


the  
Jesus   
Storybook  
Bible  
Curriculum

# Ten ways to be perfect

Moses and the Ten Commandments, from Exodus 16–17, 19–40

☉ Please see the curriculum Introduction .pdf for more guidance on praying with your group and on Scripture memory.

☉ The total allotted time per lesson is 45 minutes. This is the minimum amount of time it would take to complete the whole lesson. The time can easily be extended to increase the lesson to as much as 1.5 hours. If you have more than the allocated 45 minutes, please use the extra time to extend the time for activities, to learn the memory verse, and to pray.

☉ The “Notes for Teachers on the Text” section is intended as explanation of the Bible text and advance preparation for you only; it is not expressed in terms or language the children could understand.

*The Jesus Storybook Bible Curriculum*  
By Sally Lloyd-Jones and Sam Shammas

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## Recap of the Previous Story

3 min. 

☉ Welcome the children and ask them to sit in a circle.

☉ Briefly recap the main points of the previous stories: “We’ve been reading about how God rescued Moses and his people from being slaves to Pharaoh and led them out of Egypt. Then God rescued his people again by parting the waters so they could cross the Red Sea. We also memorized some words that God said to his people.”

☉ Ask them to recite together the verse they learned at home about the story. “Exodus 6:7 — God said, ‘I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God.’”

☉ To lead into the theme of today’s story, ask: “After the amazing ways God has rescued them, do you think his people could forget him? Do you forget things? I forget things sometimes. Raise your hand if you ever forget things. Thank you, hands down.”

## Activity Introducing the Story

10 min. 

**Aim:** To expend energy and learn that it is easy to forget things.

**Materials:** None.

1. Join the children sitting in the circle. Say: “I’m going to call out some things. If you ever forget those things, stand up. If you always remember them, stay seated. Ready?”

2. You should play this game along with the children, standing and sitting along with them.

3. Say: “Stand up if you ever forget to brush your teeth. Thank you, sit down.”

4. Say: “Stand up if you ever forget someone else’s name. Thank you, sit down.”

5. Say: “Stand up if you ever forget your own name. I’m very glad to see no one stood up.”

6. Say: “Stand up if you ever forget anyone’s birthday. Okay, sit down.”

7. Say: “Stand up if you ever forget your own birthday. Interesting that all of us remember our own birthday.”

8. Say: “Stand up if you ever forget the verses I give you to learn at home. Thank you, sit down.”

9. Continue to call out items in the same manner; e.g., the way to get to school, your best friend, Christmas, bedtime, etc. You can read the items faster and faster so the children are jumping to stand up and so expend energy.

10. Toward the end of the allocated time, say: “Stand up if you ever forget what God is like and how much God loves you.”

11. You should stand up at this last statement.

12. Say: “Thank you, sit down. Sometimes we all forget how great God is and we forget all the amazing things he has done for us. In today’s story, God’s people also forget what God is like and how much God loves them. Let’s see what happens.”

Stay seated with the children in the circle and announce the title of the story. Read aloud pages 100–107 from *The Jesus Storybook Bible* or listen to CD1 track 12.

### Notes for Teachers on the Text

The Ten Commandments begin with two commandments against idolatry. Then come commandments 3–10. Why this order? It is because the fundamental problem in law breaking is always idolatry. In other words, we never break commandments 3–10 without first breaking 1 and 2.

We will either worship God or other things. We cannot eliminate God without creating God substitutes. Something will capture our hearts and imaginations and be the most important thing to us—our ultimate concern, value, and allegiance. So every personality, community, and thought form will be based on either God himself or on some God substitute, an idol.

This means that idolatry is ultimately the reason for all wrongdoing. Why do we ever lie or steal or covet? Of course, the general answer is “because we are weak and sinful,” but the specific answer is always because there is something besides Jesus Christ that we feel we must have to be happy, something that is more important to our hearts than God, something that is enslaving our hearts through inordinate desires. All our failures to trust God wholly or to live rightly are rooted in idolatry—something we make more important than God.

We would not lie, commit adultery, steal, and so on unless we were first making some other thing, or things, more of an ultimate hope and value to us than God. We would not steal if God was our real wealth. We would not commit adultery if God was our real beauty. We would not lie unless there was something we needed to have—honor or power or approval or control—more than God.

Though we may intellectually accept the gospel of salvation by Christ and through grace, our hearts are functionally looking to something else as our hope and justification at the moment we sin. Thus, beneath any particular sin is this sin of rejecting Christ-salvation and indulging in self-salvation.

Therefore, in sin we are always forgetting what God has done for us and instead are being moved by some idol. That is precisely what happened to the Israelites in the desert.

Note also that God first rescues the people from Egypt, and then he gives them the Ten Commandments. Keeping the Ten Commandments is not what saved them; God had already done that. God did not first give the Law and then deliver the people—first he delivered his people, and then he gave them the Law. Thus we are not saved *by* the Law, but saved *for* the Law. The Law is how we regulate our love relationship with God, not the way we merit the relationship. We are saved by faith in Christ alone.

## Understanding the Story

15 min. 

**Aim:** To become familiar with the Ten Commandments and to understand their purpose.

**Materials:** A song that teaches the Ten Commandments; 1 paper scroll or large paper plate for each child; a printout per child of the Ten Commandments cut up so each one is on a small strip of paper (see the handout for wording); child-safe glue; decorating items, e.g., stickers, pieces of colored paper, tin foil, etc.; crayons; copies of the handout (the last page of this document).

