



10

The Ten Commandments

Key Themes

- God demands obedience and trust.
- God sees all men as sinners in need of salvation.

Key Passages

- Exodus 20:3–4a, 20:7a, 20:8, 20:12–17

Lesson Focus

- God gave His people Ten Commandments.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

Students will make flat “tablets” out of play dough and press objects into them to make impressions.



Circle Time

Prayer—Using the Prayer page of the Flip Chart, discuss prayer and give each child the opportunity to pray after determining what type of prayer you will offer today.

God’s Word—God gave His people the Ten Commandments.

Song—Children will sing the song they learned last week, “Goin’ to the Promised Land.”



Activity 1: Ten Commandments Wall Hanger

Students will decorate a Ten Commandments wall hanger to remind them how God gave His people the Law.



Activity 2: Keep Up the Commandments

Students will attempt to keep ten balloons in the air as an illustration that we cannot keep the Law—the Ten Commandments.



Memory Verse Review/Snack

Children will review the memory verse while enjoying the snack for the day. You may want to use the snack as incentive to recite or repeat the memory verse.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



FOR THE TEACHER

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.

- Student Take Home Sheets



COME ON IN

- Gather play dough
- Gather objects (key, dime, marker lid, plastic letters, numbers, etc.) for children to press into play dough “tablets.”

- Play dough for each child
- Objects for impressions



CIRCLE TIME

- Practice the jingle on the Song Sheet at the back of this Teacher Guide.

- Lesson Flip Chart
- Stuffed animal



TEN COMMANDMENTS WALL HANGER

- Print one Ten Commandments wall hanger sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM onto cardstock for each child.
- Cut out the tablets before class.
- Gather decorations for children to use (stickers, glitter glue, sequins, etc.)
- Cut different colored ribbon to loop through wall hangers.
- Complete wall hanger for demonstration.

- Ten Commandments wall hanger sheet for each child
- Hole punch
- Decorations
- Ribbons
- Crayons
- Glue or tape
- Scissors
- Completed wall hanger



KEEP UP THE COMMANDMENTS

- Inflate and tie off 10 balloons. Number them from 1–10 to represent the Ten Commandments.

- Inflated balloons numbered 1–10



MEMORY VERSE REVIEW/SNACK

- Prepare and bring snacks.

- Lesson Flip Chart for memory verse review
- Snacks



Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

As you prepare your heart to teach this week, read Exodus 19–20, 24, 34; Galatians 3:24; Romans 3:19–26.

Within three months of leaving Egypt, the Israelites came to Mount Sinai in the wilderness of the Sinai Peninsula. It was here that God called to Moses and declared His covenant to His people (Exodus 19:1–5).

The Israelites' encounter with God here in the wilderness was a time of terror for them. The thick cloud that accompanied Him (Exodus 19:9), the warning and severe consequence—even death—to anyone who would touch the mountain (Exodus 19:12–13), the thunderings and lightnings, the cloud, the sound of the trumpet (Exodus 19:16), smoke and fire at the mountain as it quaked greatly (Exodus 19:18) all caused the people to tremble with the fear of the Lord. They were content to allow Moses to serve as mediator and spokesperson, “Let not God speak with us, lest we die” (Exodus 20:19).

Amidst all of this commotion, as God revealed His holiness, anger, and justice, He delivered the Ten Commandments to the people (Exodus 20). God also spoke the Ten Commandments and other laws to Moses (Exodus 24:3) and later they were written down and read to the people (Exodus 24:4) who affirmed them.

God then summoned Moses to the mountain—the first of two 40-day trips Moses was to make. Here Moses was confronted with the astounding glory of the Lord (Exodus 24:16–18). What an experience for Moses, communing with the Holy God, and receiving instructions for the Tabernacle that would soon house the glory Moses was witnessing. At the culmination of this meeting Moses was given the two stone tablets of the Testimony, containing the Ten Commandments written with the finger of God (Exodus 31:18).

Moses returned from the mountaintop experience of God's glory to a devastating display of pagan idolatry. In 40 short days, the Israelites turned from the Creator God who had demonstrated His power so vividly to the worship of idols in the form of a golden calf (Exodus 32:4).

