

**GOD'S RECIPE FOR A
WONDERFUL LIFE
IN THE
TEN COMMANDMENTS**



Ed Van Buskirk

Copyright © 2020 by Ed Van Buskirk (Author)

All rights reserved. This book or any portion thereof may not be reproduced or used in any manner whatsoever without the express written permission of the Author except for the use of brief quotations.

Printed in the United States of America

First Printing, 2020

If U Love Me

905 Carnoustie Dr

Kansas City, MO 64145

www.IfULoveMe.org



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Praying the Ten Commandments	2
About If U Love Me	3
The Purpose of the Commandments in Our World Today	5
First Commandment: I am the Lord your God: you shall not have strange gods before me.	9
Second Commandment: You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain	13
Third Commandment: Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day	17
Fourth Commandment: You shall honor your father and mother	20
Fifth Commandment: You shall not kill	23
Sixth Commandment: You shall not commit adultery	26
Seventh Commandment: You shall not steal	31
Eighth Commandment: You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor	35
Ninth & Tenth Commandments: You shall not covet your neighbor's wife. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods	40
Conclusion and Call to Action	44



PRAYING THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Creator of the universe and Redeemer of our souls, give me Your grace to grow in Your Commandments each day and Your mercy when I stumble.

- (1) You are the Lord my God. I will not have any other gods before You.
- (2) I will not use Your name in vain but will glorify Your name in all my words and deeds.
- (3) I will remember to keep holy the Lord's day by preserving it only for worshiping You, resting in You and for relationship with family and friends.
- (4) I will honor my father and mother and teach my children to do the same.
- (5) I will not kill but will honor and protect life from conception to natural death.
- (6) I will not commit adultery but will honor our bodies for the sacred purpose of new life.
- (7) I will not steal but instead cultivate a heart of generosity.
- (8) I will not lie but rather honor truth in my words and actions.
- (9 & 10) I will not covet my neighbor's spouse and I will not covet the things of this world but set my heart on building treasures in Heaven. Amen.

Praying the Ten Commandments at the beginning of each day helps us to be mindful throughout the day, and again at the end of the day, as an examination of conscience.



ABOUT IF U LOVE ME

The general perception of the Commandments is that they are just a list of rules imposed on us by a demanding God to throw cold water on all our fun. However, this is so far from the truth. The misperception people have of the Commandments causes a tremendous amount of unnecessary heartache, broken relationships, despair and chaos.

The truth of the Commandments is that God, who is love and is the Creator of everything, gave us the Commandments out of His infinite love. The same as a parent loves a child and only wants what is best for his/her children, God loves us beyond measure and, in His love, only wants what is best for us. And, because He designed and created the human heart and soul, He knows what is best for our heart and soul to thrive and experience authentic joy and boundless freedom.

If U Love Me is founded on Jesus statement, “If you love me, keep my commandments.” Which is from the book of John 14:15. Our mission at If U Love Me is to restore the proper perception of and appreciation for God’s Commandments so individuals and families can avoid the heartache caused by the confusion of worldly wisdom, draw closer in relationship with God and experience the authentic joy promised by trusting in the wisdom of the Ten Commandments.

Before returning to Heaven, Jesus instructed us to “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations.” Therefore, we are all instructed to make disciples. This may sound daunting. However, it only requires that you take just one step in the right direction and then follow that step with just one more step.

The Ten Commandments provide each of us a simple set of basics to (re) learn and teach the Commandments to the children in our lives. We can all begin with our children and grandchildren and take this easy but very important step in the right direction. Collectively we can restore Jesus and His Commandments to their proper place in the heart of society.

To help you teach your family, we are building a variety of resources to make learning and teaching the Commandments interesting, easy and fun. We encourage you to visit our web site at www.IfULoveMe.org to access our resources and to come back often to discover new resources as they are



created. We also welcome your ideas for new resources and how to improve the resources we have developed.

You can play a very important role in our mission and vision by inviting us to come share the Commandments with your church, ministry or group. We offer a variety of presentation options including short talks for lunch or dinner meetings, longer presentations for retreats, conferences and RCIA formation and a full 10-week course to compliment your faith formation curriculum. Contact us at Admin@IfULoveMe.org or call us at 816-215-1483.

To fulfill our mission and vision we have an ambitious plan for developing and distributing resources. We depend on donations from caring individuals and foundations to make this possible. If you are such an individual or if you participate in making decisions for a foundation. Please consider helping us achieve our vision. – Thank You! Donations can be made at our web site at www.IfULoveMe.org or mailed to us at 905 Carnoustie Dr, Kansas City, MO 64145.

If you have a story about the Commandments to share or suggestions, give us a call or send us an email.

Wishing you a Joy-filled life,

The If U Love Me Ministry Team



THE PURPOSE OF THE COMMANDMENTS IN OUR WORLD TODAY

Most anyone will agree that, in moral terms, the world is heading in the wrong direction and the consequences are inflicting havoc on our families, the nation and the world. Increasingly, society is no longer God-centered. Instead, being me-centered is the trend with Sundays being filled first with all kinds of to-do's and entertainment at the cost of enjoying close relationships with God, family and friends and physical rest. God's name is being desecrated so frequently that we don't even notice. Lying, cheating and stealing are rewarded in the corporate and political arenas. All this disregard for God and acceptance of worldly wisdom causes a quagmire of confusion that leads to bad decisions, broken relationships, chaos and despair.

Confusion is one of Satan's favorite weapons of choice. He introduced doubt and confusion when he said, "Did God really say, 'You shall not eat from any of the trees in the garden'?" He injected the truth with a lie causing confusion and division. Today, he uses the same trick with questions like, "How do you know you shouldn't be a girl instead of a boy?" and "Don't worry about the cost. You deserve it, don't you? Just use your credit card."

We have taken our eye off God and the wisdom of His Commandments leaving us vulnerable to Satan's deception. We attempt to restore order with human laws, but they generally just introduce more confusion. We don't need more laws. We just need to follow the right laws, God's perfect laws designed as a perfect fit for our human heart. The Commandments provide a framework of moral and ethical standards within which relationships and families flourish laying a solid foundation for society.

As parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, we have the God-given authority and responsibility to restore His Commandments within the hearts, souls and minds of our children. In order to turn the tide back toward divine wisdom and restore God's plan for future generations, each of us must do our part. Each of us must get involved and work in cooperation with God. We start with ourselves. Make a commitment



to (re)learning the truth and beauty of the Commandments, how they work and the joy and freedom they offer.

As we learn to more fully appreciate the beauty and purpose of each Commandment, we learn to trust them in our lives and to become equipped to explain them to our children and grandchildren. By teaching our children and grandchildren, we begin to change the world one family at a time. It will take time and requires a collective effort, but together and by focusing on Jesus and His plan for salvation, we WILL change the world.

