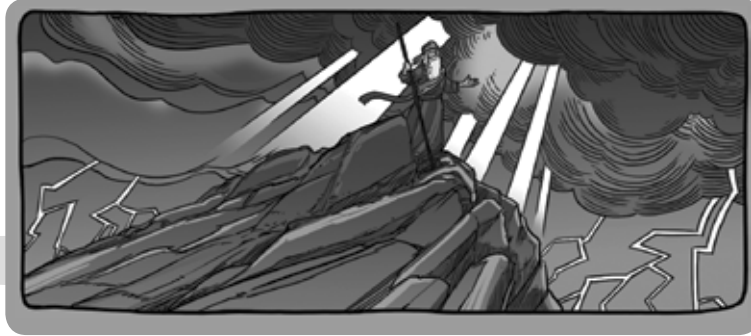


Chapter 4

Featured Story

God Gives His People the Ten Commandments
(Exodus 19:16–20:17)

We Follow the Ten Commandments



Lesson Goals

- to express that God gave us rules to keep his people safe and happy
- to recognize that the Ten Commandments are rooted in God's love for us
- to explain the difference between a sin and an accident

Lesson at a Glance

Go (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer
Engage Activity

Seek (30 minutes)

Featured Story
Core Learning Activity

Find (20 minutes)

God's Treasure of Forgiveness
Lesson Wrap-Up
Closing Prayer

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and chapter 4 activity booklet
- black markers
- white construction paper, precut to look like two Commandments tablets (Fold paper lengthwise. At the top, cut an arc. When opened, this will look like two tablets.)
- Saint Mary's Press® Big Book *Moses and the Ten Commandments* (optional)

Music Suggestions

- "Lord, I Lift Your Name on High," by CedarMont Kids (CedarMont Music, LLC)
- "The Ten Commandments Song," by The River's Voice (The River's Voice)

Background Focus

In the last session, we learned that Jesus expects that his disciples will keep his commandment of love. This commandment of love also includes following the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments, given to us by God out of love, articulate what is called "natural law": an innate and universal understanding within human beings of what is right or wrong. God's gift of the Ten Commandments codifies these innate human understandings. Saint Thomas Aquinas summarized the first principle of the natural law as: "Good is to be done and pursued, and evil is to be avoided" (*Summa Theologiae*, I-II, 94).

The Ten Commandments formed the basis of the governance of God's people as they wandered in the desert and in the more than three thousand years since. The Ten Commandments are the backbone of society as we know it. This session will help your child understand that God's rules are given out of love, to help us live safe and happy lives as his children and as loving brothers and sisters to one another.

Go (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite your child to turn to page 1 in the chapter 4 activity booklet and locate the prayer on the page.
- Begin prayer by making the Sign of the Cross, then saying, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Read the prayer together. Say "Amen," and then close with another Sign of the Cross. Have your child close the activity booklet for now.

Engage Activity

- Ask your child to write down three good rules for your family. Explain that these may be rules that are already followed (like "wash hands before eating") or they might be new rules.

- Conclude with the following or similar words:
 - We have rules for school and rules for home. God has rules too! God has rules for us because he wants to keep us safe and happy. Today we will learn more about some of the rules from God.

Seek (30 minutes)

Featured Story

- Invite your child to find Exodus 20:1–17 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (pages 131 and 134).
- Direct your child to turn the page to the Featured Story on page 132 and place an "I found it!" sticker on the page. Tell them that the words between the leaves on the page are a shortened version of the Scripture story on pages 131 and 134.
- Ask your child to look at the artwork on pages 132 and 133. Point out the man standing on the mountain. Explain that this is Moses. When God's people were slaves in Egypt, God chose Moses to lead them out of slavery.
- Invite your child to read the title of the Featured Story. Explain that long before God sent his Son, Jesus, to teach us and help us, God was teaching his people the best way to live. Tell your child that God gave us the rules we call the **Ten Commandments**.
- Before reading the Bible story on page 132, read aloud Exodus 19:16–24 on page 131. Ask your child to follow in the Bible. These verses set the scene for the giving of the Ten Commandments to Moses. Then read the Bible story aloud and ask several questions to check for comprehension, such as these:
 - Who was Moses? (*Moses was the leader of God's people.*)
 - What did God give to Moses? (*the Ten Commandments*)
 - What are some of the commandments that God gave us? (*Worship no god but me. Do not use my name for evil purposes. Observe the Sabbath. Respect your father and your mother.*)

➤ Why did God give us the Ten Commandments? (*He wants us to love him and to love ourselves and others. He wants us to be happy and peaceful together.*)

- Have your child turn to page 2 in the activity booklet and complete the activity with their Bible open. Answers: 1. *Worship*, 2. *generations*, 3. *evil*, 4. *Sabbath/holy*, 5. *Respect*, 6. *steal*, 7. *accuse*, 8. *house/donkeys*

Note: You may want to supplement this Featured Story with the Saint Mary's Press® Big Book *Moses and the Ten Commandments*.

Understand It!

- Read Understand It! on page 133, or invite your child to read.
- Invite your child to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Review these key points:
 - Rules keep us safe and happy.
 - God gave Moses, and us, the Ten Commandments so that we could be safe and happy.
 - The first three commandments teach us how to love God.
 - The next seven commandments teach us how to love other people.
- Ask your child to turn to the Ten Commandments on page 1990 in the back of *The Catholic Children's Bible*. Take turns reading each of the commandments. Point out the first three commandments about loving God and the next seven commandments about loving other people.

Live It!