Moses's anger was aroused at the sight and he broke the precious tablets at the foot of the mountain (Exodus 32:19). This led to Moses's second 40-day encounter with God where new tablets were

made—inscribed with the Law of the Lord. Here we are presented with a testimony that reveals the mercy, grace, patience, goodness, truth, forgiveness, and faithfulness of God (Exodus 34:6–7).

What an account! God revealed His holiness which terrified the people, His commandments which displayed His moral will for them, and His amazing character which gave them hope in the face of their sin.

We are reminded of all of these revelations as we read the book of Exodus. This law, given in the center of God's glory, is a revelation to all men that God demands perfection. This law works to reveal to us that we fall desperately short of the standard God must demand because of who He is. This law acts as a tutor, a school master to bring us to Christ (Galatians 3:24).

As sinners we are set on proclaiming our own goodness (Proverbs 20:6). We attempt to justify our sin by claiming to be better than others. This thinking can only lead to death and destruction. Our own deeds will never make us righteous before a holy God—they are as filthy rags to Him (Isaiah 64:6). That is the bad news.

But there is good news! God has provided a way of salvation through Christ (John 3:16). It is by grace through faith received as a gift from God—not by works—that we receive forgiveness for our sins and eternal life (Ephesians 2:8–9).

APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

Mount Sinai is mentioned several times in the Bible and given two different names. It is referred to as Mount Sinai and Mount Horeb, but its actual location is not known for sure. We certainly know it is a peak in the southern part of the Sinai Peninsula. Based on what we know from Scripture and history—there are several places it could be. Some suggest it is at Jebel Musa. Although we aren't sure of the exact location, we know that it was the mountain where God's glory and holiness were revealed to Moses. We can be sure of this because we trust the historical record found in Exodus and the rest of the Bible.

Many deny the truth of the Bible because of the lack of “evidence” regarding the exact locations of biblical places and events. However, God has allowed us to make numerous archaeological discoveries that do confirm the history recorded in His Word. As Christians, we do not depend on “proof” but we walk by

faith in God. Because we know He is perfect, true, and faithful we know we can confidently trust the record He has given us.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Throughout history, mankind has been made righteous in the eyes of God by one means—Christ’s atoning sacrifice (John 14:6). Many ask about the Old Testament saints. How could they have been saved? The answer is the same. They were saved through faith in Jesus Christ, but their faith wasn’t the same as ours. Their faith was based on the future—knowing that the promised Messiah would come to redeem His people.

As early as the Garden of Eden, when sin first entered the world, God promised freedom from the Curse through the Seed that was to come from the woman (Genesis 3:15). Jesus Christ is that Seed, the promised Messiah. In speaking of the Old Testament saints, the author of Hebrews explains, “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth” (Hebrews 11:13). These saints had hope in what was to come. They looked to the future for their salvation while we look to the past to find ours.

We know that Christ has accomplished His finished work on the Cross to give us our hope of salvation. Unfortunately, people throughout history have looked to their own works in the hopes of pleasing the gods and meriting life after death. From the Garden of Eden, to the pagan cultures that were flourishing across the globe at the time of the Exodus, to the work-righteous religious systems of today, man has tried to get himself into heaven. Proud man is convinced that he can work his way to God, and he believes that

his works are good, pure, and worthy enough to reach and satisfy the eternal, holy, omniscient, Creator of the Universe. But that is not the truth according to God’s Word. The truth is that it is only through Jesus Christ that we can be saved and declared the children of God (John 1:12).

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Dear Lord, as I begin to prepare this lesson, I am reminded of the wonder of the gospel. I thank you for your Law. I thank you that in your wisdom you knew that showing me the Law—your standard for excellence—would reveal how sinful my heart really is. And that would drive me to know more and discover the wonder of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on my behalf. Help me this week, Lord, to teach these truths clearly to the children. And please open their hearts to see that you are a God to be feared—one who must punish all sin. But you are also gracious and merciful. And because of that you made a way of salvation through Jesus Christ—the only one who could obey all the Law perfectly—the one who was willing to die to take the punishment of the sin of those who would turn to Him in repentance and faith. Open their hearts, Lord, to this truth and bring them to everlasting life in you.



COME ON IN

As children arrive . . .

- They will flatten play dough into “tablets” and press various objects into them to make impressions. Explain that God wrote His Ten Commandments to the people on tablets of stone.

