

General Church Education



The Commandments The Second Table

Exodus 20:12-17

Lesson 13

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 3: The Lord Is Our Lawgiver

For ages 8-9 years

The Commandments—The Second Table

Exodus 20:12-17

For Parents and Teachers

The second table of the Ten Commandments teaches us how to love our neighbor in a spiritual way. The fourth commandment about honoring our father and mother bridges the first and second table because it treats of our relationship to our earthly parents and also to the Lord and His Church, our spiritual Father and Mother. People usually see good reasons to keep the laws relating to the neighbor. These precepts are part of most civil law because they keep order and peace in a community and country. It is important to remember that all the commandments are really one complete whole. If we succeed in keeping the laws of the second table but disregard the laws of the first, our good deeds are not really good. Our tendency will be to become self-satisfied and believe that the good we do is from ourselves. This thought can fool us into believing that we do not need the Lord or to learn what is good and true from Him. In truth, we cannot do anything that is really good without the Lord's help.

Ideas for Children

- The Ten Commandments are laws for our whole lives.
- Even though we sometimes make mistakes, the Lord wants us to follow these rules which lead to true happiness.
- The first three commandments teach us how to love and honor the Lord and the last six commandments teach us how to love our neighbor. The fourth commandment is a bridge between the two and relates to the Lord and to our neighbor.

From the Writings

One who leads a life of charity and faith, practices repentance daily. He reflects on the evils which are with himself, acknowledges them, guards against them, and prays to the Lord for help. For by oneself, a person constantly falls, but by the Lord he is constantly raised up, and is led to good. Such is the state of those who are in good. Those who are in evil fall constantly, and are also raised by the Lord; nevertheless, they are only led away so they don't fall into the most grievous evils, to which, of themselves, they tend with all their might.

Repentance of the lips, and not of the life is not repentance. Sins are not remitted by a repentance of the lips, but by a repentance of the life. Sins indeed are continually being forgiven to a person by the Lord, for the Lord is Mercy itself; yet sins adhere to a person, however he may think they are remitted; nor are they removed from him, except by a life according to the precepts of true faith. So far as a person lives according to them, so far his sins are removed; and so far as they are removed, so far they are remitted. See *New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine* 163, and 165

The Commandments—The Second Table

Exodus 20:12-17

Words to Understand

honor—to show great respect for

adultery—a way of disrespecting marriage—acting like you are married to someone else’s wife or husband

covet—to want something that someone else has

covenant—a two-way agreement or promise



At Mount Sinai

Do you remember some of the dramatic and awesome events that prepared the children of Israel to hear the Ten Commandments spoken by the voice of God from Mount Sinai? Picture in your mind the thick clouds coming down on the tall, rocky mountain. Try to think what it must have been like to hear the rumbling thunder and see the bright lightning streaking across the sky. And then came the loud, commanding sound of the trumpet. The whole mountain shook! How terrifying! The people trembled with fear and excitement. They had prepared for this day by washing their clothes and purifying themselves. Then they stood at the foot of the mountain to hear the Lord for they had promised that they would do all that He said.

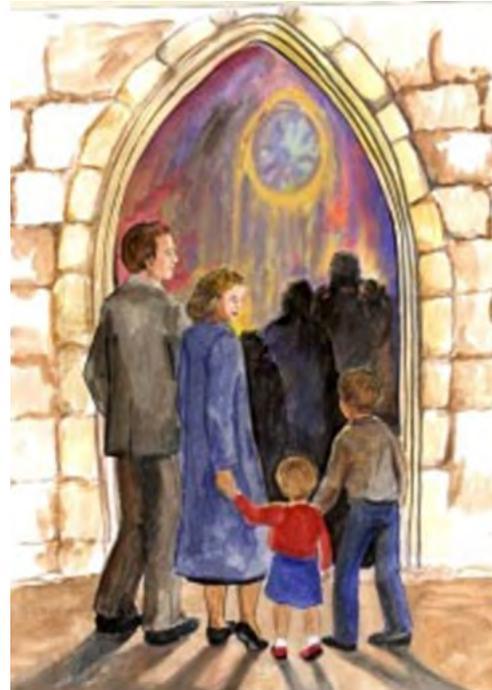
The Two Tables

As you will recall, the Ten Commandments were written by the finger of God on two stone tables or tablets. The first three commandments on the first table teach that we should love and worship the Lord above all else.