- Invite your child to read Live It! on page 133, or read it aloud yourself.
- Invite your child to pray with you: "Dear God, help us to follow your commandments today and every day. Help us to love and respect you, to love and respect ourselves, and to love and respect others. Amen."

Tell It!

- Ask your child to look at and describe the images in Tell It! on page 133. (*The first frame is Moses on the mountain; the second is the people worshipping God alone; the third is a child respecting and helping his parent.*)

- Direct your child's attention to the third frame and ask, "If you could put a picture of yourself in the third frame, respecting and helping your parent, what would it show?" (*Accept reasonable responses.*)
- Have your child use some of the smaller stickers to mark parts of the Featured Story pages that capture their interest. Remind them to save enough stickers to use on the remaining chapters.

Core Learning Activity

The Ten Commandments Tablets

- Recall Jesus' teaching on the Greatest Commandment, to love God and to love others. Tell your child that the Ten Commandments are God's Laws that help us to love God and others. Explain that because we follow Jesus, we want to follow the Ten Commandments.
- Tell your child that they are going to make a reminder of the Ten Commandments. Explain that this reminder will look like the tablets that Moses brought down from the mountain.
- Give your child the construction paper "tablets." On the left-hand tablet, have your child write "LOVE GOD" in capital letters at the top. Under this, have them write the numbers 1, 2, and 3 in a row down the tablet. On the right-hand tablet, have them write "LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR" in capital letters at the top. Under this, have them write the numbers 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 in a row down the tablet. Ask your child to turn to page 1990 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* to review each of the Ten Commandments. Read a number aloud and ask your child to read the commandment; then read a commandment aloud and ask your child to say what number it is.
- Review the significance of the Ten Commandments by asking your child to share why God gave them to us. (*Responses might include: out of love; because God wants us to be safe and happy.*)
- Conclude by reminding your child that if we want to follow Jesus, we will love God, ourselves, and others as he taught us. The Ten Commandments were not just for Moses and God's people long ago. They are still God's rules today. They are the best way for us to love God, ourselves, and others.

✕ Find (20 minutes)

God's Treasure of Forgiveness

- Remind your child that Jesus wants us to love God, ourselves, and others, and that the Ten Commandments show us how to do this in ten different ways. Explain that when we fail to love as God calls us to and we sin, we can confess our sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Recall the steps covered so far in the Sacrament of Reconciliation: the priest greets us, we make the Sign of the Cross, the priest reminds us of God's mercy, and we hear the Word of God. Explain to your child that the next step is to confess, or tell, our sins to the priest.
- Help your child understand that we confess our sins to the priest because Jesus gave the power to forgive sins to the Apostles. Tell them that the Pope and bishops are the successors to the Apostles, and they receive this same power to forgive sins. A priest receives the authority to forgive sins from his bishop.
- Explain that we confess sins, not accidents, in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
 - To commit a sin, you must *know* it is a sin (something against God's Law and against love), you must *want to do it*, and you must *do it freely*.
 - An **accident** is something that you do by mistake, that you *did not intend* to happen.
- Give an example of the difference between sins and accidents.
 - If we break something in the house, like a lamp, while we are dusting the living room, that is an accident. But if we break the lamp because we are throwing a ball in the house, which a parent has told us we may not do, then we freely and deliberately disobeyed by throwing the ball.
 - We may not have wanted to break the lamp, but we did want to throw the ball. The broken lamp was a direct result of our decision to throw the ball. We may need to help replace the lamp. We always need to make up in some way for any damage we cause because of our sins, whether it is hurt feelings or damaged property.

- Invite your child to turn to page 3 in the activity booklet and complete the activity. *Answers:*
1. *Yes, Sam disobeyed. No, this was an accident, but it was a consequence of throwing the ball. Sam should confess the entire incident and will need to make up for the broken lamp in some way.* 2. *Yes, Crissie disobeyed.* 3. *No, this was an accident.*
- If time permits, you may want to discuss the following two situations:
 1. After supper it was homework time. Lydia told her mom, "I don't have any homework." Even though Lydia had a spelling pretest tomorrow, she wanted to play video games instead of studying. Did Lydia commit a sin?
Answer: Yes, she lied to her mother.
 2. Jill walks home from school every day with her sixth-grade neighbor, Jason. Jason saw some flowers in a yard. Jason said, "Hey, Jill, go over there and pick those flowers so I can give them to my mom." Jill said, "I don't want to! That's stealing!" Jason said, "If you don't, I won't walk you home anymore and you will have to cross the highway by yourself." So Jill picked the flowers that Jason wanted. Did Jason commit a sin?
Answer: Yes, he bullied Jill and told her to do something wrong.

Did Jill commit a sin?
Answer: No, she was coerced by Jason. She told him it was wrong, but he threatened her. She did not make a free decision to pick the flowers.

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite your child to think back over all of the different things they did in this lesson, and invite them to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input, and write answers on a piece of paper.

- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the paper, and circle them:
 - God gave us rules to keep his people safe and happy.
 - The Ten Commandments are rooted in God's love for us.
 - There are differences between a sin and an accident.
- Ask your child to place the chapter 4 sticker in the correct circle on the treasure map.



Closing Prayer

- Begin the prayer by making the Sign of the Cross, then saying, "Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God," followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Invite your child to turn to page 1995 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*, then pray the Act of Contrition together.
- You may want to play a piece of music, if you have time, on the theme of listening to God or the Ten Commandments.
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Family Suggestions

For additional ideas, activities, and prayers that can be used by your family for this chapter, please refer to the Family Page on page 4 of this chapter's activity booklet.