During this time you should be at the door welcoming the children as they come in and directing them to sit down at the tables and begin the activity. Have an aid/helper ready to engage the children with the activity.



REVIEW

Using the Flip Chart, quickly review the previous lessons with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class. Remember, children learn by repetition and review.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the lesson pages from the Flip Chart. Remind the children of each lesson’s focus. This will refresh the truths in your students’ minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



Circle Time

In an orderly manner, have the children assemble in a circle away from the tables—either on the floor or in their chairs.

Bring your stuffed animal, Bible, Flip Chart, completed Ten Commandments wall hanger, and any other props you brought or prepared for this lesson.

PRAYER

This prayer time is designed to get children to begin to understand some simple concepts about prayer and to get them to understand that they can pray. Use a special stuffed animal—prayer bear—or appropriate object to pass around the circle as each child gets a turn to pray. Only the child with the stuffed animal is allowed to pray or speak during this time. Using the same stuffed animal or other object all year will add continuity and structure to this time.

We start our Bible Study with prayer. Let’s pray. *Turn to the Prayer page in the Flip Chart. Briefly review the different types of prayer presented there. Then determine which type you want the children to pray today.*

- I love you prayers—Adoration
- I’m sorry prayers—Confession
- Thank you prayers—Thanksgiving
- Please prayers—Supplication

Today Thanksgiving is suggested. You might proceed this way.

Today let’s say prayers of Thanksgiving—and thank God for the many blessings He’s given us.

The prayers you begin with should be specific to your needs. This will model to the children that you believe God does care about all the details of your life and you pray to Him about these things. Your example will increase their confidence in praying to God.

➤ Before making your transition to circle time, we suggest you take time for restroom breaks and hand washing.

➤ Preschoolers need to move. This is a good opportunity to get them to move. Make an orderly transition to the circle time. You can have carpet squares if you want to sit on the floor, or help them to move their chairs into the circle.

I'll start. Dear God, your Word says to be thankful for everything! Today I want to thank you especially for . . . *(insert personal prayer here)*.

Pass the stuffed animal around the circle, giving all the children an opportunity to say a prayer telling God thank you for something special in their lives.

Very good! Now let's put our stuffed animal away and we'll get into God's Word.

GOD'S WORD

These first four questions will be repeated each week. The repetition of these questions will help to solidify these simple but foundational truths in the children's minds at a young age.

? Before we begin, what is this? *Hold up your Bible. The Bible!*

? What is in this Bible? *God's Holy Word!*

? What does the Bible tell us? *Everything we need to know!*

? And all God's Words in this Bible are what? *True!*

For three months, the Israelites traveled in the wilderness. God provided for them every day. *Refer to Lesson 9 Flip Chart.* They finally came to a big mountain called Mt. Sinai. God told the people to gather around the mountain. He was going to speak to them. He told them that He wanted them to worship Him alone. And He wanted them to obey His laws. He was about to give some of those laws to them. Later, Moses went up on the mountain—Mt. Sinai—and God wrote the laws on two tablets of stone.

? Do you know what we call those laws that God gave Moses? *Allow discussion.*

These laws are called the Ten Commandments. These commandments would tell the people how to honor God and how to treat each other.

Let's see what God's Word says! *Open your Bible to Exodus 20. Show the children where the Ten Commandments are found. Refer to the Flip Chart.*

There are 10 commandments. *Hold up ten fingers.* This is commandment 1! *Hold up one finger. Slowly read Exodus 20:3 Can we have more than one God? No!*

The God of the Bible is the only God.

Now everyone hold up two fingers. *Read Exodus 20:4a.* The second commandment says that we can't make any carved images. The people of Israel would make statues of animals and worship those statues. You don't see people worshipping statues too often today. But this also means that God wants us to love Him more than anything. God wants to be the most important thing in our lives. God doesn't want us to worship ANYTHING He has given us. He wants us to worship Him only.

Now number 3. *Have children hold up three fingers. Read Exodus 20:7a.* This means that we should only say God's name when we are reading the Bible, studying the Bible, praying, or talking to someone else about God—like we are now. We should be very careful how we use God's name.

► As you teach, refer often to the Flip Chart picture to keep the children engaged.

Exodus 20:3

Exodus 20:4a

Exodus 20:7a

Now let's hold up four fingers and listen as I read the 4th commandment. *Slowly read Exodus 20:8.* This means that we should take special time each week to worship and honor God, like we do on Sundays when we come here to church to worship God.