Today’s lesson is about the second table. It holds the other commandments that instruct us about how to love our neighbor. These laws tell us how to act or treat other people, whether they happen to be members of our family, friends or strangers. The fourth commandment is really a bridge between the two tables. As you will see, this commandment tells about our connection to the Lord and the neighbor. You might remember that in the New Testament, the Lord says that all the commandments are really about two things: to love the Lord is the first and great commandment and the second is to love our neighbors. **Read Exodus 20:12-17.**

The Fourth Commandment: “Honor your father and your mother.”

This tells us to love, respect and obey our parents and other grown-ups who love and care for us. This is very important, isn't it? We must try to keep this commandment our whole life. But did you know that more is meant than loving our parents? We are also to honor our Heavenly Father who is the Lord. We are to respect and obey His laws and love Him with all our heart. Did you know we also have a spiritual mother? Our spiritual mother is the New Church. Just as our natural mother loves us, feeds us and takes care of us, so the church feeds our mind by teaching us and giving us a place to worship the Lord. When we love, respect and work for our church, we are making a home for the Lord in this world. The church is meant to be something like heaven on earth. So this commandment teaches about loving our natural and our spiritual parents.

**The Fifth Commandment: “You shall not murder.”**

This not only means that purposely and hatefully killing others is wrong and ought not to be done, it also means we are not to hurt others in any way. Can you think of some ways one person could purposefully and meanly hurt another? We can actually kill the spirit of another person if we hate them, are cruel to them, say mean things to them or about them, or quarrel with them.

The Sixth Commandment: “You shall not commit adultery.”

Marriage is sacred and holy. It is when a man and woman promise to love and honor each other and try to bring the Lord into their life together. During the wedding ceremony a husband and wife and promise to try to become one angel. A person must never try to take away someone's married partner or act like they are married to someone other than their own partner. This is wrong, for it destroys marriage which is from the Lord. This commandment says we should honor marriage and respect everything about marriage. Crude and disrespectful talk about sexual things is very harmful. Ask your parents and the Lord for help to avoid all the things that can cause destructive thoughts and feelings—they pose a great danger!

The Seventh Commandment: “You shall not steal.”

To steal is to take something that belongs to another without permission. We all know that steal-ing is wrong. It is a sneaky thing to do and it causes much unhappiness. Have you ever had some-thing stolen from you? If you have, you know how badly it made you feel. Stealing is a selfish thing to do. People cannot live together happily when they cannot trust that others will respect their prop-erty.

The Eighth Commandment: “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”

Can you trust someone who lies? We sometimes want to lie to get out of trouble. Evil spirits may urge us to tell a lie. They try to make us think that we can get away with it and things will go easier for us. But it is better to be brave and tell the truth even when it is hard. If we have done

something wrong, we need to learn to be honest with ourselves and with others. We can admit the wrong we have done, even if it means that we may be punished. This takes serious courage, but honesty is “the best policy” because honesty is from heaven. Lies are from hell. When you shun lies, your mind can be free of all worries and feel close to the Lord.

The Ninth & Tenth commandments: “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.”

Do you know what coveting means? It is when you are jealous and want something that belongs to someone else—you want it so badly that you wish you could take it away from the person who has it. That is not a good feeling. When we are jealous, we are only thinking about what we want. We are not happy that someone else has something nice and is enjoying it. Wanting everything for ourselves is being greedy. Greed is selfish and causes unhappiness. What can we do when covetous or greedy thoughts and feelings appear? We can try to be happy when someone has something we would like and share their joy. We can realize that our turn will come to enjoy something special. In this way we will learn how it feels to really love our neighbor. But be patient. This takes practice .

