

October 17, 2012

The Ten Commandments

Exodus 19:9; 16-20

Exodus 20:1-2

LESSON FOCUS

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” This is the first and greatest commandment. (Matthew 22:37-38)

The Seventh Commandment**You shall not steal.*****What does this mean?***

We should fear and love God so that we do not take our neighbor’s money or possessions, or get them in any dishonest way, but help him to improve and protect his possessions and income.

God turns his attention to your relationship with yourself. When you steal, cheat, lie, get something that doesn’t belong to you, you lose self respect. Our sinful nature can adjust to such a way of thinking, but there is a sense of pride and self-worth that comes from working hard and completing a job. Certainly in this command God is protecting our property from others who would steal it, but He is also protecting our self-worth.

Today’s Bible Lesson:

During the time of testing in this wilderness experience, the first thing God wanted to see was whether or not His people would keep His laws and commandments. So God then proceeds to lay out all of the laws that He wants the Israelites to abide by.

In the third month after being delivered from Egypt, God tells Moses that He will literally come down Himself onto Mount Sinai in the presence of all of His people.

When God comes down, the Bible says that Mount Sinai is completely enveloped in smoke. There was thunder, lightning, thick smoke and the entire mountain “quaked greatly.”

God then descends upon Mount Sinai “in fire.” The smoke was like the smoke of a furnace the way it was ascending off of the mountain. Just imagine such an event – that God the Father Himself is descending from His throne in heaven to visit these people with His manifest presence!

God only calls Moses to come to the top of the mountain to meet and talk with Him. No one else was allowed to go up. God then proceeds to tell Moses what the basic 10 commandments are going to be. In addition to the 10 commandments were other specific laws that He wanted the children of Israel to abide by. Moses then comes back down to deliver all of this to the Israelites.

Shortly after this first event, God then calls Moses back to the mountaintop once again. Moses stays on the top of the mountaintop this time with God for forty days and forty nights. The Bible says that the sight of the Lord at the top of the mountaintop was like a “consuming fire.”

In this second meeting with God, God gives Moses specific instructions on building a tabernacle where God’s manifest presence can dwell with the Israelites out in the wilderness for the 40 years they were

going to have to stay out there. It was during this second meeting that God gives Moses the 10 commandments written on a stone tablet!

He was given two tablets and the tablets had writings on both sides. All of the writing on the tablets was literally the handwriting of God Himself – literally engraved right on these stone tablets.

Again, just imagine this entire scene. This one man, Moses, is allowed to meet and talk with God direct for 40 days and 40 nights and then to top it all off, receives two tablets of stone with God's personal handwriting engraved on these two stone tablets!

While all of this is going on between God and Moses for the 40 days, the most unbelievable thing starts to happen at the bottom of this mountain. The Israelites start to grow impatient when they see Moses is delayed in coming back down from the mountaintop. They start murmuring and complaining, saying they do not know what has become of Moses.

10 Commandments Overview/History

The Ten Commandments were given to Moses, the great leader of the Hebrews; over 3,000 years ago after the Hebrews were delivered from slavery in Egypt. While the Law of Moses is made up of over 600 rules, the Ten Commandments were a succinct list of rules from which the others were developed. They are recorded in two chapters of the Bible: Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5.

When Jesus was asked, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" he replied: "You know the Commandments, keep these and you will live." For now, just notice that Jesus attests to the importance of the Ten Commandments. This is why Christians still accept them.

The Israelites viewed the Law (10 Commandments) as a gift from God, not an option or curse. We too need to accept the 10 Commandments as a gift from God, a reminder of God's great love and concern for His people, even today.

The commandments listed in Exodus 20 are the most commonly used set of Commandments. Christians believe the 10 Commandments were written by God on stone tablets and given to Moses during the Exodus, around or about 1450 BC.

Exodus 20 The Ten Commandments (NIV text)

¹ And God spoke all these words:

² "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

³ "You shall have no other gods before me.

⁴ "You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶ but showing love to a thousand {generations} of those who love me and keep my commandments.

⁷ "You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

⁸ "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. ¹¹ For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the

sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

¹² "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

¹³ "You shall not murder.

¹⁴ "You shall not commit adultery.

¹⁵ "You shall not steal.

¹⁶ "You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

¹⁷ "You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

"God threatens to punish everyone who breaks these commandments. We should be afraid of His anger because of this and not violate such commandments. But He promises grace and all good things to those who keep such commandments. Because of this, we, too, should love Him, trust Him, and willingly do what His commandments require." Martin Luther in the Close of the Commandments in the Small Catechism.

