

# WEEK 1

## OBEDIENCE IS A CHOICE GOD'S COMMANDS ARE FOR OUR GOOD

ELEMENTARY LESSON GUIDE

### THE FOUR KEYS . . .

## KEY VERSE

For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. 1 John 5:3

## KEY IDEAS

1. God's commands have purpose.
2. God's commands are given from love.
3. God's commands are for our protection.

## KEY PASSAGE

Genesis 3

## KEY PRINCIPLES



EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW . . .

that all God's commands have purpose and are given out of God's love and desire to protect His children.



EVERY CHILD SHOULD FEEL . . .

loved by a God whose commands are for our good.



EVERY CHILD SHOULD BE ABLE TO . . .

see the purpose in God's commands.



EVERY CHILD SHOULD WANT . . .

to honor God by keeping His commands.

# INTRODUCTION

When God created mankind, He created us with freedom. Adam and Eve had the choice to love and obey their Creator who knew what was best for them, or to follow their own path and think of themselves more highly than God, the Creator of the universe. Since Satan fell from Heaven, his goal has been to take all of creation down with him, including us. God allowed Satan to tempt Adam and Eve as a test of their trust in Him. This is a test they ultimately failed, breaking the perfect order that God had created and breaking their fellowship with God. As a result of their disobedience, God justly punished their sin. Now all of creation lives in a broken and sinful world as a result of this curse, but the Good News is that God has had a plan all along to restore our fellowship with Him and restore His creation, too. That plan is Jesus.

## OPENING ILLUSTRATION

Begin by asking the class to take turns providing examples of rules that their parents, teachers, or other authorities have given that are for their good. Once a rule is stated, discuss how that rule was important or good. Explain that sometimes we might not understand rules but that doesn't mean they are not for our good. Explain that just like our parents, teachers, and other authorities have given us rules to follow that are for our good, God's rules are always good because He is perfect. (Be prepared to differentiate God's rules as perfect from man's rules as sometimes imperfect in the event a child gives an example of a time when they were given a rule that was not for their good. Use discernment when answering.)

## KEY IDEAS

Read Genesis 3 and use the following points for guided discussion.

- God's commands have purpose.
  - Why did God give the command to not eat of the tree? From the beginning, God gave mankind freedom to choose obedience, and also from the beginning Satan has tried to influence man to choose their own way instead of God's way. Satan chose himself over God and wants all of creation to do the same. God, because He is loving, allows us to choose Him so that our love for Him will be real.
  - How is God's purpose revealed in this story even in Adam and Eve's disobedience? You cannot have true faith in God without the choice to choose Him above everything else. Faith is trusting in God even when our understanding is limited. If we know that God is good, loving, and knows better than we do, we can trust Him with the things we do not understand. God would not be God if His creation could fully understand Him, because He is all knowing and we are not.
  - Do you think Satan ruined God's plan? Why or why not? Everything Satan does is because God has granted him permission to. God wanted Adam and Eve to have a choice to obey Him, so He allowed Satan to tempt them. Because of this, God's plan was not ruined. God knew all along what choice they would make and He loved them still (vs. 21).
- God's commands are given from love.
  - How do we know it was loving? God IS love, so being in His presence means to be in the presence of love and to be loved. When Adam and Eve chose themselves over God, they chose separation from God. By God commanding them not to eat of the tree, He was giving them freedom to choose Him. God desires that we love Him genuinely, and we cannot do that if we aren't given the freedom to choose. God does not desire robots who are forced to love Him.
- God's commands are given for our protection.
  - What was the consequence of Adam and Eve's choice? (vs. 16-19, 23-24)
  - Why didn't God want them to also eat from the tree of life in vs. 22? If they did, not only would they be in sin, but they would be in sin forever. God punished Adam and Eve through separation so that His plan to redeem them through Jesus could be completed and their fellowship restored.

## Activity

With a child volunteer, provide them a sturdy cutting board or book with a flat surface. Instruct them to stand on one end of the classroom. Tell them to hold the board/book very still. Then place a marble on the center of the board/book and instruct them to walk across the room without letting the marble hit the ground. After they've attempted the challenge, and likely been unsuccessful, have them do it again and replace the board with a bowl. Once they complete the challenge, ask them which one was easier? Of course, the bowl is easier. Explain that the boundaries of the bowl made the task easier to accomplish. In the same way, the boundaries and commands that God gives to us help us accomplish His purpose for our lives.

## Prayer

Thank God that His commands are for our good and that He loves us enough to give us commands that protect and guide us. Ask God to help us live obediently to His commands, trusting that they are for our good because He knows what is best for His children.

# FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

## ACTIVITY

Memorize the key verse 1 John 5:3. Then read Ephesians 6:1-4.

Spend time talking with your child about rules and boundaries that you have given to them. Ask them if they can explain to you why you might have given them each rule/boundary. This can also be a good opportunity for you as the parent to evaluate why you give rules/boundaries. Are they Biblical? Are they for protection? Are they to help your child grow and learn? Are they meant to ultimately disciple your child to be a respectful, responsible, and more Christ-like adult one day? What rules/boundaries might need to change?

After honest reflection, remind your child that God has given us parents or guardians as a picture of His relationship with all of us who believe in Him, His children. He is our Heavenly Father and He is perfect. Our parents or guardians are not perfect because they are humans, too. But they have a very important job to care for us and show us the way. When this is done as God intended, they are showing a picture of how our Father God loves us. That is why it is so important that we honor, love, and obey. It is also why it is so important for parents to train their children with love and care and disciple them faithfully, not provoking them to anger.

## DISCUSSION

- **How does obeying God's commands bring Him honor?**  
Through obedience, we are demonstrating that we trust God. God is worthy of our trust because His commands are good. Because we can know that, it should bring us joy to obey them. (Deut. 6:24)
- **What are some of the commands of God? How are those commands good?**  
10 commandments. Exodus 20  
Love one another as Christ has loved us. John 13:34-35  
Tell others about Jesus, so that they can have life in Him. Matthew 28:19-20  
Be strong and courageous. Joshua 1:7  
Be imitators of God. Ephesians 5:1  
Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. Matthew 22:37-40  
Be doers of the Word. James 1:22  
Love your enemies. Matthew 5:44-45  
Forgive those who hurt you. Matthew 18:21-35  
(There are many, many more)

## PRAYER

Thank God for allowing us to have a relationship with Him through Jesus and for giving us purpose. Thank Him that He is glorious and deserving of all praise. Ask Him to help you live your life for Him this week.