

The Ten Commandments

Lesson At-a-Glance

Scripture Reference
Exodus 20:1-17

Lesson Focus
**God teaches us how to love God
and one another.**

Bible Memory Verse
**"I am the LORD your God . . . you
shall have no other gods before
me." Exodus 20:2a, 3**

Gather (10 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Arrival Activity Kids make mountains out of play dough.	Spark Activity Pages, Spark Coloring Pages	Play dough
Circle Time Kids pretend to climb a mountain and take in the majestic view.	Spark Song CD, Spark Songbook	Music source, mountains from Arrival Activity, pictures of mountains
Opening Prayer Kids say a ten-part prayer asking God to help them show love to God and others.	None	None

Open the Bible (15 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
The Ten Commandments Story Kids learn the commandments by playing bingo.	Spark Story Bibles, Spark NRSV Bibles	None
Mount Horeb Bingo Kids identify with the Israelites by tracing their footprints in the Red Sea seabed.	Leaflets, reproducible bingo squares	Scissors, glue sticks, bingo markers

Activate Faith (15 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
<p>The Eleventh Commandment Kids create additional commandments for showing love to God and others.</p>	Leaflets, Spark Bible Stickers	Pencils, markers or crayons
<p>Sort It Out Kids will decide whether a commandment teaches how to be in relationship with God or with one another.</p>	None	Painter's tape

Send (5 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
<p>Closing Conversation Kids review the Bible Memory Verse and look at Faith on the Go.</p>	Leaflets	None
<p>Closing Prayer Kids say thank you to God for teaching us how to live.</p>	Family Pages	None

Introduction

Bible Background

This text includes the Ten Commandments, which God gave to Moses on Mount Sinai. The commandments were presented to the people of Israel as they wandered in the wilderness after escaping from slavery in Egypt. Just prior to this, in Exodus 19:5, God announces through Moses that if the Israelites, having seen what God has done for them, obey God and keep God's covenant, they will be set aside as "a priestly kingdom and a holy nation" to the rest of the world. The Ten Commandments establish a framework for the relationship between God and God's chosen people.

While these are commonly called the Ten Commandments, they are not numbered in the Bible and are broken down differently by different translations. This can cause some confusion. You may or may not want to point it out to the kids, but you'll want to be aware as we often talk about how commandments 1-3 are about our relationship with God, while commandments 4-10 are about our relationship with one another. In the case of the Spark Story Bible, it's 1-4, and 5-10.

Why This Story Matters

We live in complex times and polarized communities. Kids experience this on a daily basis in a variety of settings: home, school, church, teams, and more. They need guidance in how they are to relate to God and one another. The Ten Commandments teach kids who God is, how they are to be in relationship with God, and how to live peacefully in community with each other.

Gather (10 minutes)

Arrival Activity

If some kids arrive earlier than others and you need a lesson-based activity, make copies of the Activity Page and Coloring Page, and set them out for kids to try.

Good morning! Welcome to Sunday school. While we're waiting for everyone to get here, we're going to build mountains out of play dough. They don't have to be sharp and pointy. They can be rounded or jagged. Be creative in making your mountain.

Spark Resources

Spark Activity Pages
Spark Coloring Pages

Supplies

Play dough

Circle Time

Does anyone want to show us the mountain you made? Encourage kids of all ages to share what they made. You can also show pictures of different mountains. **Mountains come in all shapes and sizes and can be found all over the world. Have any of you ever climbed a mountain?** Accept answers. **Let's pretend we're climbing a mountain.** Kids get up and mime climbing up a steep mountain. Pretend to be out of breath and exhausted. **Wow! This is tiring! Is anyone else exhausted? We're almost to the top! Just a little further!** Stop and pretend to look out over the view from the top. **Wow! What an incredible view! How do you feel having made it all the way up here?** Accept answers. **Some people talk about having a "mountaintop experience." It means feeling really excited and happy and close to God.**

In our story today, Moses climbed up a mountain called Mount Sinai and talked to God for a long, long time. While Moses was up there, God gave him a list of laws for the Israelites. We call some of those laws the Ten Commandments. What do you think those laws are for? If the kids have trouble coming up with ideas, encourage them to think about some of the rules and laws in their classrooms, at home, or in the community to give them clues. **The Ten Commandments teach us how we show love for God and how we can live in peace with each other. We're going to learn all about them today.**

MUSIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Song 1: "The B-I-B-L-E" (tracks 5 and 22 on Spark Song CD, page 28 in Spark Songbook)

Song 2: Piggyback song to the tune of "She'll Be Comin' Round the Mountain"

Verse 1 - God called Moses up the mountain, yes God did. (2x)

God called Moses up the mountain (3x), yes God did.