*About the **numbering**: there are at least two sets of numbering used, and both are very old, at least 1,600 years. Most Protestants use the numbering adopted by Josephus and Origen, but Catholics and Lutherans use the numbering of St. Augustine, who took it from a Hebrew list in the fifth century. The numbering is not in the Bible.*

BIBLE STORY

Exodus 11-12

Read from your Bible. Ask students to find it in a Bible too. Those that can read can follow along. Choose the passages you would like to read aloud. Use visuals to help tell the story.

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” This is the first and greatest commandment. (Matthew 22:37-38)

The Seventh Commandment

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What does this mean?

We should fear and love God so that we do not take our neighbor’s money or possessions, or get them in any dishonest way, but help him to improve and protect his possessions and income.

We have seen so many exciting things happen to God’s people. God rescued them from slavery. Then, He opened the Red Sea so that they could escape from the king’s soldiers.

God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses and His people on Mount Sinai.

God knew that the people needed special rules to help them respect each other and respect God. One day, God called Moses to come up to a mountain. A great cloud of smoke billowed around the mountain. God asked the people to stay at the bottom of the mountain while Moses climbed up to talk to God. God spoke to Moses up there. (Exodus 19) He told Moses ten things that were important.

God even wrote them down on two big stone tablets. These were the ten things that God said:

(NIV text)

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The Commandments tell us how we are to live. (Exodus 20:1-17). God gave us the Commandments because He loves us. God sent Jesus to earn forgiveness for the times we break the Commandments.

The Israelites viewed the Law (10 Commandments) as a gift from God, not an option or curse. We too need to accept the 10 Commandments as a gift from God, a reminder of God's great love and concern for His people, even today.

God gives us rules to protect us. Like the different signs in our lives, God's rules are to help us. God wants us to love others. God wants us to love and obey Him.

Review

1. Where did God tell Moses to go? (up to a mountain)

2. What did God do? (gave Moses the Ten Commandments)

3. What do the Ten Commandments say to do? (love God and love others as we love ourselves)

4. What does God want us to do? (obey His commands)

Think about it — God told Moses 10 important rules that the people should follow.

Talk about the importance of following God's rules.

Talk about warning signs, traffic signs, etc. Talk about how God's rules are like those signs and are meant to help us.

BIBLE CHALLENGE

Read this passage from your Bible. Ask students to locate it in a Bible too. Help them learn this verse.

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” This is the first and greatest commandment. (Matthew 22:37-38)

The Seventh Commandment

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“Teach me knowledge and good judgment, for I believe in your commands.” (Psalm 119:66)

Read this passage from your Bible. Ask students to locate it in a Bible too. Help them learn this verse.

What are the two things asked for in this verse?

We can learn to have knowledge and good judgment by reading God’s Word. Having knowledge and good judgment means that we can make wise decisions in difficult situations.

What are some other things we can learn from God by reading His Word?

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Prince of Egypt Video Clip

GAMES

Game 1: Fish and Sharks

Bible Focus: Exodus 23:2

Materials

Bibles, masking tape, large sheet of paper, marker

Preparation

Make two masking-tape lines approximately 20 feet apart.

Lead the Game

We're going to play a game of tag, but first we need to make a list of situations to use in the game. What are some situations in which kids your age might be tempted to do the wrong thing? (Taking a test at school. Not having enough money to buy something at a store.) List students' ideas on large sheet of paper.

Divide students into two equal groups. One group is called the "sharks" and the other group is called the "fish." Each group stands behind one of the masking-tape lines.

To start play, students start walking toward each other. After students have taken at least four steps toward each other, call out either "fish" or "sharks."

If you call "fish," the students in the fish line try to tag the students in the sharks line before they can get back to their safety line.

If you call "sharks," the sharks attempt to tag the fish. Anyone who is tagged joins the other team. Play several rounds.

Play the game again; but this time at the end of each round, the first student tagged chooses one of the situations listed on the large sheet of paper and tells what he or she thinks would be the right thing to do in God's eyes.

After the last round, ask a student to find Exodus 23:2 in his or her Bible and read it aloud. Ask one or more of the Discussion Questions below.

Discussion Questions

1. How does God want us to act toward others? How is this different from following the crowd?
2. When are sometimes kids your age don't do what is right in God's eyes? When might a kid your age be tempted to follow the crowd in doing wrong?
3. How can you do what is right in God's eyes instead of doing what other kids are doing?

