

THE CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY

CHILDREN'S MEETING LESSON

DATE: July 7, 2019

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

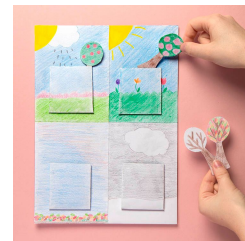
SCRIPTURE: Exodus 20:15; Deuteronomy 5:19; Matthew 7:12; Romans 13:8; Numbers 5:7; Exodus 22:1,7; Luke 19:1-8; Hebrews 4:12

AIM: Stealing is to take whatever belongs to someone else without his or her knowledge or permission. This includes “borrowing” and not returning or repaying. Stealing is a sin and should be cleared up by first confessing the misdeed and then by repaying or restoring what was taken.

SUGGESTED MEMORY VERSES: Exodus 20:15 (You shall not steal.); Romans 13:8 (Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves the other has fulfilled the law.); 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: 2825 (God's Word Gives Us Commands to Obey); 3115 (How Do You Obey God's Word?); 10 (Inside Me); 13 (A New Commandment); 6719 (The Ten Commandments); 11 (O Be Careful); 9533 (Giving Thanks); 19 (When We're Kind To Others); 1615 (Count Your Blessings - chorus only); New Song about Eighth Commandment (Don't Steal - Work Hard!)

CRAFT IDEAS: Make a sheet with four paper pockets. Label each pocket with a person we interact with (friend, mom, teacher, brother, etc.). On four squares of paper, draw something that belongs to them (game, wallet, book, favorite toy). The children can make this a simple matching game to “return” the items they find to the person it belongs to. Template: <https://www.bakerross.co.uk/craft-ideas/teachers/season-pocket-matching/>



APPROACH: Ask the children if they have ever borrowed anything and forgotten to return it. Perhaps they still have that item in their home. Also ask the children if they've ever found a coin or something valuable in the street or at their school. What did they do about it?

CONTENT: Last week we saw that the definition of stealing is to take for yourself what rightfully belongs to someone else (whether it is from a person, or a school, or a store, etc.). This week we will see how stealing breaks the basic law of God that we should love our neighbor as ourselves, and treat our neighbor as we would like to be treated.

The eighth commandment is, “You shall not steal.” Stealing breaks God's commandment. Stealing does not only mean to take money or some costly thing from others. Stealing is to take ANYTHING—from a small item, like a pencil, an eraser, a sticker, etc., to things more valuable like bicycles, jackets, or electronics, for example. Our conscience will strongly disapprove if we intentionally take anything that does not belong to us. That strong disapproval represents God's warning to us. He knows our thoughts and intentions (Hebrews 4:12) and He is warning us not to steal.

Sometimes we steal unintentionally by “borrowing” something and “forgetting” or neglecting to return it. To return the item or repay the money borrowed is the borrower's responsibility. If they do not return the item or repay the money, they have stolen it, just the same as a thief. Although the lender may forget what we borrowed from him, the Lord doesn't. This is a warning to us not to borrow things from others unnecessarily lest we forget, and, we sin against God.

Another way we may be guilty of stealing is by taking something we find. Every lost thing has an owner. If we find something we should always look for the owner, or turn in the item to the proper authorities. Then the item can be returned to the owner if he or she reported it missing.

Stealing requires restitution—restoring to the proper owner. This means that we should not only confess our sin to the Lord and to the owner, but we should repay or replace whatever we stole. In the Old Testament God required a person to repay at least a fifth more, sometimes double or even fivefold (Numbers 5:7; Exodus 22:1, 7). This teaches the thief not to be lazy or greedy and covetous. God is happy whenever we clear up any past misdeeds. In the New Testament, this is what Zaccheus did when he believed into the Lord Jesus and got saved (Luke 19:8). He had unfairly taken more tax money from people than he should have, which he realized was sinful. So he told the Lord, “Behold, the half of my possessions, Lord, I give to the poor, and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore four times as much.”

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.*

- **It is best not to borrow things from others if it’s not necessary.** Perhaps you want to borrow your friend’s toy, or a game, or even a nice jacket. We should be happy with what we have and not borrow things unnecessarily. There may be situations where we have to borrow, such as borrowing an umbrella when it unexpectedly starts raining. In that case, we should return the item as soon as possible. We should check in our homes. If there is anything borrowed, we should return it.
- **We need to make things right.** If we have stolen anything from a store or from anyone, we need to make restitution by paying for what we stole or by returning the item.
- **We can pray and ask the Lord to help us.** If we have trouble returning things that do not belong to us, we can ask the Lord to help us, and our parents also can help us. We will feel much better when we obey the Lord right away. By doing so we are keeping the commandment of the Lord.

Adapted from *Bringing Children from Adam to Christ—The Ten Commandments*, Vol. 3, Lesson 17, and the Church in New York City Children’s Meeting lessons: 9/4/88, 4/4/99, 7/24/05; 7/13/14