Personal Reflection

1. Circle the face below that best represents how well you know and live out the Commandments?



Why? _____

2. How important do you feel the Commandments are for preparing your children/grandchildren to face the temptations of the world and make good decisions?

Suggested Reading & Resources

Exodus 19, 20 & 40
John 14 & 15
Catholic Catechism 2052 - 2082



Family Activity

This activity involves making a peanut butter & jelly sandwich. Or, if your children don't like peanut butter and jelly, any type of sandwich will do. However, this sandwich is going to turn out very different.

A good time to do this is at lunchtime, when they are hungry. To prepare

1. Set out all the ingredients of a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. Then, put out a dozen or so additional ingredients that would likely make for a very bad tasting PB&J such as mayonnaise, onions, sardines and oregano. You will also need a large piece of paper and something to write with. To avoid distractions, cover all the ingredients with a towel or table cloth.
2. Write out the steps to make a PB&J sandwich. Don't make it too detailed. A list of six to ten steps should suffice. Put the recipe on the refrigerator, as it will be used in the next Family Activity.
3. If you don't have a list of the Ten Commandments hanging in a prominent place, go to our web site at www.IfULoveMe.org/Resources and print off a copy. Put it in a frame and hang it in a place where everyone can see it frequently.

Gather the children and tell them what a recipe is and why people use recipes to make good meals. After talking about the purpose of recipes for a few minutes, show them the recipe for making PB&Js.

Explain that you are going to ignore the recipe and then uncover the ingredients. Let them all choose whatever they want on the sandwich and can put as much as they want on the sandwich. Have fun and be silly. Once they are satisfied that the sandwich is finished, cut and share it. (They may choose not to eat any of it.)

Ask them what happened when they didn't follow the recipe? Why didn't it taste like a PB&J? Did it taste good or bad? Ask them if they want to ignore or follow the recipe for making their lunch. Have them help you follow the recipe you wrote down. As you enjoy lunch, ask them if it is better to follow recipes or ignore them?

Finally, explain to them that God has a recipe for life and if we follow the recipe, life turns out better. God's recipe is the Ten Commandments. But if



we ignore God's recipe, things don't turn out very good. Give some examples using how lying and stealing cause big problems but telling the truth and being generous help people.

Show them the list of Commandments you printed and read through them together. Adopt the habit of reading the list with your children each day.



FIRST COMMANDMENT: I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD: YOU SHALL NOT HAVE STRANGE GODS BEFORE ME

“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall not have other gods beside me. You shall not make for yourself an idol or a likeness of anything in the Heavens above or on the earth below or in the waters beneath the earth; you shall not bow down before them or serve them. For I, the LORD, your God, am a jealous God, inflicting punishment for their ancestors’ wickedness on the children of those who hate me, down to the third and fourth generation; but showing love down to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.” Exodus 20:2-6

But does God inflict punishment on us and even our great-grandchildren for our disobedience? If God is love, how is this possible? It is not God who inflicts punishment. The punishment is simply the natural consequences of disobedience. When we attempt to disobey the physical laws, such as gravity, and leap off the roof of our house, things turn out badly.

Similarly, when we attempt to disobey the natural laws of the Commandments and we lie, steal and commit adultery, things turn out badly. So, it is not God who inflicts punishment. The punishment comes as the natural consequences of our disobedience and the punishment, such as a parent being put in prison, will impact the children and eventually their children’s children too.

Jesus is love, and the source of all things good, b. But we become distracted by the modern-day gods, such as money, work, materialism and entertainment. Being distracted and losing focus on the Truth, we become confused, make unwise choices based on human wisdom and then are left to deal with the consequences.

The first Commandment establishes God as the one and only God, Creator of the universe and the one who brings us out of the earthly and eternal slavery of sin. Therefore, we should trust Him above all else.

This first Commandment is the foundation that supports and gives meaning to all the other Commandments. If God is unimportant to us, we become our



own god, and lying and stealing become the methods for serving our primary god—namely ourselves. Observing Sunday for worship is unimportant and using God’s name in vain is just an expression.

However, when we place God front-and-center in our lives and love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul and mind, we learn to trust Him, and we see the purpose and beauty of being a person of integrity, and see lying and stealing as the evils they are. We will naturally not want to take what belongs to someone else. Rather we will want to be generous and share with those in need and bring them joy. And, we will only want to glorify God’s name and never say anything that would desecrate His name.

Jesus warns us against the “And” when He says in Matthew 6:24,

No one can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other or, be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

The “And” is when we want to serve God *And* money. Or serve God *And* our work, or love God *And* entertainment. When we attempt this, God always seems to get in the way as we perceive any time, money and attention that is owed to God as getting in the way of pursuing our other gods. Spending 10 minutes with God at the start of the day gets in the way of getting to work. Fitting in time to go to Mass on Sunday gets in the way of tailgating or shopping.

Therefore, to help us establish a firm foundation, upon which the other Commandments derive their purpose and meaning, it is imperative to understand and pursue this First Commandment with all our heart, soul and mind. It is incumbent as parents, that we make it our highest priority to impress these Commandments upon our children and grandchildren, so they have the proper foundation to put Jesus front and center in their lives and embrace His Commandments.



Personal Reflection

1. Circle the face below that best represents how well you put God first in your life and have no other gods such as money, materialism, entertainment or prestige? Have any modern-day gods crept into your life that interfere with your relationship with God?



Why? _____

2. How can you impress the importance of keeping God first in life to your children and grandchildren?

Suggested Reading & Resources

Genesis 1 & 2
Mathew 6:24-34
Catholic Catechism 2057 – 2141

Family Activity

1. Remind your children of the purpose of following recipes and how the Ten Commandments are God's recipe for a good life.
2. Using the list of Ten Commandments you framed and hung in the Family Activity for the first session, ask one of your children to read the first Commandment.



3. Talk about why it is the FIRST Commandment and how it makes it easier to obey all the Commandments.
4. Using the Peanut Butter and Jelly recipe from the last Family Activity, read the first step.
5. Ask them what would happen if the first step in the PB&J recipe was skipped.
6. Read the story of creation in Genesis chapters 1 & 2. Have the children do some of the reading.
7. Discuss how, in the very beginning, God created everything that was good.
8. Ask, "What would it be like if God didn't create any of these things in the beginning of time?"
9. Explain that, because God created everything, we should always put God first. Some ways to do this are:
 - a. Pray to God when we first wake up each day.
 - b. Pray to God, before we eat each meal.
 - c. Pray to God before we make any important decisions.
 - d. Pray to God before we get in bed each night.

Below are some additional ways to help your children realize how wonderful God is. Be sure to point out that God 'invented' everything and always knows best. That is why it is important to pray, go to Mass and read from the Bible.