Game 2: Balloon Burst

Supplies Needed:

Strips of paper with the following Bible verses:

Exodus 20:7

Exodus 20:12

Exodus 20:15

Matthew 22:37, 38

Luke 6:27, 28

Luke 6:31

John 15:12

Ephesians 4:29

Ephesians 4:32

Colossians 3:13

Balloons

Whistle

Prepare for the game:

Print the Bible verses onto strips of paper. Put the strips of paper into balloons and inflate and tie the balloons. Bible verses can be written out/typed out, or simply the reference listed and students look up the verse in their Bible.

Play the Game:

Students stand in a circle and pass one balloon around the circle over head, between legs, from person to person until you blow the whistle. Student holding the balloon when the whistle is blown moves to the center of the circle and pops the balloon (or has someone pop it for him or her). Student reads verse and game continues.

SCIENCE EXPERIMENT

Science Experiment 1: Volcano Thunder

Kaboom! Hear the sound of the thunder and feel the earth shake as your kids follow the commandments of the One, True God.

From Exodus 19:10-19

And the LORD said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow. Have them wash their clothes and be ready by the third day, because on that day the LORD will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. Put limits for the people around the mountain and tell them, 'Be careful that you do not go up the mountain or touch the foot of it. Whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death. He shall surely be stoned or shot with arrows; not a hand is to be laid on him. Whether man or animal, he shall not be permitted to live.' Only when the ram's horn sounds a long blast may they go up to the mountain."

On the morning of the third day there was thunder and lightning, with a thick cloud over the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast. Everyone in the camp trembled. Then Moses led the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. Mount Sinai was covered with smoke, because the LORD descended on it in fire. The smoke billowed up from it like smoke from a furnace, the whole mountain trembled violently, and the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder. Then Moses spoke and the voice of God answered him.

Okay, so God wasn't on a volcano, but Scripture does tell us the mountain shook!

When God spoke to Moses about the Ten Commandments, the Israelites could see smoke, fire and lightning on Mount Sinai. Let's create a smoking mountain. It will help us remember what God wants our full attention as well as our submission and obedience to his laws.

Supplies needed:

Small cups or baby food jars

Water

Vinegar

Baking soda

Dishwashing soap

Straws

Trays or cover the tables or go outside

What you'll do:

Place the cups or jars on top of the tray or covered tables and fill them halfway with water.

Have kids add a teaspoon of baking soda and stir it until the soda is dissolved completely.

Add the dishwashing soap.

Slowly pour about 1/3 cup of vinegar into each jar and watch the foamy special effects!

Talk about it:

Why did God take time to give laws to his people?

What happens when people ignore God's laws?

"Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker." (Psalm 95:6)

Experiment 2: Heart, Soul and Mind

Supplies:

Tablecloth

Smarties candies – 1 roll per student

Coffee filters – 1 filter per student

Bowl of water

Paper plates – 1 plate per student

Clear drinking glass – 1 glass per group

Dark corn syrup – 1/3 cup per group

Cooking oil – 1/3 cup per group

Water to pour – 1/3 cup per group

1/3 cup measure

The Israelites had come from the land of Egypt. It was the land of many gods. And to the Egyptians the more gods to worship the better. The God of Israel, however, wanted none of this. He is the only true God and he wanted his people to remember that always.

With Moses as leader, God led his people from Egyptian slavery to the wilderness of the Sinai Desert. Here they camped at the foot of a mountain called Mount Sinai. With thunder and lightning and trumpet blasts, God made His presence known with the Ten Commandments.

With God so near, the Israelites trembled with fear. Suppose that happened today. What would the news say?

Open your Bible to Exodus 20:1-11. Let's read that section.

God's people needed to obey his commandments. But in the days to come that would prove easier said than done for the Israelites. Let's do an experiment that melts hard hearts into ones eager to obey and honor God.

Distribute plates, filters, candy – one per student. Set the single piece of candy in the middle of the filter. Have kids dip fingers into the bowl of water and drip five or six drops onto the candies until each is soaked and a small water ring forms on the filter. Wait five minutes.

Today's Bible verse talks about hearts.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart.....Ask a student to pour 1/3 cup of corn syrup into the empty drinking glass.

And with all your soul.....add 1/3 cup cooking oil, slowly down the inside of the glass.

And with all your mind.....finally pour in 1/3 cup of water down the inside of the glass.

Allow the contents to settle. **Our Bible verse speaks of three different things: a heart, a soul and a mind.** Have the class observe the now three separate layers of liquid in the glass. **Think of the three separate layers and the heart, soul and mind that make up just one thing – YOU! May our hearts, souls and minds seek to honor and love God above all else all the days of our lives.**

Back to the candy: Observe how the shell of the round candy has softened and rings of color now decorate the coffee filters.