Verse 2 - There God gave him Ten Commandments, yes God did. (etc.)

Verse 3 - Moses went back down the mountain, yes he did. (etc.)

Verse 4 - Gave the people God's commandments, yes he did. (etc.)

Verse 5 - Now we all can live together, yes we can! (etc.)

Opening Prayer

We're going to say a prayer with ten parts asking God to teach us how to show love to God and each other. We can either say, "God, help me show you love by (insert your idea here)" or "God, help me show others love by (insert your idea here)." I'll start, and we'll go around until we have said ten things. Help me count! If kids get stuck, you can offer suggestions that they can repeat, or you can pray and have the kids count.

God, help me show you love by reading the Bible (praying, coming to church, etc.). **God, help me show others love by sharing my things** (being kind, listening to my parents, etc.).

Amen!

Spark Resources

Spark Song CD

Spark Songbook

Supplies

Music source

Mountains from Arrival
Activity

Pictures of mountains

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

None

Open the Bible (15 minutes)

The Ten Commandments Story

Invite kids with Spark NRSV Bibles to each find and sit with a buddy with a Spark Story Bible.

Even though the Ten Commandments aren't actually numbered in the Bible, we're going to shout the numbers out together the way they're written in the Spark Story Bible. When I hold up my fingers, shout out the number together.

Read the story, holding up your fingers before reading each commandment.

Now we are going to open our Bibles and find this story.

Invite the older kids to look up the story in their Spark NRSV Bibles on pages 81-82, and the younger kids to find The Ten Commandments on page 94-99 in the Spark Story Bible. Older kids can help younger kids when they have found their own pages.

Look through the story in the Spark Story Bible together, and count the number of commandments. Pause. **Older kids, show your buddies where the story is in your Bible, and notice how the commandments are not separated out or numbered.**

God gave Moses the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. Older kids, turn to map M5 in the back of your Spark NRSV Bible. With your buddy, find Mount Sinai. Wait until kids have found it. **What does it say underneath "Mount Sinai" in parentheses? Mount Sinai actually has several names in the Bible. Mount Horeb is one of them.**

Bible Memory Verse

"I am the LORD your God . . . you shall have no other gods before me." Exodus 20:2a, 3

We will work on our Bible Memory Verse at the end of today's lesson so we have enough time to play Mount Horeb Bingo! Invite kids to mark this verse with a Spark Bible Sticker.

Mount Horeb Bingo

We're going to start learning the Ten Commandments by playing Mount Horeb Bingo. On the front of your leaflet is a blank bingo board, or in this case, a HOREB board. I'm going to give you a bunch of squares with the commandments written on them. Paste them into the blanks to make your board. Make sure not to put the same commandment in a column more than once. Older buddies, help your younger buddies make their boards. Give each pair of buddies a pile of precut commandment squares. Circulate to make sure the kids all have five different commandments in each vertical column. When everyone is finished, use the Reproducible Bingo Squares II squares to draw out of a basket and play the game.

Spark Resources

Spark NRSV Bibles
Spark Story Bibles

Supplies

None

Spark Resources

Leaflets
Reproducible Bingo Squares

Supplies

Glue sticks
Bingo markers

Invite kids to read and discuss the Bible Bits together.

Activate Faith (15 minutes)

God's Hands, Our Hands

Now that you've heard the Ten Commandments a few times, talk to your buddy and see if you can come up with a few more commandments that weren't on the original list. They can be serious or silly, but they have to be rules about how to show love to God or other people. Write or draw one of the commandments on your own leaflet. Then trade leaflets with your buddy and write or draw another one on theirs. After the kids have finished, invite them to share the commandments they came up with.

Ask for volunteers to read the Did You Know? items aloud. Invite kids to place a sticker or special mark next to the item they found the most interesting.

Spark Resources

Leaflets
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies

Pencils, markers or crayons

Sort It Out

Before class, create two large circles on the floor next to each other. In one, using tape, write the word "God." In the other, write the word "Others."

The Ten Commandments can be divided into two groups. The first group teaches us how we are supposed to treat God. The second group teaches us how to treat each other. I'm going to read either a commandment from the Bible or another rule or idea, and you're going to figure out which category it goes in. When you decide, jump into the correct circle. Help the younger kids who may not be readers to know which circle is which. If necessary, have them work with their buddy from the leaflet activities.

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Painter's tape

Here we go!