- a. Watch one of the Planet Earth programs on Netflix or from the library.
- b. Go for a hike and have the children draw a picture of something that captures their attention.
- c. While enjoying one of their favorite special treats, ask them the question, "How did God create everything in the whole wide world and why did He do that?"



SECOND COMMANDMENT: YOU SHALL NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD YOUR GOD IN VAIN

“You shall not invoke the name of the LORD, your God, in vain. For the LORD will not leave unpunished anyone who invokes his name in vain.” Exodus 20:7

Our names, which are a reflection of who we are and our reputations, are important. We work hard to develop a positive reputation and we take great offense if someone says something degrading about us.

With name calling such a severe offense, why is it that so many people don't consider it offensive to abuse God's name? We hear people using God's name in frustration and anger all the time, figuring it is not that big of a deal. God, being Who He is, can handle it, right? But names are very important and no one, especially God, should have their name abused and misused.

How we refer to God tells us a lot about the reverence we have for Him in our heart. So, if we use God's name irreverently, it is evidence that we lack proper reverence for God. Conversely, when we genuinely and openly praise God's name, it is a reflection of the honor and reverence we have for God.

Blasphemy and perjury are two serious ways people break the Second Commandment. Blasphemy is referring to God in a curse, calling upon Him frivolously or when our behavior, as Christians, reflects poorly on Christ. Perjury is when we call upon God in an oath unnecessarily to establish credibility. Such as, “I swear to God I didn't eat the last piece of pie.”

Another form of perjury is when we make a serious oath calling upon God as a witness and then we break the oath, such as when called as a witness in a court of law. Understanding these two types of offending God and rooting them out are not just a matter of watching our tongue. It requires that we carefully and thoroughly examine hearts and then take steps to properly order our lives to align with God's love for us.

When friends, family and coworkers hear Christians disrespect the name of God, we degrade the image they have of God and discourage them from having a relationship with Him. Over time, repeated abuse of the name of God, erodes the perception others have of God. Therefore, when we break the Second Commandment, we share some responsibility for others' lack of



reverence for and love of God. That is the opposite of what we are called to do as Christians.

How we behave is also a reflection of Jesus Christ and His name. Therefore, it is not just our words that potentially break the Second Commandment. We break it when we treat others disrespectfully, lie, steal, willingly ignore the Lord's Day or break any of the other Commandments. Calling ourselves Christian, but behaving contrary to Jesus' example of a Christian, is breaking the Second Commandment by being hypocritical.

Everything in the universe was created by God out of His love for us. Jesus came as a mere man to suffer and die to free us from the bondage of sin. As Creators of the universe and Redeemers of our souls, the names of Jesus, God the Father and the Holy Spirit are all to be honored and glorified above all other names. When we praise the name of Jesus, we glorify Him in our souls, and we exalt Him for others to see His glory and be drawn to Him.

When Jesus gave us the perfect prayer He began, "Our Father, who art in Heaven, holy be your name," showing the sacredness of God's name. There is divine power in the name of Jesus—divine power to cast our demons, heal the sick and mend relationships. Therefore, we are to call upon the name of Him when we pray and in our worship to glorify His name.

Personal Reflection

1. Circle the face below that best represents how well you honor and glorify the name of God the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit?



Why? _____



2. How can we restore the image and reverence of God so our children will grow in their reverence for God's name? Other family members? Coworkers?

Suggested Reading & Resources

Psalm 29
Psalm 96:1-10
Psalm 113
Mathew 5:33-37
Catholic Catechism 2142 – 2167

Family Activity

Plan some family time to do the following activity. A Sunday afternoon would be a great opportunity.

1. Secretly bake a batch of cupcakes. After frosting them with white frosting, separate out one cupcake for each of your family member and sprinkle dirt and sand on top. That's right, dirt and sand.
2. On the remaining cupcakes, put delicious sprinkles. Be sure there is at least one dirt-free cupcake for each family member.
3. Hide all the cupcakes.
4. Talk with your family about how using God's name in vain makes people think about God as bad and ugly.
5. Then talk about how praising God's name glorifies God and helps people like and want to know God.
6. Show the cupcakes with dirt on them to kids and explain how using God's name disrespectfully is like putting dirt and sand on delicious cupcakes. Also explain how praising God's name is like putting yummy sprinkles on cupcakes. It makes people want to like them even more.
7. Ask them which of the cupcakes they want to eat and why? Ask them how the dirt and sand on the ugly cupcakes are like using God's name



in vain. Even just a little dirt and sand will make the cupcakes ugly, just like a little swearing or lying will do a lot of damage to your reputation.

8. Ask your children to pay attention over the next several days to when they hear people use God's name in vain and then talk about this during dinner each night for a week.
9. Put a "God's Name In Vain" jar in the kitchen to collect money from anyone who violates the Second Commandment. After a week or two, revisit the discussion of the cupcakes. Decide as a family how to use the money.



THIRD COMMANDMENT: REMEMBER TO KEEP HOLY THE LORD'S DAY

“Remember the sabbath day—keep it holy. Six days you may labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God. You shall not do any work, either you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your work animal, or the resident alien within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the Heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them; but on the seventh day he rested. That is why the LORD has blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.” Exodus 20:8-11

With the rotation of the Earth, God gave us day and night, with the moon revolving around the earth He gave us months, and in the revolutions of the earth around the sun He gave us years. By tilting the earth He gave us the seasons of the year. But nothing in nature has a natural cycle of seven days. God created everything in six days and then, as a bonus, gave us an extra day. A God-given day of vacation every week to recall all He created, to praise Him and to rest and enjoy all He has blessed us to enjoy.

But what if God didn't create the extra day and just ended the creation story after six days and then launched us right into Monday? How fun would that be? However, in His love for us He knew His creation was not complete. He wanted to give us even more. So, in His infinite love and wisdom, He created an extra day as a gift.

Unfortunately, our culture has Sunday turned up-side-down as a day to get caught up for the week ahead. The trap we too often fall into is that we begin thinking about all the other seemingly more important and more fun ways we could use time on Sunday.

As we fill up Sundays with chores and worldly desires, we become too busy for God and for spending time playing with family and friends. Between getting the laundry done, grocery shopping for the week, helping the kids finish their science project, the two soccer practices and the big game, there doesn't seem to be time to “fit in” going to church. As busyness takes hold, we drift from our relationship with God, causing us to become confused and tempted with the



lies and deception of the devil and wondering how we ended up there.

God knew that in order to have healthy spiritual lives, spending time with Him by attending Mass is not optional but rather essential.

In addition to making time for building our relationship with Jesus, Sundays give us the opportunity to enjoy and strengthen relationships with our family and friends. Keeping the chores out of Sunday gives us time to nurture our delicate family relationships and enjoy the finer moments of life.