The Laws of Heaven

The Lord gave the Ten Commandments so that we would know the difference between good and evil. We need to learn the difference so that we can freely choose to do what is good. This is the way to be truly happy and to come to live in the Lord’s kingdom forever. We don’t always obey the Ten Commandments, do we? Sometimes it seems easy and other times it seems hard. Everyone makes mistakes. The important thing is to accept our mistakes and be honest when we have done wrong. When we are sorry and try not to do it again, the Lord forgives us and helps us to do better.

The Ten Commandments provide protection. When we follow these “rules of life,” they protect us from being selfish and suffering the unhappiness that thinking only of ourselves can cause. Learn the Ten Commandments by heart and say them to yourself often. We are to keep these laws in our memories for our whole life. When we obey them, we come closer to the Lord. His tender love can then reach inside of us and touch our hearts.

Discussion Ideas

- The commandments are the Lord’s laws for our lives. They are also the laws of heaven. Heaven is happy because the angels obey these laws.
- The commandments help guide our way back when we have made mistakes.

Activity Overview | The Commandments—The Second Table

Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

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 take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Honor your father and your mother.

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.” Exodus 20:1-17 (parts)

Songs

Ten Commandments Song

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-the-ten-commandments/>

All That the Lord Has Spoken

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-all-that-the-lord-has-spoken-2/>

Projects

Choose one or two activities.

- Activity 1 | Ten Commandments—Fill in the Blanks
- Activity 2 | Sequence the Ten Commandments
- Ten Commandments to Decorate
- Picture to color—Moses Receives the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20)

Additional Activity Ideas

- Hear the Ten Commandments spoken in Hebrew at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/video-the-ten-commandments-in-hebrew/>

Activity 1 | Ten Commandments Fill in the Blanks

You will need a copy of the Word to complete this activity. Read the questions. Look for the answers in Exodus chapter 20.

1. And _____ spoke all these words, saying...(Exodus 20:1)
2. You shall have no other _____ before Me. (Ex. 20:3)
3. You shall not make for yourself a carved _____. (Ex. 20:4)
4. You shall not take the _____ of the Lord your God in _____ . (Ex. 20:7)
5. Remember the _____ to keep it holy. (Ex. 20:8)
6. Honor your _____ and your _____. (Ex. 20:12)
7. You shall not bear _____ against your neighbor. (Ex. 20:16)
8. You shall not _____ your neighbor's house. (Ex. 20:17)
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's _____, nor his manservant, nor his _____, nor his _____, nor his _____, nor anything that is your neighbor's. (Ex. 20:17)
10. Now all the people witnessed the thunderings, the _____ flashes, the sound of the _____, and the _____ smoking. (Ex. 20:18)

- Answers:
 1. God
 2. gods
 3. image
 4. name, vain
 5. Sabbath day
 6. father, mother
 7. false witness
 8. covet
 9. wife, manservant, ox, donkey
 10. lightning, trumpet, mountain



Activity 2 | Ten Commandments Sequencing Cards

Optional: Copy cards on to thick paper or cardstock.

Cut the cards apart along the lines.

Using the Cards

Sequencing Cards may be used in a variety of ways to help children learn and reflect on the Ten Commandments. For example:

1. Put the cards in the order in which the Lord gave them to us.
2. Compare the Commandments.
 - Which of the commandments do you think would be the hardest to keep?
 - Which commandments tell how to love and honor the Lord?
 - Which commandments tell how to love and treat the neighbor?
 - Which commandment tells about both the Lord and the neighbor?
3. Sort the Commandments into two groups; a group about the Lord, and a group about the neighbor. Which commandment belongs in both groups?
4. Memorize the commandments by reciting them using the sequencing cards. On the first day, start with one card. Add an additional card each day, so that by the end of a week or two you will have learned them all.

