

Ten Commandments

Materials

- Long rope/string
- Four balloons
- Craft sticks
- Markers
- Masking tape
- Ribbon
- Scissors

Introduction

Place four balloons and a long rope (or string) on the floor.

Adult: Let's see. We have four balloons and a really long rope. We are going to play a game. It's a great game—when everyone follows the rules. However this time I'm not going to tell you the rules! Rather, I'm going to let you play the game without rules. Ready? Have fun! (Sit quietly and watch what the kids do with the supplies.)

- What was it like to play a game without any rules?
- Do you think it was as fun as it could have been?

People sometimes complain about rules, but, really, rules are helpful. Without them, people might not know how to behave at all! God gave us the Ten Commandments for a reason – to teach us how to live, to show us when we've made a mistake, and to help us keep good order. God's rules rule!

Now let's play the game again, according to the rules that I know. First we need two equal teams. Spread the rope between the two teams. To play the game, each team will begin with two balloons. Try to hit the balloons over the rope to the other team's side. Keep the balloons in the air, and keep hitting them back and forth over the rope (string). Each time a balloon touches the ground on one side, the other team scores a point. (To make the game more challenging, you can attempt to get all four balloons in play at the same time.)

Story

God gave the Israelites ten special rules, called commandments, to teach them how to live. Today, you will read the Bible passage (Exodus 20:1-17) where God gave the commandments.

Discuss:

- The laws that God gives here are very specific. They tell His people exactly what they must and must not do. Why do you think there are so many "shall not" here?
- What are the two commandments that don't have "shall not" in them?
- Why do you suppose they are worded that way, without "shall not" language? What are the two shortest but most powerful commandments?
- Which commandments tell us how to love God?
- Which commandments tell us how to love each other?
- Can anyone follow all the commandments perfectly?
- How do the Ten Commandments tie into God's Big Rescue Plan? Discuss the difference between Law and Gospel here.

Practice applying the commandments to real life scenarios. For each example below, discuss which commandment applies and whether it was kept or broken.

- Working at a job for 7 days a week and never going to worship.
- Complaining to your parents that all your friends have the newest gaming system but yours is old.
- Praying to God to say "Thank you" and to ask for the things you and others need.
- A husband wakes up early to make breakfast for his wife.
- Worshipping a wooden idol shaped like a duck-billed platypus named Cranky.
- Sticking up for a friend when other people are gossiping about him or her.
- Shoving your brother or sister down whenever he or she goes into your bedroom.
- Helping yourself to your brother or sister's stash of Halloween candy.
- Playing video games when your mom told you to get your homework done.
- Helping a friend fix his bike.

Helpful comments for these answers:

- Second commandment: This commandment is about not swearing and cursing, but is also about using God's name in appropriate ways, like prayer, praising God, and giving thanks to God.
- Fifth commandment: This commandment is about not murdering, but it is also about not endangering or harming others.
- Ninth commandment: This commandment is about not coveting a neighbor's house, but is also about helping neighbors keep what they have.

Time Capsule

Using the photo as a guide, decorate craft sticks for each of the commandments. Connect the sticks with strips of masking tape. When finished, fold accordion style and close with ribbon.