Keeping Sunday as a holy vacation gives meaning to the other days of the week and is like a delicious dessert after a hard week of work. So, why waste it? Enjoy it and be prepared to face the week ahead.

Personal Reflection

1. Circle the face below that best represents how well you preserve Sundays for worshiping Jesus, resting in His love and for building good relationship with family and friends?



Why? _____

2. What would your ideal Sunday look like and what major obstacles prevent you from fully observing the Third Commandment?



3. What can you do to teach your family the purpose of God's weekly day of vacation?

Suggested Reading & Resources

Exodus 31:12-17

Mark 2:23-27

Catholic Catechism 2168 -2195

Apostolic letter Dies Domini of the Holy Father John Paul II

Family Activity

1. To prepare, purchase the ingredients for ice-cream Sundays.
2. With your children, talk about how God created Sunday as a day for worship and a vacation day every week.
3. Ask your children how the family overlooks the vacation day and instead, allows work to get in the way of the vacation day. This includes homework, laundry, yardwork and shopping.
4. Ask your children for their ideas on how to preserve Sunday as a day for worship and relaxation.
5. For each activity you identify not belonging on Sundays, develop a plan to do it at another time.
6. Without activities to enjoy on Sundays, people will initially feel bored. So, also plan for ways to have fun and relax on Sundays together. Be careful of making it a day to veg in front of the TV or computer. Try having no electronics and enjoy some good old-fashioned games. Be creative and include friends and extended family members.
7. Break out the ingredients for ice-cream Sundays and enjoy.



FOURTH COMMANDMENT: YOU SHALL HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER

“Honor your father and your mother, that you may have a long life in the land the LORD your God is giving you.” Exodus 20:12

Over the past several decades, culture has turned the parent-child relationship upside down. This reversal is the result of parent’s authority being increasingly undermined, aided with an unhealthy attitude of entitlement that is offered to, and even imposed upon, children. How will this trend play out over the next several decades? How do we restore the family hierarchy as designed by our Creator and provide our children the childhood they need and deserve to become the best versions of themselves in adulthood? The answer lies within the richness and wisdom of the Fourth Commandment.

At first glance the Fourth Commandment is only intended for children to learn obedience of and respect for their parents. But there is so much more packed within the Fourth Commandment. While it is clearly intended for children, it is equally intended for parents. The Fourth Commandment actually is a comprehensive field-guide for raising strong, stable families and raising children who are confident, joy-filled and prepared to contribute to society.

The Fourth Commandment implies that for children to honor and obey their parents, parents must be honorable and of good character. It is much easier for children to honor and obey when their parents set the example of honor and good character, instead of an example of disrespect habits of bad choices. Parents set the tone. Additionally, a parent’s model of obedience and honor for God shapes how their children will obey and honor God.

The Fourth Commandment also includes a promise. Honoring our father and mother promises a “long life in the land the Lord your God is giving you.” This promise may seem to be just some extra fluff to make the Commandment sound appealing. However, when you consider how the Fourth Commandment plays out, it really does pave the way for a long and happy life.

Living a good life is about choices, and children who learn obedience and respect are better equipped to make good choices that lead to a better life for them and their children. A child who obeys his parents and comes in at



curfew may miss out on the “fun” of staying out late, but they also avoid the situations that put drunk drivers behind the wheel.

As parents and grandparents, we are called by God to be examples of honor and respect. Furthermore, we must be intentional about teaching honor and respect to our children. Don’t let it happen by chance.

Another aspect of the Fourth Commandment is that it instructs us to honor our parents by caring for them in their old age. No one has perfect parents and too many people have parents who clearly fell short of providing an ideal childhood. Regardless, we all are called by God to set aside our differences and honor our parents and fulfill their needs as they become physically and mentally unable to care for themselves.

When it seems impossible to lovingly care for parents, we can draw strength from the following Bible verse:

“With your whole heart honor your father; your mother’s birth pangs do not forget. Remember, of these parents you were born; what can you give them for all they gave you?” Sirach 7:27-28

One of the hidden gems masterfully designed within God’s framework of the Fourth Commandment is a variety of blessings for the whole family, including future generations.

Personal Reflection

1. Circle the face below that best represents how well you set the right example for your children/grandchildren to follow?



Why? _____



2. How can you be intentional in teaching your children/grandchildren about how obedience and respect of their parents paves the way for long and joy-filled life?

Suggested Reading & Resources

Proverbs 6:20-23

Mark 7:8-13

Sirach 3:1-16

Sirach 3:17-28

Catholic Catechism 2197 2257

Family Activity

1. Play the game, “Mother May I” with your children. To review the rules of the games, enter an Internet search of “How to play the game Mother May I”
2. After playing and while enjoying a favorite family treat, have a conversation with the children about why God gave parents to children and how God wants them to respect and honor you.
3. Read & discuss Sirach 3:1-24. Notice how the lessons of humility immediately follows lessons of obeying parents.



FIFTH COMMANDMENT: YOU SHALL NOT KILL

“You shall not kill.” Exodus 20:13

Because we don’t go around killing people, it would be easy to give little or no thought to the Fifth Commandment. However, I propose we all make life-and-death decisions more frequently than we realize.

For example, decisions about investing in companies that produce abortion equipment or provide services or supplies to an abortion clinic is helping to kill unborn babies. How about being hired to fix a leak in the roof of an abortion clinic? What about texting while driving and voting for candidates and issues that support abortion and assisted suicide. These are just a few common examples of how the Fifth Commandment applies to all of us.

Therefore, when we engage in business and decide how we vote, we are obliged to have a clear understanding of the practices and purpose of the business and we need to know what the issues are and where the candidates stand on the sanctity of life.

Also, physical killing is not the only type of killing addressed in the Fifth Commandment. In Matthew 5:21-22, Jesus warns that, even without participating in physical killing, negative feelings we have toward one another are the root of killing.

“You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, ‘You shall not kill’; and whoever kills will be liable to judgment. But I say to you, whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment.”

How about when, in anger, we kill with our tongue. The words said in anger from a parent to the tender heart of a son, daughter or spouse can never be taken back, and can kill their ideas, hopes, dreams and self-esteem. Out of jealousy and greed our words can kill someone’s reputation, their career or even their marriage. All of which are protected by the Fifth Commandment.

Think of the joy and excitement of a young couple having a baby. Conversely, recall the heartache and pain when someone close to you



dies. The joy and sorrow experienced at the beginning and end of life makes it exceedingly obvious that life is precious. And, because life is a gift from our Creator, life is even more than precious. It is sacred. Jesus' life and death on the cross to save us demonstrates that our lives are the very purpose of His coming to live among us.

Opposed to Jesus' mission of salvation is Satan's mission, which is the destruction of our lives and our souls. The Fifth Commandment protects human lives and it stands to protect the soul of those who participate in Satan's mission of destruction.

