



## Loving Others

(based on Exodus 20:12-17)

Remember that God had led the Hebrew people out of slavery, and they were camped, waiting for Moses. He had climbed the mountain to receive a message from God for the people. God had a set of rules, Ten Commandments that God wanted the people to follow. God knew that these rules would help them, and their children, and their children's children, and so on for generations. These rules would help them remember who God is—first and most important in their lives—and these rules would help them live together in peace and grace.

The first four rules were about how the people ought to love God.

The other six rules were about how people ought to love one another:

5. Treat your father and your mother with respect. Look after them.
6. Don't kill anyone. Respect all people.
7. Be true to your husband or wife.
8. Don't steal things that belong to others.
9. Don't lie about anyone. Always tell the truth about others.
10. Be happy with what you have.

Moses thought about these rules too. They were perfect. They were all about treating others as you would want to be treated.

Rule 5 would remind children to honor their parents, especially when children think they know everything. God figured out that children need their parents, and parents need their children.

Rule 6 seemed like a pretty obvious one, but as Moses thought about it, he realized that it went beyond just killing someone. It had to do with respecting the life of all people. Harming another person, with force or words, is also wrong.

God knew that to build a new nation in a new land, families needed to stick together. So God made a rule to help people keep their promises in marriage. Moses thought that it was a good rule to keep all the promises we make to others.

Moses thought Rules 8 and 9 just made sense when people were living in community together. People shouldn't take things that aren't theirs, and they shouldn't lie about others.

Moses fully agreed with Rule 10; we all should be happy with what we have. "After all, everything is a gift from God," Moses said to himself.

The Ten Commandments were just what the people needed to hear. Following God's rules would help them love God and love one another. Now they knew how to serve God gratefully and live in peace. Once again, God had taken care of the people.



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(based on Exodus 20:12-17)

Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

### Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your children—imagine and wonder.
- Invite “I wonder” statements by beginning with some of your own, such as: I wonder, “Why did God give the people the Ten Commandments?” I wonder, “How did God think the commandments would help the people then and now?”



### Responding to God's Grace

- Together, list rules that are important to each person in the household. Select the top ten rules and create and decorate a poster listing the ten special rules. Display this poster in a common area.
- Make a Ten Commandments flip book. Use eleven hole-punched index cards per person. Write “The Ten Commandments” on the first card. On the other ten cards, write a summary of or illustrate each of the commandments. Cut 3" pieces of yarn. Thread a piece of yarn through each of the holes punched in the cards to bind them together.
- Using Exodus 20:17, create a billboard on mural paper that is an anti-consumerism ad. How would you advertise *not* coveting? As you work together, have some discussion about having the “right stuff” to fit in with peers. Have a discussion about stewardship: How do we decide what we’ll do with our money? How does this commandment influence what we buy?

### Celebrating in Gratitude

- Invite each member of the family to think of one activity that can be done to keep each of the commandments this week. Make a promise to God and to one another to follow through on at least one of the ideas you share.
- Ask family members to repeat the lines of the following prayer after you say them:

*Thank you, God, for Moses and people who help others.*

*Thank you, God, for being with those who are in need.*

*Thank you, God, for being with us here today.*

*Amen.*