

THE CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY CHILDREN'S MEETING LESSON

DATE: June 30, 2019

SUBJECT: THE TEN COMMANDMENTS: The Eighth Commandment (1 of 2): You Shall Not Steal

SCRIPTURE: Exodus 20:15; Deuteronomy 5:19; Ephesians 4:28; Philippians 4:11

AIM: We should not steal, but rather be thankful and content for what we have. We should respect the property of others, and thereby show respect to others.

MEMORY VERSES TO CHOOSE FROM: Exodus 20:15 (You shall not steal.); Ephesians 4:28 (He who steals should steal no more, but rather should labor, working with his own hands in that which is respectable, that he may have *something* to share with him who has need.)

SUGGESTED SONGS: 4 (Be Careful What You Do); 1615 (Count Your Blessings); 195 (Oh, He's Done So Much For Me); 6719 (The Ten Commandments); 176 (God uses Helpers); 9219 BSS David #19 (I'd like to Honor You); 9204 BSS David #4 (Honor, Honor); 4300 BSS Matthew Vol 2 #22 (Learn How to be Faithful Today); 4601 (Make the Bed)

CRAFT IDEAS: 1) Count your blessings, name them one by one: Have each child make a list of their blessings (family, home, dog, car, bike, friends, etc.) 2) Continue making the Ten Commandment tablets.

APPROACH: 1) What's missing? Game - Prepare a tray of objects and have the children identify each object to help them remember what the items are. Have the children close their eyes. Meanwhile take away one object. Do they know which one was taken away? 2) Ask the children: Is it honorable to steal money from the bank? Is it dishonest to steal a pencil from the store?

CONTENT: The Ten Commandments tell us what God likes and what He dislikes. They are measuring sticks by which we can know if we are pleasing or not pleasing God. The Eighth Commandment says, "**You shall not steal.**" (Exodus 20:15). To *steal* is to take another's property, ideas, or things without permission (from a school, a store, etc.), in a dishonest or unlawful way, especially in a secret manner. God gave this commandment to His people to teach them that they must respect others' property. If we do not respect others' property we do not respect others. To steal is a sin. Stealing something, whether small (a pencil or a pack of gum) or big (breaking into a car, house or bank), is sinful. Cheating on a quiz or test is stealing answers from another student or source.

There are two causes of stealing: laziness and greed (covetousness). Before the fall of man, he freely gathered his food from the earth. After man's fall God cursed the ground because of man's sin (Genesis 3:17-19). God declares in Genesis 3:19, "By the sweat of your face /You will eat bread /Until you return to the ground,..." This shows plainly that man would have to work hard in order to survive.

Some people are lazy and do not want to work hard to support themselves; rather they take an easy way—stealing. If a person works hard, he will have enough money to buy what he needs, and even have extra to share with others. We enjoy and appreciate things we work for and it makes us feel good inside when we pay the price. Ephesians 4:28 says, "He who steals should steal no more, but rather should labor, working with his own hands in that which is respectable, that he may have *something* to share with him who has need." Stealing is not pleasing to the Lord. God desires His people to work for their food and possessions. Work is good for man.

When someone is not satisfied with either what he has or how much he has, he will be easily tempted to steal. He will desire something he does not need, or will covet what someone else has. Prayer and thanksgiving kill covetousness. We need to open our eyes to see what the Lord has given us. We have our

family, a house or an apartment to live in, hot and cold running water, heat in the winter, drawers and closets full of clothes, and an abundance of food. We often take these things for granted while longing for other things, even coveting the things of others. Counting our blessings and thanking the Lord for each of them is the way to prevent coveting and stealing.

SUGGESTED APPLICATIONS TO CHOOSE FROM: *Please pray and fellowship over which applications to cover. Please do not try to cover all the applications. It is sufficient to cover just **one or two applications** which are appropriate for the age group of the children you are serving.*

- **We should be faithful in both big and small things.** Stealing includes big things and little things, whether it is candy or a pencil, or something bigger like a toy or electronic game. We should not think that just because something is little, it does not matter. It *does* matter to God. If we have stolen something, we need to make it right by giving it back to the person, and confessing. If we find something that does not belong to us, we should try to return it to its rightful owner rather than keeping it for ourselves. If someone leaves their sweater or Bible at our house, we should be faithful to return it to them.
- **We should be respectful of others' belongings.** We should not touch things that do not belong to us. When we go to someone's house, we should not go to other rooms or open closets or drawers unless the host invites us to do so. When we are at school or at the meeting hall, we should ask the teachers and serving ones for the supplies we need and not open all the drawers and cabinets. If something is on loan to us, we need to take care of it and not vandalize it. When we borrow a library book, we should not write it in or tear the pages, or spill water on it.
- **We should be thankful for what we have and be generous to share with others.** We should be thankful for whatever our parents have provided for us and should not compare what we have with others because that is not pleasing to the Lord. We should be thankful for our families, homes and possessions. In addition, rather than being greedy, we should have a giving heart, and be willing to share what we have. Perhaps we may have extra toys or games, or have items we no longer play with. We can choose some to give away to other children who may need them, not because we don't like the toys anymore, but because we want to give something good to others. We may have clothes that are too small yet still in good condition and can share our hand-me downs with other children and families.
- **We should help out at home.** As children, we should be willing to work. Though we do not go to work like our parents do, we can help out at home by doing our chores, such as washing dishes, folding laundry, and helping younger brothers and sisters. In this way, we will be trained to work hard by completing the task, and not be lazy. We can also find opportunities to be helpful at the meeting hall and at school.

Adapted from *Bringing Children from Adam to Christ—The Ten Commandments*, Vol. 3, Lesson 16, and the Church in New York City Children's Meeting lessons: 3/28/99; 7/17/05; 6/29/14