

8th Grade Homestudy Lesson #2

Live Free

GOAL

The goal of this lesson is to show you how the Ten Commandments are God-given steps to teach you how to live freely.

The Ten Commandments

1. I am the Lord your God, you shall not have any other gods before me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
3. Keep holy the Lord's day.
4. Honor your father and mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's possessions.

MAIN IDEAS

- The Ten Commandments came directly from God, not as punishments but as steps toward true freedom.
- Christ and the Church reaffirm that living out the Ten Commandments is the best way to love God, our neighbors, and ourselves.
- Because the Ten Commandments speak to deep moral truths, they can never be outdated or irrelevant.

TEACHING

RULES, RULES, RULES

Imagine waking up and finding yourself at home alone with no rules to follow. How would you spend that day. Now imagine that this no rules scenario continued. What consequences might you encounter? (E.g., If you stopped doing chores, the house would become messy.) We may not always like them, but rules are important. They show us how to respect and care for others and ourselves. Likewise, our faith has rules to show us how to best love God, others, and ourselves. Without rules in our faith, we are merely guessing at how to be good and holy. The Ten Commandments show us how to follow God.

God used Moses to lead the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt. But the Israelites still struggled to understand how to follow God even though they were free from the Egyptians' harsh rules, and

all they had to do was trust God. **But without clear direction, it was difficult to trust God.** Journeying toward the Promised Land, the Israelites made many poor decisions that showed they were not trusting of or grateful to God or even Moses. **But God wanted the Israelites to live in true freedom as His people! He knew that, despite their mistakes and complaints, His freedom would give them true happiness.**

GOD RULES

Read Exodus 20:1-17

What did you learn from this Bible story?

How was God speaking to you through this Bible story?

God's solution was to give the Israelites the Ten Commandments to help them follow and trust Him. The Ten Commandments are sometimes called the "Decalogue." Decalogue literally means "ten words," reminding us the Ten Commandments are the Word of God, given directly to us.

(CCC 2056)

The Decalogue is so important that God physically wrote them Himself! Exodus 31 tells us that God gives Moses two stone tablets that have the Ten Commandments on them, "written with the finger of God." (CCC 2056, 2058). God places this emphasis on the Ten Commandments because they reveal who He is — a God who is love and calls us to love. With the Decalogue, the Israelites can now clearly see God's will. He is asking for a relationship; He offers His love and life to the Israelites, asking them to follow the commandments, His rules for love, in return.

CCC 2059-2062

The Ten Commandments invite the Israelites to think in a totally new way. Their minds are stuck on their slavery in Egypt and their journey to the Promised Land. **But with the Decalogue, God is trying to save them from a different kind of slavery — the slavery of sin — and lead them on another journey down the path of life.**

Read CCC 2057

PLAYING BY GOD'S RULES

The story of the commandments does not end there. Some people dismiss the commandments as ancient rules. **But as moral truths that "sum up and proclaim God's law," the commandments go beyond one group of people and one time in history.** (CCC 2058, 2063).

The Ten Commandments continue with us. Jesus affirms this many times, even in His first big

3. Why do you think the Ten Commandments are so important to our faith?

4. Which commandment could you do a better job following?

5. Which commandment do you think you follow well? Why?

6. As Christians, we are meant to follow the Ten Commandments “always and everywhere.”
What are some ways we can remind ourselves to follow the commandments?

7. Do you look to the Ten Commandments when you make a tough decision? Why or why not?

8. Which commandment do you think is most important for youth today?

9. How is the freedom God offers different from the freedom the world offers?

SEND

10 Commandments Reflection

Take a few moments to contemplate the importance of each commandment. How does this commandment help to maximize freedom in your life?

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