

# We Love God When We Keep the Lord's Day

**Objective:** The students will (1) review the story of how God called the Israelites to be His people and gave them commandments, and (2) learn and be able to recite the first three commandments that identify an appropriate response to God for all He has given.

## *For the Catechist*

In this lesson the children begin their study of the Ten Commandments. The study comprises this and the next two lessons. These lessons are very important and rather full. The story of the giving of the Ten Commandments was placed in lesson 15, "We Are Called to Be God's People." A commandment is a law given to show us how to grow in love with God and one another.

When the Israelites left Egypt (the Exodus), they had little knowledge of their God. They knew they were descended from the line of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob-Israel, and that they worshiped the God of their fathers. When Moses led them out of slavery and God provided the many miracles of the journey (water from the rock, manna in the desert), they began to realize the greatness of their God and the honor due to Him. They were anxious to know how to please the God who had saved them.

**Covenant.** God chose to make a covenant with His people. Covenants were common in the time of the Exodus as binding relationships between conquerors and conquered, between one who is greater and one who is weaker. The one who is greater dictates the terms of the covenant. For his part, he will provide care and protection. The weaker one must abide by the covenant to continue to receive protection.

**Ten Commandments.** The Ten Commandments are the cornerstone of God's covenant with His people. However, there is much more to what transpired at the making of the covenant, and many more rules. (See Exodus 20-23.) The Ten Commandments follow the typical covenant form. First, the relationship of the weaker to the greater is defined. So, in

## *Lesson Plan Overview*

**Opening:** Greatest Commandment **Need:** Greatest Commandment worksheet placed at icon corner for children to read and memorize.

**Introduction:** Discussion of what God has given us and what we give back to God. **Need:** Large photos of food, clothing, nature, car, toys, etc. from magazines. Icon of Christ. Exodus visual aid, provided. use also those from lesson 15.

**Read Text Aloud:** Have students read text aloud.

### *Activity Tracks:*

Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

- *Basic:* I Love God
- *Group:* "Exodus and Ten Commandments"  
Interactive Story Circle
- *Craft :* Commandment" Folding Cards

**Closing:** We Have Seen the True Light

## *Come Bless the Lord Icon Packets:*

Packet I:

Packet II:

## *Teaching Pic:*

#DL6 Blessed is the Kingdom

the first three commandments we see the Israelites being told where they stand in relationship to God, for example, "You shall not have any other Gods." In the final seven we see the rules that must determine their day to day activities. To keep God's protection, the Israelites agreed to follow the Ten Commandments. The covenant is ratified by a sacrifice and the sprinkling of blood. (See Exodus 24:7-8.) This is a foreshadowing of the new covenant in Jesus Christ ratified by his sacrifice on the cross.

Just as the Israelites wanted to do what was pleasing to the God who saved them, so must we. This is an important point to remember in presenting God's rules. God has given us so much and loves us, we want to do what is pleasing to God.

## ***Background Reading***

*(Direct quotations from the sources noted.)*

### **God of the Covenant**

"The story of the Old Testament tells of the relationship entered into between God and His people. This relationship was called a 'covenant,' or solemn agreement, rather like a formal treaty. Of the various covenants in the Old Testament, the greatest one is the covenant made with the Israelites through the prophet Moses. On this occasion the people were liberated by God from slavery in Egypt and were led to a promised land. In return they were to worship the one, true God and they were given the Ten Commandments and the Law, as recorded in the first five books of the Bible.

"Of the other covenants the one with Adam declared that human beings would be given paradise and friendship with God if they would not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The covenant with Noah declared that God would never again destroy the world by a flood. The covenant with Abraham testified that God would make Abraham the father of a great nation, if in turn his male children and descendants would be circumcised" (*LLI 36-37*).

### **The Ten Commandments**

"The Jews of Jesus' day were reared on the Law of Moses which governed so many aspects of their lives. The heart of this Law is, of course, the Ten Commandments which Jewish tradition understood as commands to love. Thus the scholar questioned by Jesus described the greatest commandment as the one to love God above all and love your neighbor as yourself.

"The Lord confirmed this view when He told the scholar, 'You have answered rightly; do this and you will live' (Luke 10:28). And so, keeping the Ten Commandments—understood as invitations to love—remains the first step in following Christ. We respond to the love God has poured out on us by becoming loving people in turn" (*Celebrating Forgiveness 14*).

### **The First Three Commandments**

"The basic expressions of love for God are found in the first three commandments. We are to give God what is His due: He alone is to be God, to be first in our lives. Nothing else, even something religious, is to receive the worship due to God alone. Otherwise, it becomes an idol. The Lord's name is not to be used casually but to be given the respect due to the Holy One. The Lord's Day is to be kept holy: to be set apart for Him. This is the beginning of loving God" (*Celebrating Forgiveness 14*).