The Fifth Commandment calls us to protect life in the choices we make. The reality is, we are sometimes required to make difficult decisions in very complex situations. To choose life in these difficult decisions, it is imperative that we become well informed about Catholic teachings regarding life. Spending time reading Scripture, studying the Catholic Catechism and in quiet prayer offer wisdom and the clarity of thought needed to navigate the lies and deception of our culture regarding life, and make the right decisions.

Personal Reflection

1. Circle the face below that best represents how well you conduct your tongue and business affairs in alignment with the Fifth Commandment?



Why? _____

2. Outline a discussion you can have with your children/grandchildren to help them value life and understand the lies of our culture regarding abortion and euthanasia.



Suggested Reading & Resources

Genesis 4:1-16 Story of Cain and Abel. Consider the freedom Cain lost as a result of his sin.

Catholic Catechism 2258 – 2330

Theology of the Body for Beginners by Christopher West.

www.NumberOfAbortions.com – Live counter of abortions

DailyRosary.net – Rosary recorded new each day and emailed to you.

Family Activity

To gain a more complete appreciation for the miracle of life, have each person in the family spiritually adopt an imaginary baby, tracking their development in the womb. Each member of the family decides if the baby is a boy or a girl, gives their baby a name and together as a family, a day is chosen as the birthday for all the babies. Over nine months the family watches to see how the babies grow and each person prays for the baby, its mother and father. Then, on the big day, have a big party to celebrate their birth. Invite other family members and friends. Include presents that will be donated to a local pregnancy resource center or adoption agency. Make their birthday an annual celebration to be reminded of how your family celebrates the miracle of God's gift of life.

To make your spiritual adoption fun and easy, we have provided full instructions with adoption certificates, posters, prayer cards and birth certificates on our web site. All are free and can be downloaded at www.IfULoveMe.org/SpiritualAdoption.



SIXTH COMMANDMENT: YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY

You shall not commit adultery. Exodus 20:14

A Stradivarius violin is one of the most sought-after and revered musical instruments. Its primary purpose is to produce beautiful music. What if the owner decided to use a Stradivarius as a drum, beating the back of it with drumsticks? This would still produce music, but how would it compare to the music it was intended for and how would it degrade its purpose and disrespect its maker?

How much more precious is the human body than a Stradivarius? Yet through adultery, pornography, sex change operations and contraceptives we degrade our bodies and disrespect our Creator. Instead of properly glorifying and respecting our sexuality, today's culture desecrates it.

Our mission: To restore the preciousness and miracle of our bodies so future generations can avoid the heartache, depression and disappointment of the abuse that rips families apart, requires children to grow up not knowing their father or mother and jeopardizes souls.

The Sixth Commandment emphasizes the importance and purpose of our sexuality, warns us of the evil and dangers of adultery and it calls us to glorify God through our sexuality.

God created sex between a man and a woman as sacred and holy and good, with the primary purpose of our sexuality being to participate with God in creation through the marital act. Anything that deviates from this purpose, degrades God's purpose and is an offense against God and His creation.

To more fully appreciate the greatness of the Sixth Commandment, let's take a quick look at the topics of Creation, Sexuality, Marriage, Chastity and Lust.

Creation: As the encore and crown-jewel of creation, God created man and woman and made them holy and sacred in His image and likeness. We participate with God in His creation through the gift of life given to us in our bodies.

Salvation: God's crown-jewel of our bodies are essential for our salvation. Therefore, it is paramount to do everything and anything to protect and



treasure our sexuality. However, Satan has a different plan for our sexuality: division, not unity; death, not life; eternal damnation instead of eternal salvation.

Marriage: Jesus gave Himself exclusively and totally to His bride for the purpose of giving life—eternal life! Catholic marriage models the marriage of Jesus and His bride, the Church. Anything less than being exclusive, without reservation and fully open to life, falls short of God’s plan for marriage.

Chastity: Chastity is the virtue that removes lust from our heart and frees us from the torture and slavery of impurity. Chastity is not about abstaining from sex. Rather it is about having the self-mastery to freely and properly choose with whom and when to have sex.

Lust: The opposite of Chastity is the vice of lust which enslaves our hearts. Lust distorts sex to be self-serving instead of life-giving. It is deadly. Today’s culture has embraced lust, promoted it, and flaunted it as a natural and necessary way of life.

The human heart is constantly in search of authentic love. But we get distracted and lose our way. We try to fill a God-sized hole with worldly pleasures that don’t satisfy. Having been made in the image and likeness of God, we are made for greatness, for joy and for the freedom of salvation.

Personal Reflection

1. Circle the face below that best represents how well you live free of adultery including watching sexually tainted or explicit shows, reading sexually tainted or explicit books or viewing pornography?



Why? _____



2. How does today's sexually oriented culture distort God's plan for life and salvation through our bodies?

3. How can you be intentional about teaching your children/grandchildren God's plan for their sexuality and warn them about how our culture attempts them to rob them of what is intended as holy and pure?

Suggested Reading & Resources

Psalms 139:13-18

Proverbs 5

Matthew 19:1-12

Romans 1:18-32

1 Corinthians 6:15-20

Catholic Catechism 2331 - 2400

CatholicInRecovery.com

TheCatholicSexAddict.wordpress.com

Strive21.com

www.covenanteyes.com – Internet blocker

www.netnanny.com – Internet blocker

“Beyond the Birds and the Bees” by Gregory Popcaks

“Parents, Children and the Facts of Life” By Fr. Henry V. Sattler

“It's time for the talk” by John Van Buskirk

The Chastity Project (Chastity.com) led by Jason and Chrystalina Evert and Christopher West. , “The Thrill of the Chaste” by Dawn Eden.



Psalms 139:13-18

Proverbs 5

Matthew 19:1-12

Romans 1:18-32

1 Corinthians 6:15-20

Catholic Catechism 2331 - 2400

CatholicInRecovery.com

TheCatholicSexAddict.wordpress.com

Strive21.com

www.covenanteyes.com – Internet blocker

www.netnanny.com – Internet blocker

“Beyond the Birds and the Bees” by Gregory Popcak

“Parents, Children and the Facts of Life” By Fr. Henry V. Sattler

“It’s time for the talk” by John Van Buskirk

The Chastity Project (Chastity.com) led by Jason and Chrystalina Evert and Christopher West. , “The Thrill of the Chaste” by Dawn Eden.

Family Activity

The Family Activity for this Commandment initially involves just the parents. The objective is to draft a general outline for having intentional, well thought-out conversations with your children about their bodies and sexuality. As a starting point, below is a cursory breakdown of topics that you can use for your plan. Also, refer to the suggested reading list and tailor to suit your children’s maturity. Also, remember that this is not a one-time conversation, but an ongoing conversation that begins at an early age and continues, at least, into early adulthood.