Exodus 20:8

Please hold up five fingers. Listen carefully as I read. *Read Exodus 20:12, emphasizing honor your father and mother.*

Exodus 20:12

? Who does God want you to honor? *Honor your parents.*

? Do you know what it means to honor your parents? *Allow for discussion. Can have several answers but include obey them with a happy heart.*

All right, now let's find out what the 6th commandment is. Hold up six fingers! *Read Exodus 20:13.* You shall not murder! Now I don't think any of you has murdered anyone. But the Bible tells us that we aren't supposed to even get angry with anyone or we have broken this commandment.

Exodus 20:13

Let's hold up seven fingers. *Read Exodus 20:14.* The 7th commandment tells us that once we are married, we must stay married. Husbands and wives must love each other—and only each other—for the rest of their lives. God thinks marriage is very important.

Exodus 20:14

? Now let's hear what the 8th commandment is. *Have children hold up eight fingers. Read Exodus 20:15.* Do you know what that means? *You shouldn't steal.*

Exodus 20:15

That's right. We shouldn't take anything that doesn't belong to us!

On to number 9! *Have children hold up nine fingers. Read Exodus 20:16.* The 9th commandment says we shouldn't lie. We should always tell the truth!

Exodus 20:16

The 10th and last commandment God gave Moses was that we should not covet. *Have children hold up ten fingers. Read Exodus 20:17.*

Exodus 20:17

To covet means to really, really want something that someone else has. Maybe your sister has a new toy and you want it so bad you can't stop thinking about it! You want it so bad you would do almost anything to get it and you don't think you would be happy unless you had it. This is not good. God wants us to be happy with what we have. When we want something that bad, it is coveting and it is a sin.

So these are the Ten Commandments God gave the Israelites. But no one can obey all these laws perfectly. Every time we disobey our parents, or tell a lie, or steal, or break any of these commandments, we sin. God hates sin and must punish all sin.

We can't keep God's Law. We need help! These commandments point us to Jesus. Jesus is the ONLY one who has kept God's Law perfectly. He came to earth and became a human, just like us. But He never sinned. He died on the Cross for our sin and then rose again three days later. So if we believe in Him as our Lord and Savior, then we are saved and our sins are forgiven!

SONG

► Enthusiastically recite one line with the motions. Have the children repeat the line and the motions. You can march around the room or march in place. Repeat if time allows.

OK. Time to get up! God gave the Israelites the Ten Commandments at Mt. Sinai while they were in the wilderness on the way to the Promised Land. You helped me with the “Goin’ to the Promised Land” jingle last week. Let’s do that again; you repeat after me and follow my lead! *Recite the “Goin’ to the Promised Land” jingle.*

Lyrics can be found on the Song Sheet at the back of this Teacher Guide.

We are going to go back to the tables now and make our own Ten Commandments to take home and share with our families. *Hold up sample wall hanger.*

Oversee an orderly way to get the children back to their seats, especially if the chairs were moved for circle time.



Ten Commandments Wall Hanger

Boys and girls, let’s all come sit down at the table. We are going to make our own copy of the Ten Commandments. We are going to color and decorate a wall hanger like this.

Hold up sample wall hanger.

Color and decorate your wall hangers however you want. Then we’re going to put pretty ribbons through the tops and you will be able to hang them at home.

MATERIALS

- Ten Commandments completed wall hanger for demonstration
- Ten Commandments wall hanger sheet, cut out for each student
- Stickers
- Yarn or ribbon of various colors
- Single hole punch
- Glue or tape
- Crayons
- Glitter glue
- Other decorations as appropriate

INSTRUCTIONS

Fold the wall hanger in half. Glue or tape the halves together. Let the children color and decorate both sides of the wall hanger. Then hole punch the top and let the children select a strand of yarn or ribbon to loop through it.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

God gave His people the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments are for us, too.

? Can we ever keep ALL of these commandments perfectly? *No!*

? Who was the only person who could do that? Who obeyed all of these perfectly? *Jesus.*

That’s right. And these commandments from God show us that we need Jesus’s help. We can’t keep them perfectly, because we are all sinners. And God has to punish all sin. But Jesus did keep all the commandments perfectly. And when Jesus died on the Cross, He took the punishment for our sin—if we call on Him to be our Savior—if we believe in Him and trust Him.