# The Lesson Plan

## Opening

[Gather at the icon corner.] *Last week we learned that the Greatest Commandment is You shall love God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength, and love your neighbor as yourself. This teaching of Jesus will light our way through life. Jesus is our Light. If we learn to live as this commandment teaches us, we are on our way to meet the Father.*

## Introduction

[Scatter photos and icon of Christ on table.] *What are all of these?* [Repeat question. Allow responses.] *These all have something in common. What are they all?*

*These are all things we enjoy. These are all blessings from God. God has given us so many good things. What is God's best gift? (Jesus Christ) God cares about us and loves us.*

[Use visual aids as appropriate.] *Long ago, God called a people to be His own. We learned about this in lesson 15. The people became known as the Israelites. They were descendants of Abraham. They were slaves in Egypt. What is a slave? (One who is forced to work for another) They were God's people, and He no longer wanted them to be slaves. He called on Moses to lead the people out of slavery. Moses went to the king of the Egyptians, called the Pharaoh, and said, "Let my people go!" The pharaoh said, "No." Then God called down 10 plagues on the people of Egypt; one was a drought where all the crops dried up and there was no food. Finally, the Pharaoh let the people go. They made it to the Red Sea, and God opened a path through the sea for them to cross. Pharaoh sent soldiers after them; and when they tried to cross the Red Sea, it closed up and they drowned. God's people were finally free. They were so happy. They began their journey to the promised land where they would live. It would take them 40 years to get there.*

*They loved their God. They wanted to know how to please their God. One day during the journey, God called Moses to a high mountain, Mount Sinai. He told Moses 10 rules that the people must follow to be God's people. These became the 10 Commandments. The people were very happy. Now they knew what they must do for the God who had given them so much.*

*God has given us so much. God cares about us. We, too, want to please God. Like the Israelites we, too, follow God's rules.*



## Reading of Text

*As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).*

**They wanted to follow God's rules.**

*Why did God's people want to please Him? (He had rescued them from slavery and given them new life.)*

**Do you remember how God gave the Ten Commandments?**

*The Lord called Moses to the mountain. When Moses went on the mountain, a cloud covered it. Moses stayed for 40 days and nights. He came back with two stone tablets on which were written the Ten Commandments.*

**Nothing must be more important to us than God.**

*Let's say that all together . . . That is what the commandment means. What does the first commandment say? ("I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before Me.") Let's try that all together.*

**We should say God's name only when we are speaking to or about God.**

*Let's have two people read that again . . .*

*That is what the commandment means. What does the second commandment say? ("You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain.") Let's try that all together.*

**We keep it holy by going to church.**

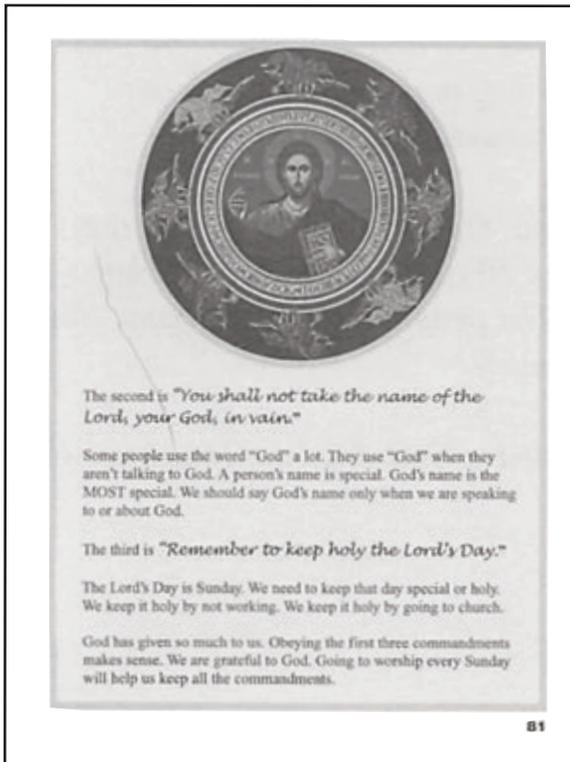
*What is the third commandment? ("Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.") Which day is the Lord's Day? (Sunday) Even if we go to church during the week, we must go to church on Sunday. Sunday is the Lord's Day.*

**Going to worship every Sunday will help us keep all the commandments better.**

*When we go to church, we remember that God wants us to live united to Him. We remember that the Commandments tell us how we are to live.*

**We worship when we bow.**

*Name three ways we worship. (When we sing, bow, and make the sign of the cross.)*



## You are saying "Yes!" to God.

When you place God first, you are in church on Sunday.  
When you obey God's commandments, you are saying "Yes." God has given us so much. It is only right that we obey His commandments. Let's all say "Yes" to God.  
Ready, "YES!"