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 take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

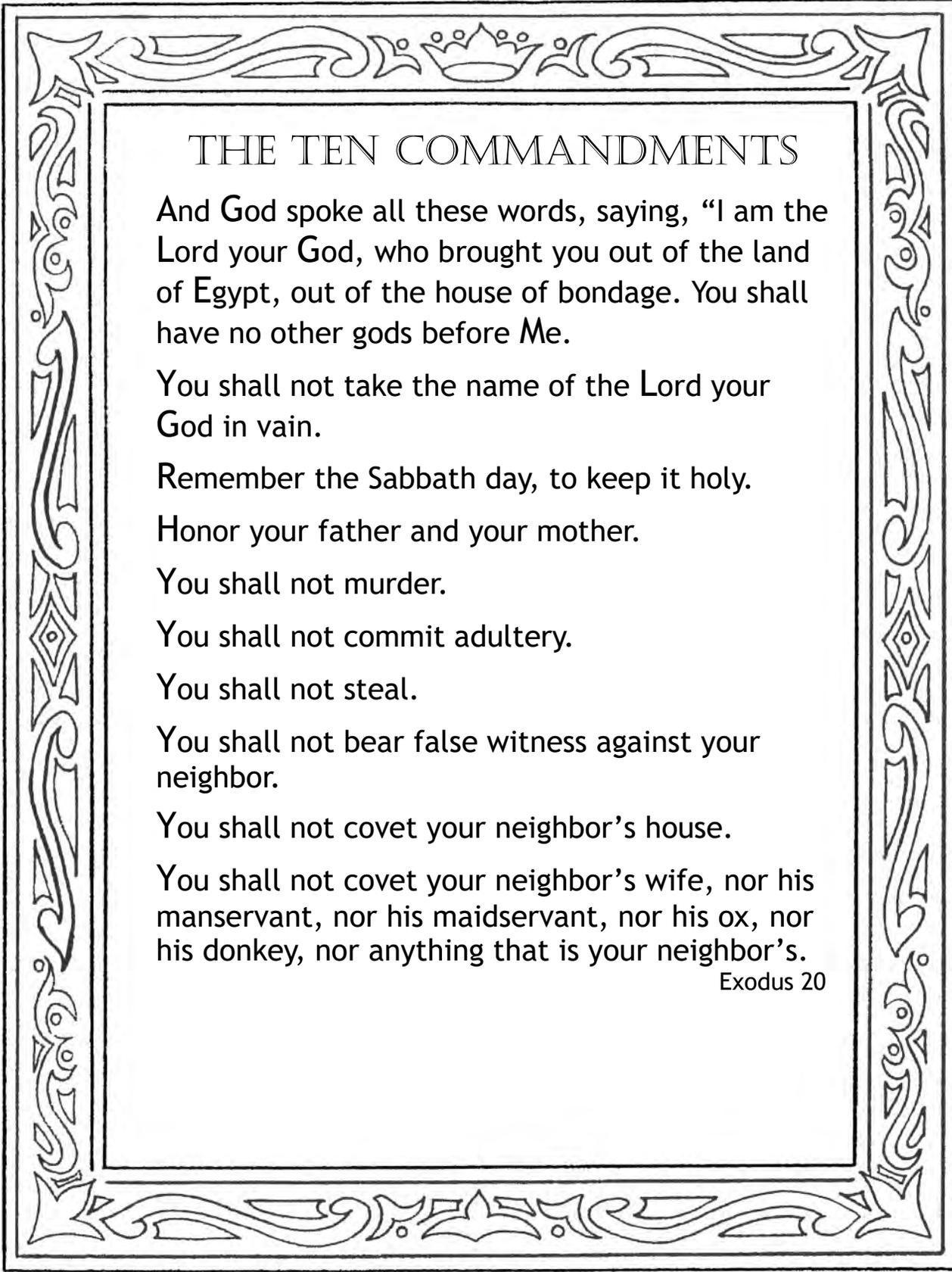
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THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

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Exodus 20