Young Children (Ages 3 – 10)

1. Our bodies are special?
2. Why do we cover our bodies?
3. No one should touch where underwear covers.
4. The difference between boys and girls, both physically and emotionally.



Adolescents

1. The purpose of marriage.
2. God's purpose for our bodies.
3. Pornography and how it disrespects what is sacred.
4. The dangers of pornography to themselves and others.
5. Physical maturity/body changes.
6. Abstinence and the purpose of purity and Chastity.
7. How to handle peer pressure regarding sexuality.
8. Coming to you when they have questions.

Early Adulthood

1. Same as Adolescents but at a more mature level.

The stakes and the threats are too high to wait or not be intentional about engaging with your children about their bodies, marriage and sex. MAKE THIS A PRIORITY!



SEVENTH COMMANDMENT: YOU SHALL NOT STEAL

You shall not steal. Exodus 20:15

If you were having a conversation with Jesus about not stealing, do you think He would have anything to add such as, “You have heard it said, ‘You shall not steal. But I say...’?” Of course He would, because Jesus wants us to look beyond the simple words of a Commandment so we can discover ourselves. By looking beyond the words, “Do not steal,” we discover what and who we love most. We discover how genuinely we love others and we discover any selfishness and fear within our heart that prevents us from trusting in God to provide all that we need.

Jesus would likely continue the conversation by encouraging you to cultivate generosity in your heart so you can not just share, but joyfully share. And not just share your possessions, but share your time, your appreciation for others and other intangibles that are even more valuable than money or things. Being generous demonstrates that God is real and living through you.

The Seventh Commandment calls us to detach from the things of this world, so our possessions don’t impede us from setting our hearts on pursuing treasures in Heaven. The Seventh Commandment teaches us to be grateful for the big and small blessings each day offers, and it teaches us to trust that God will always provide what we need.

Conversely, stealing is evidence that we love ourselves more than we love others and that we love the creation more than we love the Creator. Stealing shows a lack of trust that God will provide what we need, it shows we lack generosity and it turns us inward on ourselves, setting us up to be discontent, never having enough.

There are many forms of stealing. Some are very obvious, and others are not so easy to recognize because they don’t involve the act of taking. When we keep something that belongs to another, it is the same as stealing. Some examples are when we find something, like a wallet or when the cashier gives us too much change. Other forms of stealing that are often not easily recognized include gossiping, which steals someone’s privacy and reputation, and being mean to people, which steals their dignity and robs them of having a good day. There are many ways to steal that don’t involve taking.



The Seventh Commandment teaches that all of God’s creation is intended for everyone’s benefit, not just the “chosen few.” For a variety of reasons, some have too little and others have too much. Those with too little are likely to struggle in their experience of God’s goodness because they are focusing on surviving.

Those with too much are likely to struggle in seeing the goodness of God because they are focusing on accumulating more and safeguarding it all. The Seventh Commandment calls us to moderation. To have what we need and share the rest with others who struggle with less than they need. Through moderation generosity, we participate with God in His plan of salvation for ourselves and our neighbors.

We are called to prioritize the allocation of our tangible and intangible possessions according to the Greatest Commandment. That is, to first love God with all our heart, soul and mind. Regarding our possessions we do this through a tithe to His church. Next, the Greatest Commandment calls us to love others as we love ourselves. Therefore, we are not just to share from our leftovers. We are to be intentional in planning to include what others need, the same as we plan for our own needs.

The Seventh Commandment is a call to greatness and an invitation to participate in God’s plan of joy, freedom and salvation through our work and our generosity.

Personal Reflection

1. Circle the face below that best represents how well you cultivate a heart of generosity?



Why? _____



2. What is the most important lesson you can teach your children/ grandchildren about God’s plan of generosity?

Suggested Reading & Resources

Tobit 4:7-11

Matthew 25:14-30 – Parable of the Talents

Luke 15:11-32 – Parable of the Prodigal Son

Tobit 4:7-11

Catholic Catechism 2401 – 2463

Santa’s Secret: A Story of Hope by Donna McGuire

Family Activity

1. Talk with your family about creation and how it is all intended for everyone’s benefit. Discuss how stealing goes against God’s plan of creation and talk about how Jesus wants us all to be generous and why. Refer to paragraph 2452 in the Catholic Catechism to help with the conversation.
2. Load the family in the car and take a drive. First, slowly drive through a very wealthy neighborhood. As you drive, discuss how material possessions and excess can be obstacles to generosity and nurturing a relationship with God.
3. Next, drive through a very poor neighborhood. Discuss how the people who live there may not have basic necessities. Discuss how their struggle can be obstacles for nurturing a relationship with God.
4. Stop for a treat at your favorite ice-cream or donut shop.
 - a. Write a list of some of the things your family has that the poorer families don’t have. Include some intangibles such as safety and heat. (Post this on the fridge when you get home.)



- b. Decide on a family plan for sharing some of what you have with the less fortunate. Keep your plan simple to implement, but meaningful for each person to participate.
5. Implement your plan. On the following several Sundays, review the list from the fridge and ask the members how they are becoming more grateful and more generous.



EIGHTH COMMANDMENT: YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST YOUR NEIGHBOR

“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.” Exodus 20:16

With each Commandment, God reveals what He has made sacred and is to be protected. The Eighth Commandment follows suit. God’s warning to not lie reveals that truth is sacred and is to be protected.

God, who is the Creator of all things, established truth in the very things He created. When He created the solar system, He created the truth of gravity. When He created a sparrow, He created the truth that sparrows fly and produce offspring. Therefore, Jesus is justified when He says, “I am the way, the truth and the life.” And so, logic follows that any untruth leads us away from God.

Truth is the foundation of relationships making it possible to live in harmony with one another and to live a peaceful and joy-filled life. Truth establishes honor and respect for one another, and truth is a pillar of trust necessary for healthy marriages and strong communities.

However, because of our selfishness and pride, we struggle with accepting the truth and go to great lengths to deny the truth, creating a mess. In time, the lies produce confusion, fear, disagreements, anger and division, and we spin more lies to cover the first lie with each lie growing bigger than the last. With each lie, our humanity and dignity diminish, making it more difficult to recognize the truth as we are led further from God.

Satan devised the lie and first used it in the garden of Eden when he sprinkled a little doubt by asking, “Did God really say you would die...?” He then lied to make God out to be the bad guy saying, “You certainly will not die!” and then followed up with the false promise of “your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods.”

Satan, the father of lies, causes nothing but confusion, division, destruction and slavery to sin. Because of their disobedience, Adam and Eve hid themselves from God and from one another. Satan’s strategy worked so well with Adam and Eve that he uses the same strategy on us today and it still works!