Keep Up the Commandments

MATERIALS

- Inflated balloons numbered 1 through 10

INSTRUCTIONS

Have the students get into a circle. Give each student an inflated balloon. Pick one or more students to go to the center of the circle. This child will be expected to keep all of the commandments in the air without them dropping to the floor.

These numbered balloons are the Ten Commandments. When I say “Go,” I want everyone who has a balloon to toss it into the center of the circle. The student in the middle will have to try and keep all the balloons in the air without letting them touch the floor. We’ll play this for a few minutes. *Pick different children to go to the middle of the circle. You can even pick two or more students to attempt to keep the balloons in the air. You may want all the students to participate in keeping all the balloons up.*

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

? Even though you worked very hard to keep your balloons in the air, could you keep them up forever without letting them fall?
No.

The balloons quickly fell to the ground. It was impossible to keep all the balloons in the air. The same is true of God’s Ten Commandments. We can’t keep all of them. It would be impossible.

It seems kind of hopeless, doesn’t it? God gave us the Ten Commandments, but we know we can’t keep them. So we know we sin against God. And we know that God hates sin because He is holy. And He must punish sin because He is just.

But He provided a way for us to escape the punishment we deserve—through Jesus Christ, the Savior, God’s only Son.



Memory Verse Review/Snack

Exodus 20:1–3 And God spoke all these words, saying: “I am the Lord your God . . . You shall have no other gods before Me.”

After thanking God for your snack, review the memory verse with the children while enjoying the snack for the day. You may want to use the snack as incentive to recite or repeat the memory verse.

Use the Memory Verse page in the Flip Chart. Explain the verse to the children as you go over the verse together. Say the verse and point at each picture several times. Ask the children if anyone wants to try and say it on their own.



Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

This has been a great lesson. God gave the people the Ten Commandments at Mt. Sinai. God does want us to obey and trust Him. But God knows that we can't keep His commands perfectly—no one but Jesus has ever done that. And because we can't keep His commands, we sin. God must punish our sin.

But God is rich in mercy and love. He provided a way for us to be forgiven and not be punished. That way is Jesus Christ. Jesus was perfect! And when Jesus died on the Cross He took the punishment so that whoever would turn to Him in faith would be saved and would one day rejoice in heaven with God. That is good news for us!

► Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the children to practice the memory verse this week.



Group Prayer Time

- Ask forgiveness for the sins we commit every day.
- Thank God that His laws help us see our need for Jesus.
- Ask God to reveal His truth of salvation through Jesus Christ to the children.

Do you still have more time? Review the past quarters using the Flip Charts, add another coloring page, recite and review the current and past memory verses, sing more songs, or bring out play dough. Keep the children occupied with intentional, God-centered activities until their parents come to pick them up.

Song Sheet

GOIN' TO THE PROMISED LAND

(Similar to "Goin' on a Lion Hunt" jingle for children)

Goin' to the Promised Land. *Children repeat.*
Wave goodbye.

God's on our side. *Children repeat.*
Point up to God.

We're not afraid! *Children repeat.*
Hands on hips, look brave.

What's that? *Children repeat.*
Look around with hands above eyes—scared!

Pharaoh's army! *Children repeat.*
Hands on face, look scared!

They are behind us— *Children repeat.*
Look behind you.

Red Sea is in front of us— *Children repeat.*
Look in front of you.

God will provide! *Children repeat.*
Point up to God.

Goin' to the Promised Land. *Children repeat.*
Wave goodbye.

God's on our side. *Children repeat.*
Point up to God.

We're not afraid! *Children repeat.*
Hands on hips, look brave.

What's that? *Children repeat.*
Look around—scared.

The Red Sea! *Children repeat.*
Eyes wide, look scared.

Can't go over it. *Children repeat.*
Move both arms in an upward arc.

Can't go under it. *Children repeat.*
Move both arms in a downward arc.

Have to walk THROUGH it! *Children repeat.*
March in place.

Goin' to the Promised Land. *Children repeat.*
Wave goodbye.

God's on our side. *Children repeat.*
Point up to God.

We're not afraid! *Children repeat.*
Hands on hips, look brave.

God's on our side! *Children repeat.*
Point up to God.