1. At the end of the story, say: "Isn't it surprising! After all the times God has rescued them, the people forget God. They forget what God is really like. They forget what God has done for them. But God did not forget them. God kept on showing his people that he would look after them if they would trust him and obey him."
2. Ask: "For example, what did God do for them when they were hungry? Correct, God made the sky rain with food. What did God do for them when they were thirsty? Yes, God made water flow from a rock. Then, to show them that they need a Rescuer and that he is the one who saves them, and to help them know, love, and follow him better, God gave them the Ten Commandments."
3. There are numerous songs available online and elsewhere that teach the Ten Commandments. Choose one and teach it to the children, including as much movement as possible. (If you cannot find a song, please play a game to help the children become familiar with the order of the Ten Commandments.)
4. Give each child a paper scroll and a cut-up set of the Ten Commandments. Put the glue and decorating items in the center of the circle. Announce that each child is going to make a scroll of the Ten Commandments to take home.
5. Ask: "Looking at the pieces of paper in front of you, which is the first commandment? Pick it up and hold it up for me to see. Yes, the first commandment is 'You shall have no other gods before me.' Glue that to the very top of your scroll."
6. Repeat with the other commandments, and then allow a few minutes for the children to decorate their scrolls.
7. After a few minutes have passed, ask the children to help you put away the decorating items.
8. Ask: "Without looking at your scroll, what is the first commandment? Correct, we are to have no other gods. What is the second commandment? Yes, no idols. An idol is a pretend god, something that is not God that we make into a god and treat as if it is God. An idol is anything we treat as more important to us than God."
9. Say: "We all have idols. We all have things that we sometimes treat as if they are more important to us than God. Sometimes we treat our grades or popularity or clothes or video games as if they are more important to us than God. Sometimes the things we make into idols are really good things. Sometimes we treat our friends or our family as if they are more important to us than God. Friends and family are good things and we should love them and treat them well, but God should be more important to us than anything or anyone else."

10. Give each child a copy of the handout and a crayon. Say: "You can see a question in the orange box at the top of your paper. Let me read it to you: 'Do you have something that you sometimes treat as more important to you than God?' Write down what it is."

11. Give them time to do this, then say: "The commandments tell us that God should be more important to us than anything or anyone else. They also tell us to do or not to do many other things. Look at the blue box on your paper. In today's story, the people promised always to obey the Ten Commandments. Can they keep their promise? Circle yes or no."

12. Say: "Raise your hand if you circled yes. Raise your hand if you circled no. Thank you, hands down. You are right; no one can keep all the commandments all the time."

13. Say: "Next question. Does obeying the Ten Commandments save people? Circle yes or no. Does God save people? Circle yes or no. Raise your hand if you think obeying the Ten Commandments can save you. Raise your hand if you think God can save you. Thank you, hands down. You are right; only God can save us."

**For larger groups: You may want to divide the group into smaller circles, each with a teacher. Each teacher can help with the craft as well as help clarify the children's understanding of the commandments.**

## Drawing the Story to a Close

1 min. 

Say: “In the story, the people promised to do everything God had said, to obey all the Ten Commandments. But no matter how hard they tried, they could never keep God’s commandments all the time. Again and again they would forget what God is like; again and again they would not obey his commandments.”

Say: “God knew this and he wanted them to know it too. God wanted them to remember that he is the one who saves them. Obeying the commandments cannot save them; only God can save them. But there is someone who did obey all of God’s commandments all the time. Who was it? Yes, it was Jesus.”

## Jesus in the Story

2 min. 

Ask: “What did we discover about Jesus from today’s story?”

Get a few children to share their answers aloud, commenting appropriately; then ask everyone to write an answer in the space on their handout.

## Praying about the Story

5 min. 

Pray aloud, thanking God for who he is. Ask God to forgive you and the children for the times when you have treated something or someone else as more important to you than God. Ask God to forgive you and the children for forgetting him and ask him to help you and them to remember.

Ask the children to look at their answer to the first question on their paper and to pray that they would treat God as more important than whatever that thing is.

## A Verse from the Story to Learn at Home

2 min. 

☉ Introduce the verse: “We learn from the first commandment that God should be more important to us than anything or anyone else. We are going to memorize that commandment.”

☉ Announce the verse: “So, the verse to learn at home is Exodus 20:3 – ‘You shall have no other gods before me.’”

☉ Read the verse out loud together as a group.

☉ Remind the children to give the handout to their parents, to memorize the verse for next time, and to take their scrolls home with them.

Do you have something that you sometimes treat as more important to you than God?

- You shall have no other gods before me.
- You shall not make for yourself an idol.
- You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God.
- Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.
- Honor your father and your mother.
- You shall not murder.
- You shall not commit adultery.
- You shall not steal.
- You shall not lie.
- You shall not covet.

The people promised always to obey the Ten Commandments. Can they keep their promise?

YES NO

Does obeying the Ten Commandments save people?

YES NO

Does God save people?

YES NO

### Jesus in the Story

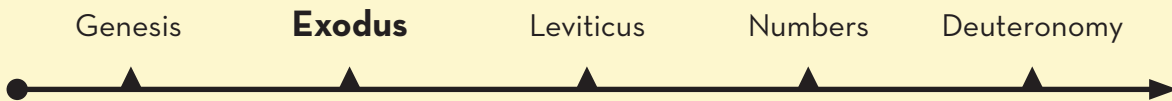


What did you discover about Jesus from this story?

→ Jesus

### A Verse from the Story to Learn at Home

You shall have no other gods before me. (Exodus 20:3)



Notes for parents: From the story we learned that God gave his people the Ten Commandments. But the people couldn't keep the commandments. Only one person obeyed all of God's commandments all the time – Jesus. Please help your child to memorize the verse and the Scripture reference for next time. Please review with them the place of the book of Exodus, using the diagram above. [www.jesusstorybookbible.com](http://www.jesusstorybookbible.com)