Through the Natural Law, lies always have negative consequences, such as shame, confusion and division. Lying can have devastating lifelong impacts that span generations. Alternatively, truth leads us to Jesus, who is Truth, and living in truth sets us free. Free from the slavery of lies, free to enjoy good relationships and experience authentic joy.

To help navigate difficult decisions and to recognize lies, the Catholic Catechism offers this definition.

To lie is to speak or act against the truth in order to lead into error someone who has the right to know the truth. Catholic Catechism 2483

Therefore, because Nazi soldiers did not have the moral right to know the truth, the Polish family was not guilty of lying to the soldiers when asked if they were hiding Jews.

This is very helpful, but it allows for erroneous rationalization and emotions. Therefore, St. Augustine warned against all lying. His fear was that exceptions could open the door to erroneous rationalization and emotions. He also warned that exceptions for lying introduce the risks of becoming a habitual liar.

There are many ways the Eighth Commandment can be broken. All of them turn us and others away from Jesus and His truth that offers clarity of thought and freedom of living free and joy-filled lives.

To be better aware of the lies that we have grown blind to, the list below is a breakdown of the types of lies along with some examples.

White Lies – False responses given to avoid hurting other’s feelings, e.g., “Yes, I really do like your new haircut. (*Gag, cough, smile.*)” To avoid white lies, we should be loving, respectful and sincere in giving a true response.

Fib/Exaggeration/Boasting – A false statement to impress someone or diminish someone’s credibility. This type of lie is prone to becoming habitual lying, e.g., “I have done that a million times.” Or, “You never get to work on time.”

Half-truth – Withholding some of what is necessary for others to assess the full truth, e.g., telling your boss the third quarter preliminary sales



are up twenty percent, but intentionally leaving out that the final results will be considerably less.

Gossip/Fabrication/Plotting – Talking about someone with the intent of damaging their reputation or boosting your own, e.g., “Did you hear that Bob might lose his job again?”

Flattery – Insincere compliments that misleads others to think they are better than they are. Flattery is often used to make others like us, e.g., “Your cooking is absolutely the best.”

Compulsive/Habitual – Frequent use of any one or multiple forms of lying. Habitual lying is a symptom of severe confusion and insecurity.

Breaking promises – Making a promise with little or no intention to keep the promise, e.g., “I promise I will make it up to you.”

Living a lie – Portraying to be someone we are not or living contrary to reality, e.g., Living above our income to impress others or being in denial of our talents and the person God created us to be.

Disclosing Secrets – Sharing something that was told to you in confidence, e.g., “I’m not supposed to tell you this but....”

Euphemisms – Flowery words that hide the real meaning of something bad. For example, “freedom of choice,” “death-with-dignity” and “right-sizing the workforce.”

Bold-faced/Blatant lies – A direct false statement that we know is not true and is intended to mislead someone.

Personal Reflection

1. Circle the face below that best represents how well you avoid telling lies and uphold what is true?



Why? _____



2. How can you best explain to your children/grandchildren the importance of being truthful?

Suggested Reading & Resources

Genesis 3

Wisdom 7:7-30

Sirach 27

Catholic Catechism 2464 – 2513

Family Activity

1. Read the story of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:1-13 and discuss it with your children. In your discussion, include the following points.
 - a. God gave Adam and Eve everything in the garden to enjoy.
 - b. Life was good and they were free to live as they wanted.
 - c. There was only one rule, which was to not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.
 - d. The serpent used the following tricks.
 1. The serpent, who is the devil, first asked a question to make Eve doubt God.
 2. Instead of walking away from the serpent, Eve continued to listen.
 3. The serpent lied and made a promise to trick Eve.
 4. Adam remained silent and did not protect Eve.
 - e. After disobeying, Adam and Eve blamed others for their disobedience.
 - f. Adam and Eve's freedom was restricted. They were no longer free to enjoy the garden.
 - g. Adam and Eve hid themselves and life became difficult for them.



2. Talk about some real-life situations in which Satan tries to trick us and the problems it causes.
3. After your discussion, enjoy some desert. As you do, turn your treat into a lesson about lying. To do this you will need a carton of the family's favorite ice-cream, salt and pepper.
 - a. Before serving everyone their portion of ice-cream, scoop up just one bowl.
 - b. Tell the kids that the ice-cream represents truth. Talk about how truth is good and comes from God. Explain that truth makes life enjoyable and delicious like the ice-cream.
 - c. Then, sprinkle generous portions of salt and pepper over the ice-cream and tell them that the salt and pepper are like lies that make what is good, taste bad.
 - d. Let each of the children sprinkle some salt and pepper. Do they want to add a little or a lot?
 - e. Have each person take a bite of the ice-cream and then have each person describe what the salty lies did to the delicious ice-cream.
 - f. Scoop up new servings for each member of the family. Ask the kids if they want any salt or pepper on their ice-cream. Why did they not want salt?
 - g. Enjoy!



NINTH & TENTH COMMANDMENTS: YOU SHALL NOT COVET YOUR NEIGHBOR'S WIFE. YOU SHALL NOT COVET YOUR NEIGHBOR'S GOODS

“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, his male or female slave, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.” Exodus 20:17

When we covet, we develop an inordinate emotional attachment to something, and our attachment becomes so great that we push God out of the center of our lives, so we have more time to spend with whatever object has replaced God as being first in our life. The object can be a person or a thing. Or, it can be something intangible such as prestige, pleasure, entertainment or success.

Having become obsessed, we become blind to the authentic goodness and purpose for which the object was intended by God. Then, in our blindness and striving to possess it, we jeopardize other intrinsically good things, such as relationships, physical and spiritual health, dignity, and the future.

Disordered attachments of a covetous heart entice a person to violate the Commandments that pertain to lying, stealing, adultery and killing. And most sadly, coveting is a form of idolatry that violates the first Commandment of not having strange gods.

But knowing that coveting is what entices us to break the first eight Commandments, we can use this to our advantage. Becoming aware of what we covet identifies specific virtues to cultivate, giving us the prudence and fortitude to live according to the Commandments and reap their rewards. How cool is that?

Coveting is a condition of the heart. When we become aware of what we covet, we begin to foresee when we are approaching a danger zone (near occasion of sin) and can then avoid the temptation. For example, Jesus warns us about any lust or anger we have in our heart as being precursors to adultery and murder.

There are several conditions of coveting that are helpful for understanding how coveting operates.



Discontentment causes us to diminish what we have, grumble, complain and wallow in self-pity, and, instead of celebrating the achievements of others, we celebrate their misfortunes.

Greed makes us feel that enough is never enough. Greed continually makes us want more money, more time, more knowledge, more food, more sex, more entertainment, more prestige. Greed makes us bitter, self-centered and blind to important responsibilities and prized relationships. Greed causes us to become a slave to our “strange” gods as they demand an inordinate amount of our time, attention and love.

