom of the mountain. Imagine how frightening it must have been! Mount Sinai was covered with smoke, because the Lord had come down in a fire. Smoke poured up into the sky and covered the mountain. The whole mountain was shaking. The trumpet got louder and louder and louder. God was showing the people how great and powerful He was, and they were very afraid.

Moses spoke to God, and God answered him with thunder. The Lord called Moses to come up the mountain, so he went up to meet with Him. God was about to teach the people something very important, and He wanted to make sure they would obey Him.

The Ten Commandments

So the Lord God spoke with the people and gave them the Ten Commandments. As God spoke, the people heard the rumble of thunder and saw lightning flash all around. The mountain smoked like it was on fire and the people stood far away, shaking because they were afraid.

Students, do you know what a commandment is? Do you know what the Ten Commandments are? [Give students an opportunity to answer.] They are a set of rules that God wanted the Israelites to follow, and they are the same commandments He wants us to obey. God loves us and wants the best for us, so He gave us His rules so we can live in a way that pleases Him. When we obey the Ten Commandments, it is a way for us to show that we love God.

These were the Ten Commandments God gave the people:

[Hold up flash card 1.] Do not worship any god except Me. I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, where you were slaves.

[Hold up flash card 2.] Do not make for yourselves pictures or statues that look like anything in the sky, on earth, or in the sea to worship. Do not bow down and worship these idols. I am the Lord your God, and you are to love and worship Me alone. If anyone disobeys Me, I will punish their families: their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. But I love those who love Me, and I am kind to those who obey Me. When people love Me and obey My laws, I am kind to their families for thousands of generations.

[Hold up flash card 3.] Do not use My name in a way that shows a lack of respect. I am the Lord your God, and I will punish anyone who uses My name in a bad way.

[Hold up flash card 4.] Remember to observe the Sabbath day, and keep it holy. You have six days when you can do all your work, but the seventh day of each week you are to rest. No one is to work on that day, including you, your children, your slaves, your animals, and anyone else who lives in your towns. When I made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything in them, I made them in six days. On the seventh day I rested and blessed that day.

That is why I made the Sabbath a special day that belongs to Me.

Students, how many commandments had God just given the people? (Four.) These first four commandments told them how they could show their love to God. God loved His people very much, and He wanted them to love Him back.

The Lord still had another six commandments to give the Israelites. Let's learn what they are. Listen carefully and see if you can hear who they teach us to love.

[Hold up flash card 5.] Honor your father and your mother. Obey your father and mother, love them and respect them. If you do this, you will live a long life in the land I am giving you.

[Hold up flash card 6.] Do not murder.

[Hold up flash card 7.] You must only have one husband or one wife.

[Hold up flash card 8.] Do not steal.

[Hold up flash card 9.] Do not tell lies about others.

[Hold up flash card 10.] Do not covet. Do not want something that does not belong to you. Do not wish for someone else's house or wife or slaves or cattle or donkeys or anything else that does not belong to you.

Can anyone tell me a pattern they noticed in the last six commandments? The first four commandments talk about how we should love God. What do you think the last six commandments talk about? [Give students an opportunity to answer.]

The last six commandments teach us about how God wants us to love one another. When we follow them, we are treating other people the way we would like to be treated. God has given us these last six commandments so we can live peacefully and happily with other people.

Moses Explains

Let's go back to the story now. As God was giving these commandments, the mountain was smoking and there was thunder and lightning. The people were shaking and very frightened. They stood a long way off and said to Moses, "If you speak to us, we will listen. But don't let God speak to us or we will die!" They were terrified!

Moses replied, "Don't be afraid! God has come only to test you. He has shown Himself to you. Remember how God has spoken to you on this mountain and keep that fear in you, so you will obey Him and not sin."