- **I am God, the only God.**
- **Don't take your brother's Halloween candy.**
- **Read the Bible.**
- **Be loyal to your husband or wife.**
- **Go to church on Sunday.**
- **Have no other gods.**
- **Don't wish you had your friends' things.**
- **Don't hurt others with words or actions.**
- **Listen to your mom and dad.**
- **Don't use God's name with bad words.**
- **Share your toys.**
- **Pray.**
- **Respect your teachers and coaches.**
- **Don't lie about people.**
- **Be happy with what you have.**
- **Hug your friends.**
- **Go to Sunday school.**
- Feel free to make up any other ones you can think of and/or add one or two the kids came up with in the Eleventh Commandment activity.

Send (5 minutes)

Closing Conversation

Everyone grab your leaflet and find the Faith on the Go ideas. Let's read them out loud together. Take volunteers to read. **Who wants to share one idea they think they can do this week?** Encourage both older kids and younger kids to share.

Let's practice our Bible Memory Verse for today. Ask a volunteer to read it from his or her leaflet. Read a short section and have the kids repeat it. Then say it together as a group. Challenge the kids to say it by themselves.

Spark Resources
Leaflets

Supplies
None

Closing Prayer

Distribute Family Page to kids and point out Family Conversations #2 and #3.

These are really good ones to think about. Ask your family about them at the dinner table.

No matter how you count them, the commandments all add up to helping us living a great life as God's children. Let's pretend we're climbing a mountain again and say a prayer with each big step, thanking God for teaching us how to live.

When we reach the top, we'll all throw up our hands and shout "AMEN!" Mime climbing up the mountain as you pray, pretending to be out of breath.

Loving God, thank you for teaching us that you are our God. Thank you for teaching us to use your name with love. Thank you for teaching us to rest with you. Thank you for teaching us to love our families. Thank you for teaching us not to hurt others. Thank you for teaching us to love our spouses. Thank you for teaching us not to take things that aren't ours. Thank you for teaching us to tell the truth. Thank you for teaching us to be happy with what we have. We made it! We're at the top! One, two, three: AMEN!

As you say goodbye to kids, make sure they take home their leaflets and Family Pages.

Spark Resources
Spark Family Pages

Supplies
None

Reproducible Bingo Squares 1 (for use by kids in making bingo boards)

Print enough sheets so that each kid can have 24 squares. Cut them out in advance so there is enough time to create their bingo boards and play the game at least once. Kids will have multiples of the same commandment, and should make sure to paste no more than one of the same commandment in the same column.

I am God, the only God.	Have no other gods.	Don't use God's name with bad words.	Take a day each week to spend with God.	Respect your mom and dad and others who take care of you.
Don't hurt others with words or actions.	Be loyal to your spouse.	Don't steal.	Always tell the truth about others.	Be happy with what you have.
I am God, the only God.	Have no other gods.	Don't use God's name with bad words.	Take a day each week to spend with God.	Respect your mom and dad and others who take care of you.
Don't hurt others with words or actions.	Be loyal to your spouse.	Don't steal.	Always tell the truth about others.	Be happy with what you have.
I am God, the only God.	Have no other gods.	Don't use God's name with bad words.	Take a day each week to spend with God.	Respect your mom and dad and others who take care of you.
Don't hurt others with words or actions.	Be loyal to your spouse.	Don't steal.	Always tell the truth about others.	Be happy with what you have.

Reproducible Bingo Squares 2 (for use by teacher in drawing numbers for bingo)

Cut all squares and put into a basket or bowl. Mix thoroughly. Draw out one at a time for Mount Horeb Bingo.

H I am God, the only God.	H Have no other gods.	H Don't use God's name with bad words.	H Take a day each week to spend with God.	H Respect your mom and dad and others who take care of you.
H Don't hurt others with words or actions.	H Be loyal to your spouse.	H Don't steal.	H Always tell the truth about others.	H Be happy with what you have.
O I am God, the only God.	O Have no other gods.	O Don't use God's name with bad words.	O Take a day each week to spend with God.	O Respect your mom and dad and others who take care of you.
O Don't hurt others with words or actions.	O Be loyal to your spouse.	O Don't steal.	O Always tell the truth about others.	O Be happy with what you have.
R I am God, the only God.	R Have no other gods.	R Don't use God's name with bad words.	R Take a day each week to spend with God.	R Respect your mom and dad and others who take care of you.
R Don't hurt others with words or actions.	R Be loyal to your spouse.	R Don't steal.	R Always tell the truth about others.	R Be happy with what you have.
E I am God, the only God.	E Have no other gods.	E Don't use God's name with bad words.	E Take a day each week to spend with God.	E Respect your mom and dad and others who take care of you.
E Don't hurt others with words or actions.	E Be loyal to your spouse.	E Don't steal.	E Always tell the truth about others.	E Be happy with what you have.
B I am God, the only God.	B Have no other gods.	B Don't use God's name with bad words.	B Take a day each week to spend with God.	B Respect your mom and dad and others who take care of you.