Envy is the most dangerous symptoms of a covetous heart. The Catholic Catechism defines envy as, “The sadness at the sight of another’s goods and the immoderate desire to acquire them for oneself, even unjustly.” The intense emotion of envy drives people to distort reality, leading to poor judgement and malicious actions such as slander, vandalism and even murder.

Misplaced Trust is another characteristic of coveting that places trust in things of the world instead of in God. By sowing doubt and a lie, Satan was quick to transfer Eve’s trust from God to himself. With the trust misplaced, Eve was an easy target of the false promise of becoming “like God.”

When we drift from observing the First and Third Commandments, we begin to covet worldly gods. These other gods begin to consume us and further push God and His authentic love to the margins of our hearts and, in time, leave us feeling empty.

Personal Reflection

1. Circle the face below that best represents how well you are grateful for what you have avoid coveting?



Why? _____



2. What allows coveting to enter our heart and what problems does coveting cause?

3. How can you teach your children/grandchildren how coveting sets them wanting to steal and lie and break all the other Commandments?

Suggested Reading & Resources

Romans 7
Timothy 6:7-19
Catholic Catechism 2514 – 2557
Book *The Pearl* by John Steinbeck

Family Activity

1. To prepare, think of each family member's favorite treat and purchase it. If possible, make each treat different and specific to each family member.
2. Wrap each treat and write one family name on each. But, write the name of someone who does NOT consider this their favorite treat.
3. Have each child think of something that another person has that makes them really jealous.
4. Have them write it on a piece of paper. (Parents can play along too.)



5. Next, have them answer write their answers to the following questions. Don't discuss them. Just have them write their answers.
 - a. When you think about this, how does it make you feel about the person?
 - b. Would having what that other person has help you be a better person? How?
 - c. What would it take to have what they have?
 - d. What is more important to you: God, or the thing you are jealous about?
6. Read Exodus 20:17 and explain to them what it means to covet
"You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, his male or female slave, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."
7. Give each person the wrapped treat with their name and have them open them one at a time, but not eat the treat.
8. Hopefully, when a family member opens their treat, the member who likes that treat the most will wish it was for them.
9. After all the treats are open, ask the question, "Do any of you feel jealous?" Laugh and have some fun figuring out how everyone can have what they like most.



CONCLUSION AND CALL TO ACTION

With such astonishing wisdom and goodness packed into the Ten Commandments, it is woefully unfortunate that our culture has brushed aside the Commandments, ignored them and perceived them as just a list of rules imposed on people by a demanding God.

Wisdom of the past warned that future generations would forget the Commandments and suffer the consequences. That time is now, and the consequences are evident in the statistics and suffering that is so unnecessary.

But it doesn't have to be this way. With the power of the Holy Spirit, the wisdom of your experiences and the insights you now have regarding the Ten Commandments, you have the wisdom, the authority and responsibility to teach those whom God has put in your life about the greatness of His Commandments.

For 40 years Moses taught his Israelite family the Commandments so they could enter the promised land and avoid years of struggling in the desert. He understood the power of the Commandments and, with the same earnest a parent sends their children off to college or into the world, Moses stood on the banks of the Jordan and used his final opportunity to warn his entire Israelites family of the dangers of forgetting the Commandments.

“See, I have today set before you life and good, death and evil. If you obey the commandments of the LORD, your God, which I am giving you today, loving the LORD, your God, and walking in his ways, and keeping his commandments, statutes and ordinances, you will live and grow numerous, and the LORD, your God, will bless you in the land you are entering to possess.

If, however, your heart turns away and you do not obey, but are led astray and bow down to other gods and serve them, I tell you today that you will certainly perish; you will not have a long life on the land which you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess.

I call Heaven and earth today to witness against you: I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life, then, that you and your descendants may live, by loving the LORD,



your God, obeying his voice, and holding fast to him. For that will mean life for you, a long life for you to live on the land which the LORD swore to your ancestors, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give to them.”

The choice was in the hands of the Israelites. History shows that when they obeyed the Commandments, life was good for them. When they didn't, they were destroyed by their internal strife and then overtaken by their enemies.

Now, the choice is in your hands. What will the future hold for your family? Will your future generations remember and enjoy the blessings of the Commandments? Or, will they forget and endure the consequences? Are the Commandments important enough to pass them on to your children and grandchildren? If so, how should you pass them on? Should you abdicate this vital responsibility to the school to teach them? Will they learn them through television, social media or the music they listen to?

What is it going to take for future generations to know, understand and live the Commandments? It is going to take you and me making a commitment. Teaching them the greatness and purpose of the Ten Commandments and engaging in their daily lives, helping them apply the Commandments in their everyday challenges and showing them how they are a recipe for a wonderful life.

Don't let this workbook sit on the shelf and collect dust. Use it as a starting point to learn and teach the Commandments to your family and your friends. Engage them in discussions about the Commandments. Be intentional and make a monthly date with your children and grandchildren to go out for ice-cream and engage with them about what is happening in their life. Dream with them and warn them of the dangers that will rob them of their dream. Teach them the hidden secrets of the Commandments and the wonderful life they offer.

At first, children are likely to resist and complain. This is no different than when they complain about having to eat vegetables before dessert or go to bed at a reasonable time. So, don't be discouraged, but in love, persevere in your monthly dates with them. In time, they will appreciate and look forward to these special moments with you. Before you know it, they will grow up and be on their own. We have precious little time for these precious, holy conversations with them.



Also, have fun with your children doing the Family Activities for each Commandment above. Let us know how your family activities turn out by sending an email to Admin@IfULoveMe.org and include a photo of your family as you do the activities. If you have suggestions on how to make the Family Activities more engaging, let us know.

Thank you for caring enough about your children, their salvation and all of society to learn the greatness of the Ten Commandments. May our amazing Creator and Savior Jesus Christ be with you as you carry on His mission of Jesus' discipleship in your family.

You can play a very important role in our mission and vision by inviting us to come share the Commandments with your church, ministry or group. We offer a variety of presentation options including short talks for lunch or dinner meetings, longer presentations for retreats, conferences and RCIA formation and a full ten-week course to compliment your faith formation curriculum. Contact us at Admin@IfULoveMe.org or call us at 816-215-1483.

To fulfill our mission and vision we have an ambitious plan for developing and distributing resources. We depend on donations from caring individuals and foundations to make this possible. If you are such an individual or if you participate in making decisions for a foundation. Please consider helping us achieve our vision. – Thank You! Donations can be made at our web site at www.IfULoveMe.org or mailed to us at 905 Carnoustie Dr, Kansas City, MO 64145.

If you have a story about the Commandments to share or suggestions, give us a call or send us an email.