

GOD IS FIRST

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

TEN COMMANDMENTS COMMAND DECREES FIRST GOD GODS

BIBLICAL REFERENCE

Exodus 20:1-11; 32:1-34

MEMORY VERSE

“Obey the Lord your God and follow his commands and decrees that I give you today” (Deuteronomy 27:10, NIV*).

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help children learn what it means to put God first in their lives.

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

The first four commandments (Exodus 20:1-11) instruct us on our relationship with God. When Moses presented to Israel the 10 Commandments that God had given him, it symbolized the beginning of the relationship of the Lord with his people through a series of standards that expressed what his will for his children would be. Exodus 32:1-34. The story of the golden calf shows how quickly the people forgot what God had done for them. These people are annoyed and distressed because their leader, Moses, was gone. The request that they made, “Come, make us gods who will go before us,” did not necessarily mean that the Israelites were rejecting God, they wanted something visible to represent him and give them confidence.

Moses, the pillar of fire, and the cloud met this need; but the people had not seen Moses for forty days and thought he would never return. Aaron granted Israel’s request and built a golden calf for the people to worship. They also built an altar to the new god and they offered sacrifices. The Israelites were very happy to have the golden calf to worship, proclaiming that it was who brought them out of Egypt.

God was very angry because of the sin of his people and asked Moses to leave so that he could destroy them, but Moses sought God’s favor for the people. This moment in the history of the Israelite people is evidence of their lack of faith and commitment.

Tell your children that to put God first should be a priority in our lives and that, as Christians, our goal should be to please him with our actions and words.

ADAPTATION

Most of your children, especially those who have grown up in the church, know that one of the commandments is not to worship false gods. However, this commandment refers not only to idols made by men, but also to other aspects of life.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Welcome your children and make them feel appreciated. Ask the group: "Who likes to travel or go for a walk?" (listen for their responses) Then say: "I like that when I travel, whether in our town or to another town there are signs along the road that guide me." Then ask: "Can anyone tell me what signs I might see?" (Let the children participate and tell what signs they have seen, such as: stop signs, danger signs, use your seat belt signs, etc.)

Emphasize the idea that all these signs are rules that must be obeyed. Ask: "Why do you think these signs help us?" (Wait for their answers.) Then, explain that they help us to reach our destination and warn us of possible dangers. If we obey them, we will have a good trip and be safe. Mention that in the same way, God has given us a set of rules that we call "Commandments" and they help us to live as he wants us to.

If possible, on a piece of paper or poster board write the word "Commandment" in large letters and stick it up in a prominent place in your meeting area. Tell children that during this unit they will learn about the commandments God gave to his people.

TEACH THE LESSON

Before class time, read Exodus 20:1-11; 32:1-34 and be ready to tell the story in your own words. Also, look for drawings of a golden calf to help illustrate the story to the children.

Start the Bible story by describing to your children the situation that the people of Israel were going through. It had been many months since the Israelites had left Egypt. They had been walking in the desert for a long time and God had demonstrated many times that he was always protecting them. However, the people were continuously complaining and God had heard them.

Now they were at the foot of Mount Sinai. Moses climbed the mountain to receive the commandments God had for his people. After forty days, the Israelites thought Moses had died and they began to ask Aaron for a god.

If possible, show children illustrations of the golden calf and explain what the people did to worship the golden calf. Emphasize the fact that the Israelites were not giving God the place he deserved, and they had forgotten all the miracles they had seen since leaving Egypt.

Ask, "Can you imagine how God felt when he saw what his people were doing?"

"Do you think the people deserved God's forgiveness?" Give them time to answer and reflect on the importance of being thankful and loyal to God.

While you tell the Bible story, allow your children to see you are using your Bible. It is important that they understand that these teachings are found in the Word of God.

CONNECT THE LESSON

Write a story

Give your children Student Activity Sheet #111-A. Read together the four commandments that are written there and ask, "Which picture reminds you of the Bible story? Why was it wrong for the people of God to worship the golden calf?"

Then give them some time to create stories about obeying and disobeying God.

Pictures and letters

Have them turn to Student Activity Sheet #111-B, and give them time to complete the code, filling in the blanks that paraphrase the Bible verse, "Obey the Lord your God and follow his commands and decrees" (Deuteronomy 27:10).

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

[Download Additional Memory Verse Activities PDF](#)

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On notecards or pieces of paper, write the words of the Bible memory verse (Deuteronomy 27:10) putting one word on each card. Then hide them around the classroom before the children arrive.

When the lesson is over, tell them that they will learn a new verse for this unit, but it is lost. Have them look for the cards and bring them to the front. As they find the cards, put them in order on the board and repeat the Bible verse together. Use these cards throughout the unit as a tool for memorizing the verse.

WRAP-UP

Pray

Ask them if they have any prayer requests and pray for them. Remember, during this unit, we are asking for the guidance of the Holy Spirit to give opportunities to present the plan of salvation to your children, and to give the invitation to children who have not made the decision to accept Christ as their Savior.

Ask: "Would you like Jesus to be your Savior and best Friend and would you like to begin to live as a child of God?"

Say: "It is easy!"

A: Admit that I have sinned and I need God to forgive me and to help me change.

B: Believe that God loves me and sent his only Son, Jesus, so I can be forgiven.

C: Receive Jesus as my Savior and claim my new identity as a child of God."

Ask: "Would you like to pray with me as I pray for you?"

If the response is "Yes," say the following, phrase by phrase, and with the child repeating your words: "Dear God, thank You for loving me and sending Jesus to earth. Thank You for allowing Jesus to die for the things that I have done wrong and for raising him to life again. I am sorry that I have disobeyed You. Please forgive me. I want Jesus to always be with me. Help me to obey You every day. I believe You love me and you have forgiven me. Thank You for making me your child. I believe that You will be with me forever! Amen."

Tell the child: "When Jesus is our Savior, he will always be with us. He will help us to live the way that God wants us to live. Romans 12:2 says, 'Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.' Living for God means that we will act differently toward others than we did before. We will want to know his will and do things that please him. We will want to be kind and loving. We will talk to God in prayer and listen to God in his Word. This is how we grow as God's friend."

In your own words, tell the child how excited you are that he/ she is now a child of God. Let the child know that you will keep praying. Invite the child to come to church. Tell the child that it will be important to learn more about God through reading the Bible and by talking to him through prayer. Make sure that you inform child's other leaders that the child made a decision to become a Christian so that others in the church can follow up with this precious new believer and the child's family.

Encourage

Encourage the children to put into practice, during the week, what they learned today. Return the works they did. Remember, during this unit, we are asking for the guidance of the Holy Spirit to give opportunities to present the plan of salvation to your children, and to give the invitation to children who have not made the decision to accept Christ as their Savior.

Invite

Before dismissing the children, invite them to come to the next session and to bring a friend.