

The Ten Commandments

Exodus 19:20-20:17

MEMORY VERSE

MARK 12:30

“'And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these.”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

A ball large enough to roll on the floor between children.

A broomstick.

Two strips of paper, one 8 1/2” x 1” and another 5 1/2” x 1” for each of the children in your class.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Ten Commandment Circle Game

Read the Ten Commandments; then play this circle game: Seat children in a circle; then roll a ball to one child who will say any one of the Ten Commandments then roll the ball back to the teacher. Keep rolling the ball to other children.

The following children that are chosen may then say any of the commandments that have not been mentioned (help them out!).

Continue as long as you want to, speeding up the game if you would like to. This will hopefully help the children gain familiarity with all of the commandments.

LESSON TIME!

Have you heard of the Ten Commandments? How many of them do you know? God gave these commandments to men to reveal His righteous standard. No man has been able to keep these rules without failure. Only Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man, was able to keep the Ten Commandments perfectly throughout His life. God knew that man would not and could not keep His commandments. God had a plan. At the right time, He would send a Savior, Jesus Christ, to bring sinful man back to God. Not only is there forgiveness for our sins through Jesus Christ, but the power to do what pleases God. One person explained, "The Law sets forth what a person ought to be, grace exhibits who God is." **God will enable us to do what He wants us to do.**

EXODUS 19:20-25

Then the LORD came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain. And the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.

And the LORD said to Moses, "Go down and warn the people, lest they break through to gaze at the LORD, and many of them perish.

"Also let the priests who come near the LORD sanctify themselves, lest the LORD break out against them."

And Moses said to the LORD, "The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai; for You warned us, saying, 'Set bounds around the mountain and sanctify it.' "

Then the LORD said to him, "Away! Get down and then come up, you and Aaron with you. But do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to the LORD, lest He break out against them."

So Moses went down to the people and spoke to them.

Only Moses and Aaron were permitted on the mountain; the priests and the people were to stand before it. God instructed Moses not to allow the people to try to get a glimpse of God; for if they did, they would perish. No wonder the people trembled at the foot of the mountain before the holy and awesome God.

Limbo

Use a broomstick and let the children line up and go under the stick. No bending forward! Move the stick lower and lower, making it harder to pass under it. This can demonstrate the difference between the world's standard (easy) and God's standard (impossible).

With the stick very close to the ground, it is impossible for us to go under it, just like it is impossible to keep all the commandments, even though we try with all of our might. We need the help of Jesus to do the things God has commanded us to do. **God will enable us to do what He wants us to do.**

EXODUS 20:1-17

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 bondage.

"You shall have no other gods before Me.

"You shall not make for yourself any carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth;

"you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me,

"but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

"You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

"Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

"but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates.

"For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

"You shall not murder.

"You shall not commit adultery.

"You shall not steal.

"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

"You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's."

Let's simplify and look once more at the Ten Commandments.

1. "You shall have no other god's before me."
God wants to be first in our hearts. Is there anything more important to you than God? Anything that comes before our desire to love and worship God is an idol.
2. "Worship God only."
God wants our complete attention and affection. Our love for Him should affect every area of our life.
3. "Do not take God's name in vain."
Do not use God's name in wrong ways. The words we say reflect what is in the heart.—May our words honor God.
4. "Rest on the Sabbath day and think about God."
The Sabbath day was a day God set aside for the children of Israel to rest and worship Him. It is similar to Sunday when many families take special time to attend church. When we are in love with our Lord, we will want to go to church and learn about Him. However, we need not just set one day aside to worship the Lord; as a Christian, we will want to continue gathering together, worshipping, and growing throughout the week.
5. "Respect and obey your parents."
6. "You shall not murder."

7. “You shall not commit adultery.”
Be faithful to your husband or wife.
8. “You shall not steal.”
Do not take what is not yours. Take care of those things that belong to others.
9. “Do not lie about others.”
10. “Do not covet.”
We should be happy with what God has given us. We should not look at what someone else has and wish it would be ours.

The Ten Commandments show us the perfect way to live. They are “holy, just, and good” (Romans 7:12). They demonstrate the way to live according to God’s rules, in harmony with God and in harmony with other people (like your brother or sister). In Psalm 19:7-9 we read, the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes...the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.” Psalm 19:10 continues, “More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.” God desires the very best for His children and keeping God’s rules is the best way, the perfect and complete and blessed way to live, in perfect harmony with God and man.

However, we find a problem, not with God’s commandments, but with *us*. We cannot keep the commandments perfectly. We fail to do what is right.

We all have broken and will continue to break God's rules, because we were born that way—with a sinful nature. The Ten Commandments reminded the people of the great gulf that existed between a holy God and man. The Bible says, "...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God..." (Romans 3:23). Thus, man was separated from God, because of original sin (sin we were born with) and acquired sin (sin we have committed since were born). No matter how hard man tries to live by the Ten Commandments, he will fail, "fall short." Man needs a savior--someone who will bridge the great gulf of sin that has separated man from God.

Jesus, God's only Son, became the one to stand in the gap—to bridge the gulf between God and man. He took upon Himself the judgment that was due sinful man when He died on the cross. Now, those who accept God's offer of forgiveness, through faith in the work of Jesus Christ, are made "righteous"—just as if they had never sinned, just as if they had kept God's commandments perfectly.

Have you put your trust in Jesus and received God's free gift of forgiveness? Today would be a good day to take that important step. No matter our past sins, God will forgive us. He promised, "the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out" (John 6:37).

Jesus died to forgive our past, present, and future sins. 1 John 1:8,9 says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Not only did Jesus die that we might be forgiven when we fail, but He now lives to help us to do the right things. Philippians 4:13 states "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Apart from God's help and power, we cannot keep the commandments. But, **God will enable us to do what He wants us to do.**

1 John 5:3-5 states, “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.” It is in relationship with Jesus Christ that we find the power to do what we could not do by ourselves.

Instead of thinking of the Ten Commandments as rules, think of them as a ruler. We use rulers to measure things; the Ten Commandments help us to measure how far short we are of God’s perfect requirement. Our failures drive us to Jesus, who not only forgives us, but can do in us and for us what we cannot do for ourselves.

The law also may be pictured as a mirror. A look in the mirror may reveal a dirt smudge on your cheek. The dirt was there before you looked in the mirror, but now you are aware of the dirt and your need to be clean. So the Ten Commandments reveal our sin and failure. Unfortunately, the law can do no more to help us than to reveal our sin. But, the knowledge of our sin, drives us to God to seek forgiveness through faith in Jesus Christ and power *not* to sin. **God will enable us to do what He wants us to do.**

In John 1:17, we read, "For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." Grace works inside out. We, who have put our trust in Jesus, have been given a new nature (2 Corinthians 5:17). Our new nature wants to do the things that please God, to keep His commandments. Keeping God’s commandments is no longer something we have to do, but something we want to do. As it was in our old nature to sin, it is in our new nature to obey God out of a heart of love.

We need to purpose in our hearts to know God through Jesus and yield our lives into His mighty hand. Let us purpose to love Him with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength and love others as our self; then, we will be on the road to successfully fulfilling the Ten Commandments. **God will enable us to do what He wants us to do.**

The Commandment Cross

Write the two portions of the memory verse on two strips of paper (Love God on the 8 1/2" x 1" strip of paper and Love Your Neighbor on the 5 1/2" x 1" strip of paper). Staple together to form a cross.

Explain that the Ten Commandments represent our relationship with God and our relationships with others and can only be made right through the cross of Jesus.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of thanksgiving for His commandments and His help to keep them. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity.