

NEW RULES

Bible Basis: Exodus 19:1–8; 20:1–17

Bible Verse: [God’s people] answered with one voice. They said, “We will do everything the LORD has told us to do.” —Exodus 19:8, NIV

Bible Point: God gave us rules so we can know him. I can know God by learning his laws.

Resource: *The Story for Children*, Chapter 5: “New Rules”

STEP 1: COME TOGETHER

Stuff You Need: whiteboard or large paper, marker

Say, **I know you have a lot of favorite things and favorite foods. We could spend all day talking about them. But today I want to hear about your favorite rules.** Invite kids to tell you about rules they like. Be ready to write down anything they say. Some may mention something, but likely the general reaction will be that they don’t like having rules. Encourage discussion by asking:

- Why don’t we like rules very much?
- If we don’t like rules, why do we have them?

Say, **Today’s story is about rules that came straight from God.**

STEP 2: HEAR THE STORY

Stuff You Need: *The Story Card 5*

Follow the directions to present the following Bible story. Then gather to debrief.

RULES FOR GOD’S PEOPLE

As you begin the story, tell children that you will be holding up fingers. When you hold up fingers, they will shout out the number. For instance, when you put up one finger, they say, “Number one!” and so on. After you say the rule, have children echo it back to you.

After 400 years of living in Egypt, God’s people left that land. God wanted to take them to their own land and chose Moses to lead them. But first, while the Israelites were in the desert, God gave Moses some rules the Israelites needed to follow if they wanted to stay God’s special people. While Moses was on Mount Sinai listening to God, God gave him 10 rules—or commandments—for the people to follow. God had written them out on two big stone tablets. Moses took them to the people. God said, “I am the LORD your God. I brought you out of Egypt. That is the land where you were slaves.”

Put up one finger. Children call out, "Number one." The first rule was, "Do not put any other gods in place of me." Repeat.

Put up two fingers. Children call out, "Number two." The second rule was, "Do not make statues of gods that look like anything in the sky (Repeat) or on the earth (Repeat) or in the waters (Repeat). Do not bow to them or worship them." Repeat.

Put up three fingers. Children call out, "Number three." The third rule was, "Do not misuse the name of the LORD your God." Repeat.

Put up four fingers. Children call out, "Number four." The fourth rule was, "Remember to keep the Sabbath day holy (Repeat). Do not do any work on that day." Repeat.

Put up five fingers. Children call out, "Number five." The fifth rule was, "Honor your father and mother." Repeat.

Put up six fingers. Children call out, "Number six." The sixth rule was, "Do not commit murder." Repeat.

Put up seven fingers. Children call out, "Number seven." The seventh rule was, "Do not commit adultery." Repeat.

Put up eight fingers. Children call out, "Number eight." The eighth rule was, "Do not steal." Repeat.

Put up nine fingers. Children call out, "Number nine." The ninth rule was, "Do not give false witness against your neighbor." Repeat.

Put up ten fingers. Children call out, "Number ten." The tenth rule was, "Do not long for anything that belongs to your neighbor." Repeat.

Moses went and told the people all of the LORD's words and laws. They answered with one voice. They said, "We will do everything the LORD has told us to do."

At the end of the story time, give each child a copy of *The Story Card 5*. Ask children to recap the story by telling you what they see on the front of the card. Then turn it over and read the Bible verse on the back together. Ask:

- **Why did God give his people these rules?**
- **What did the people say about God's rules?**

Collect the cards for now. You'll send them home with children later.

STEP 3: EXPLORE MORE

Choose from these activity options to help explore the lesson further.

OPTION 1: COMMANDMENT POP-UP

Stuff You Need: copies of “New Rules” handout, scissors. Optional: craft sticks, glue

Assign children to groups of five to ten. Cut apart the rules from the handout and give each child one or two rules. Make sure each child knows which rules he or she has. Starting with number 1 read them together. Take this time to explain any concepts that may be difficult for young children. For instance, “adultery” means breaking promises you make when you get married. Giving “false witness” means telling a lie. Misusing God’s name means saying it in a way that does not give him honor. Then play a game. Call out the numbers 1 to 10 in random order. The child with the number you call lifts the card and recites the commandment. (If you have some non-readers, play by recognizing the numbers and holding up cards.) If you’d like, you can glue cards to craft sticks for children to hold. After the game, talk about:

- **What sometimes makes rules hard to follow?**
- **How are God’s rules good for us?**

Optional: Ask kids to guess how old the Ten Commandments are. The answer is around 3,500 years, yet people still read and follow them all over the world. Wow!

Say, **God gave his people these rules so we can know him better and live our lives in ways that make him happy.**

OPTION 2: TEN COMMANDMENTS MEMORY

Stuff You Need: multiple copies of “New Rules” handout on cardstock or sturdy paper, scissors
Optional: small zip-top plastic bags

Have children form pairs or trios. Give each group two copies of the handout and have them cut apart the cards. (For younger children, you may want to cut them ahead of time.) Groups can scramble the cards, then lay out 20 cards in a grid, words down, and play a game of “memory.” Each player turns over two cards. If they match, the player keeps them. If they don’t match, turn the words down again and someone else takes a turn. If you’d like, you can give every child a set of 20 cards in a plastic bag to take home to play with family. Talk about:

- **Why did God give rules to his people?**
- **How can we learn about God by keeping his good rules?**

Say, **We don’t always know what’s good for us, but God does. His rules help us stay safe from things that hurt us while we learn to follow God’s way.**

OPTION 3: THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Pair the group up in twos and have them complete the word search puzzle together or send home and have the children work on it with their family.

OPTION 4: Ten Commandments

Coffee-stained paper

Stuff you need: cold coffee or tea (about ½ cup per student), cups, baking sheets or something to catch liquid when students pour it over their papers, white paper, markers, hairdryer or someplace to hang paper to dry

1. Give each student a piece of paper and a bowl of cold coffee or tea.
2. Have them crumple their paper into a ball.
3. Let them unfold paper and spread it onto the cookie sheets or whatever you're using.
4. Help students pour coffee/tea over the whole sheet.
5. Dump excess liquid in the sink.
6. Either blow dry (will take about five minute) or hang to dry (will take roughly a half an hour).
7. When paper is dry, have students write one (or all) of the Ten Commandments on their sheet of paper.

Close your class time by praying for children to come to know and love God's rules for his people.