The people stood from far away and watched as Moses went into the thick, dark cloud where God was.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

1. **Why do you think God gave the Israelites the Ten Commandments?** In the Old Testament, the Ten Commandments were a covenant of love given by God for the people of Israel.
2. **Do we still have to follow the Ten Commandments today? Why?** Yes. The Ten Commandments serve as a guide to lead us to a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ in the new covenant. For older students, you can mention that the first thing we must understand is that the Ten Commandments were never intended to be an end in themselves. The primary purpose of the law is to restore the relationship between the holy God and sinful man and establish the foundation for relationships with one another. The commandments are like signposts guiding us on the road to this end. Without such an understanding, the Ten Commandments are merely a set of rules that lead to death, discouragement, and pride.
3. **Why do you think it's important to follow the Ten Commandments?** God is holy. Holiness is part of God's very being. The Ten Commandments are part of God's expression of His holiness and the standard He requires in order to have a relationship with Him. It is important because we will not fall from God's standard if we keep it. Another important reason is that it is Jesus's teaching. Read Matthew 4:4: "Every word" of God includes the Ten Commandments. We are to live by every word. Read Matthew 19:16-17: Jesus Christ tells us to keep the commandments and names those commandments in verses 18 and 19. John 14:15 is a straightforward statement.

MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.
You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

"I may live and keep Your word." (Psalm 119:17b)

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. Sinai
2. afraid
3. Ten Commandments
4. God
5. other people
6. True
7. True
8. 8, 5, 2, 9, 4, 6, 10, 1, 3, 7
9. Answers may vary.
10. "I may live and keep Your word." (Psalm 119:17b)

SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

1. Obedience produces a life of peace and blessing.

God has given us His commandments because He loves us. He shows us how we can please Him in our lives and how to live peacefully with others by obeying His commandments. If we do this, He will bless us.

Obedying God's commandments is one way to show our love for God. It also demonstrates to others that we are His special people. Apart from God's commandments, our parents and teachers also give us rules and boundaries to help us have peace and order in our lives.

2. Sometimes, we find it difficult or we don't understand why we have to obey God's commandments. When we feel this way, we need to remind ourselves that God knows what is good for us better than we do, although we may not understand it at the time.

It's not always easy to have to follow rules and have boundaries for everything. Sometimes, we just want to play, be dangerous, or have a little fun. But we may not know what is good for us or what is harmful for us.

To understand God's better way, ask your students to think about their younger siblings, or cousins, or another kid that is younger than them. Look at some of the things that the younger children do that your students know are not good (e.g., climbing on tables or touching a hot stove). While the little ones may not understand that what they are curious about is bad for them, your students will know because they have been in those situations before.

In the same way, help your students understand that there are also many things in their lives they have yet to understand, but our parents, teachers, and God Himself know better. So when they follow the rules and obey God's commandments, it is really for their good and for their benefit.

3. There are consequences for everything that we do—sin will lead to punishment, but obedience will lead to life and peace.

Remind students to think about the consequences of their actions before they speak or act. Ask your students to share about a time when their parents disciplined them for something they did wrong. What did they learn when they looked back at the situation? [Give students time to think.] Similarly, God disciplines us because He loves us and wants to teach us the better way, so that we don't keep making the same mistakes.

On a brighter note, the upside of obeying rules and commandments is that we will have a joyful life. Remember that God's commandments teach us how to love one another. That means if we follow the rules, we are learning how to treat one another with love and respect. When we treat one another with love and respect, God is glorified! Also, ask your students to share experiences of following rules and of God's blessings, and how they felt about it afterwards.

ACTIVITIES

1

God's Commandments

Objective: To know the Ten Commandments.

Materials

- Ten Commandments cards template, one per pair of students
- Scissors

Instructions

1. Cut out the cards and mix them up.
2. Pair up the students and hand each pair a stack of cards.
3. Ask them to place the cards face down in four rows of three cards each.
4. The first player turns over two cards. If they match (commandment with its correct number), the player keeps the pair. If they do not match, the player turns them back over and the next player takes their turn.
5. The player with the most matched sets is the winner!

2

Clothesline Commandments

Objective: To familiarize the students with the Ten Commandments.

