

Halam St Michael

Ten Commandment Boards

Aim: To consider the Ten Commandments and their impact on how Christians live

Objective: Pupils will look at the Ten Commandment boards in church and explore what they might mean today

Curriculum links:

KS2 Teachings and authority

Activity: The children will look at the language and meaning of the Ten Commandments and create modern versions.

Resources:

King James Bible
Copies of the Ten Commandments for pupil reference
Modern translations of the Bible
Materials for poster making

Information for Leader

This session is based on the board displaying the Ten Commandments above the south door.

You will need to check with the school in advance if there are any school or class rules. If possible it would be helpful to have a copy to use in the session. The school may not use the term 'rules' in which case it is best to use the school's terminology throughout the session.

The word 'adultery' will come up in the session. Decide in advance how you are going to define this for children. You could say it's being married and having another girlfriend/boyfriend, or not being loyal in a marriage.

After looking at the boards the children may find it easier to work from a paper copy of the wording.

Introduction (5 mins)

- Allow the children time to arrive, take their coats off, sit down and have a look round. They need to be seated where they will be able to see the Commandment board.
- Hold up a copy of the school/class rules and begin reading them. Ask the children if they sound familiar. Explore why the school/class have rules and the impact some of them have on the children's lives.
 - What would happen if this rule wasn't kept?
 - Why do you think this rule is there?
 - How does this help you all get along?
 - Do any of them make life safer?
- Which rules are hardest to keep?

Activity (35 mins)

- Point out the board to the children. They are like the rules for Christians. They are written in the Old Testament of the Bible in chapter 20 of the book of Exodus, as it says at the top of the board.
- Start reading the commandments. Stop to talk about the language. Look at the use of 'f' instead of 's'. If you have a King James Church Bible you could show it to the children and find Exodus 20 and ask one of the children to read the first couple of commandments. Read the commandments and ask



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the children to put up their hand if they hear a word we don't use today. Ask if they know, or can work out what the word means.

- What would life be like if everyone obeyed the Ten Commandments? Some of the Commandments are easier to keep than others. In what ways might it be hard for a Christian to keep all the commandments? How might that affect how they live?
 - Working in small groups, ask the children to re-write the Ten Commandments so that people today would understand them. You could then compare the children's work with a modern paraphrase of the Bible, such as *The Message* or *Good News*.
 - Children could make posters of their commandments to display in church or back in school.
- or
- Divide the class into 10 groups and give each group a commandment. Ask them to create a short drama showing someone keeping or breaking their commandment and finish with one of them reading out their commandment. They can then show their drama to the rest of the class.

Plenary (5 mins)

- Next to the Ten Commandment board is another board with the words of the Lord's Prayer. “ . . . forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation . . . ” For Christians there is life beyond the obeying of the laws/rules. Jesus offered forgiveness of sins (trespasses). If appropriate say the Lord's Prayer together.

Extension

- Children can make posters to represent one of the commandments.
- Look at the story of Moses and the people of Israel in the wilderness and how they did and didn't obey the Ten Commandments.
- Explore how the Ten Commandments are kept or not in 21st century Britain. What would life be like for everyone if they were kept? What difference does it make to a Christian to attempt to keep them?
- Compare with other Ten Commandment boards such as
 - <http://southwellchurches.nottingham.ac.uk/bulcote/hfitting.php>
 - <http://southwellchurches.nottingham.ac.uk/langar/hfitting.php>
 - <http://southwellchurches.nottingham.ac.uk/cinderhill/hfitting.php>
 - <http://southwellchurches.nottingham.ac.uk/annesley/hfitting.php>
 - <http://southwellchurches.nottingham.ac.uk/edwalton/hfitting.php>

The Ten Commandments

Taken from the boards in St Michael's church, Halam



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I.

Thou shalt have none other Gods but me.

II.

Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them, for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, and visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and shew mercy unto thousands in them that love me and keep my commandments.

III.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

IV.

Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all that thou hast to do, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt do no manner of work, thou, and thy Son, and thy daughter, thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, thy Cattle, and the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day, wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and Hallowed it.

V.

Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

VI.

Thou shalt do no Murder.

VII.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII.

Thou shalt not steal.

IX.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

X.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his.

Lord have mercy upon us and write all these thy laws in our hearts we beseech thee.