**Let's review.** Why is it only right to obey God's commandments? (He has given us so much.) Now, who can tell me one of the commandments we learned today? [Repeat for all three, and question students as to what they mean.]



When we go to church, we worship God. We worship when we sing. We worship when we make the sign of the cross. We worship when we bow.

When we go to church, we fulfill God's third commandment. At the Divine Liturgy we remember all God has done for us. At the Divine Liturgy we receive God through His Word. We receive God in Holy Communion. God wants us in church.

The Greatest Commandment tells us first: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength." The first three commandments tell us how we can respect and love God.

God must be **FIRST** in importance in our lives. When you keep the Lord's Day, you are saying God is first. You are saying "Yes!" to God.



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## Activity Tracks

### Basic: I Love God

Today we learned that God loves His people. God has given us so much. We learned that God gave the Israelites their freedom. In return they wanted to know how to please God, and He gave them the 10 Commandments. Let's use this worksheet to review what we learned.

### I Love God

Draw a line to the phrase that completes the sentence in the group above and then in the group below.

1. God has given us  You shall not have strange gods before Me.
2. We say "Yes" to God when  we follow God's rules.
3. We follow  to us than God.
4. The first is "I am the Lord your God."  many good things.
5. Nothing must be more important  the Ten Commandments.

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6. The second is "You shall not take the name of the Lord,"  holy the Lord's Day."
7. We should say God's name  your God, in vain."
8. The third is "Remember to keep"  when I follow God's rules.
9. We keep the Lord's Day holy  by going to church.
10. I say "Yes" to God  only when we are speaking to or about God.

**Group:** "Exodus and Ten Commandments" Interactive Story Circle

*Today we reviewed how Moses received the Ten Commandments. The Exodus and the Ten Commandments stories are wonderful. Do you remember when we did the Reader Theatre? We'll continue the story today but we will act.*

[Determine how many students you'll want for Israelites, soldiers, and the sea.]  
*Here is how we'll tell the story. Think about how you will play your parts. [As you tell story, stop at pauses and have students explain how they can enact each scene. Read the scene again with students coming to the circle center to enact.]*

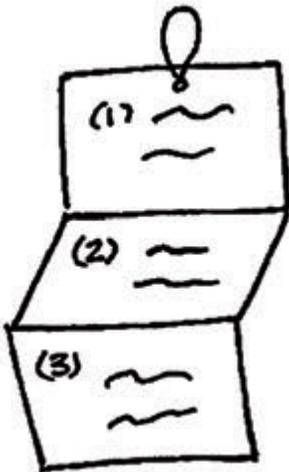
*After the 10th plague the Pharaoh told Moses, "Take your people and leave Egypt!" [Pause: Moses and Pharaoh]*

*Moses gathered the people and headed to the Red Sea. When he got there, he turned around and saw that the Pharaoh had sent soldiers to bring them back. How would they get across the sea? [Pause: Moses, Israelites, Red Sea]*

*God told Moses to go to a high mountain and to raise his staff. Moses did so. The sea parted in the middle. The Israelites were able to cross through the sea. When the soldiers followed, the sea closed in and swallowed them. [Pause: Moses, Israelites, Red Sea, soldiers]*

*God had saved His people once again! Later, during the 40 years in the desert, God called Moses to a high mountain. He told Moses He wanted the Israelites to be His people. These were the conditions. He gave Moses the 10 Commandments. [Pause: Moses]*

*When Moses returned, he found that the people had made an idol to worship—a golden calf. Moses was so upset, he smashed the tablets on which God had written the 10 Commandments. Later the people learned to worship only the God who had saved them. They learned to love God's commandments. [Pause: Moses, Israelites, golden calf.]*



**Craft:** "Ten Commandment Unfolding Cards," Part I

*Materials:* Index cards (10 per student), glue stick, scissors, "Commandments 1-3" worksheet, baggie for each child's project, masking tape, hole punch, ribbon.)

*Today we began our study of the 10 Commandments. I would like you to know these by heart. We'll make some unfolding cards to help us remember. Today we'll cut and paste the first three commandments. We'll tape them together and fold them accordion style. We'll hole punch the first card and place a ribbon through so you can hang these in your room. Each of you gets a baggie to use for your project.*

**Closing:** *Let's pray "We Have Seen the True Light."*

# *The Greatest Commandment*

*You shall love the Lord  
your God*

*with all your heart, with  
all your soul,*

*with all your mind, and  
with all you strength,*

*and you shall love your  
neighbor as yourself.*





*1) I am the Lord, your  
God, you shall not have  
strange gods before Me.*

*2) You shall not take the  
name of the Lord, your  
God, in vain.*

*3) Keep holy the Lord's  
Day.*