Materials

- Construction paper in various colors
- Markers or crayons
- Slips of paper
- Rope or clothesline
- Clothespins
- Scissors

Preparations

1. Number the slips of paper 1 to 10. The numbers correspond to the Ten Commandments.
2. Cut the construction paper in the shape of T-shirts (use as much of the construction paper as possible).
3. Prepare a clothesline or rope across a classroom wall with 10 clothespins attached to it.

Instructions

1. Pass out one numbered slip of paper to each student. If there are too few students, give each student more than one commandment. If there are too many students, allow the extra students to illustrate the commandments.
2. Pass out one construction paper T-shirt to each student.
3. Ask students to write the commandment on the "T-shirt" and illustrate or decorate it as they wish.
4. When all of the commandments are completed, allow the students to pin them up in the correct order. Keep this up as a reminder to the students to keep the Ten Commandments.

3

Commandments Relay

Objective: To practice rapid recall of the Ten Commandments.

Materials

- 30 identical pieces of cardboard
- Long rope to use as a starting line

Preparation

Each of the Ten Commandments is to be written on one side of each piece of cardboard. Make two sets of the Ten Commandments. Do not number the commandments. Number the remaining 10 pieces of cardboard.

Instructions

1. Mix the commandments up and set them face-down in two piles corresponding to two complete sets of commandments. Set the numbered pieces of cardboard in numerical order beginning from the starting line, moving further away from the starting line as you progressively lay down the numbered cardboard pieces.
2. Divide the class into 2 teams and have each team line up behind a pile behind the starting line.
3. When the start signal is given, the first person in each team is to take the commandment on the top of their pile and place it on the ground in line with the corresponding number.
4. When the first person has returned and passed the starting line, the next person in the team is to take the next commandment on the top of the pile, and repeat the procedure.
5. This is to continue until the winning team has successfully completed arranging their set of commandments in order.

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|------------------------------------|
| Commandment | Commandment | Commandment | Commandment | Commandment |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| You shall have no other gods before Me. | You shall not make for yourself an idol. | You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. | Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. | Honor your father and your mother. |
| Commandment | Commandment | Commandment | Commandment | Commandment |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| You shall not murder. | You shall not commit adultery. | You shall not steal. | You shall not bear false witness. | You shall not covet. |

E1 Year 1 Book 3 Lesson 6—The Ten Commandments

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Bible Truth: We are to live differently from the people around us by following the commands of God.

Lesson Objectives:

1. To understand that God showed His love for us by giving us His commandments.
2. To obey God's commandments by demonstrating our fear of God and our love for Him.
3. To understand that fearing God and obeying His commandments are the whole duties of our life.
4. To follow His commandments with courage and faith.

Bible Reading: Please put a checkmark in the space when you complete the reading each day.**Prayer:** Please put a checkmark in the space on the days you prayed to God.

| | Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Bible Reading | | | | | | | |
| Prayer | | | | | | | |

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(Psalm 119:17b)

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Homework Assignment

Understanding What You Have Learned

Fill In the Blank

| | | | | |
|------------------|--------|--------------|-------|-----|
| Ten Commandments | afraid | other people | Sinai | God |
|------------------|--------|--------------|-------|-----|

1. The Israelites came to a mountain called _____.
2. The people were _____ when they saw that God had come down to the mountain to speak with them.
3. The Lord gave Moses some important rules. These rules are called the _____.
4. The first four commandments teach us to love _____.
5. The last six commandments teach us to love _____.

True or False

6. God told the Israelites not to touch the mountain because He didn't want them to get hurt. _____
7. The people had to prepare themselves before they met God. _____

8. Number the Commandments

- _____ Do not steal.
- _____ Honor your father and your mother.
- _____ Do not make for yourself an idol.
- _____ Do not tell lies about others. (Do not bear false witness.)
- _____ Remember the Sabbath, to keep it holy.
- _____ Do not murder.
- _____ Do not want something that does not belong to you. (Do not covet.)
- _____ Do not have other gods except the Lord.
- _____ Do not use God's name without respect. (Do not take the Lord's name in vain.)
- _____ You must only have one husband and one wife. (Do not commit adultery.)

9. Why do you think it's important to follow the Ten Commandments?

10. Write down this week's memory verse.
