



RESPECTING ONE GOD

*“You shall have no other gods before me.”
—Exodus 20:3*

“A god is that to which we look for all good and in which we find refuge in every time of need. To have a god is nothing else than to trust and believe him with our whole heart. As I have often said, the trust and faith of the heart alone make both God and an idol. If your faith and trust are right, then your God is the true God. On the other hand, if your trust is false and wrong, then you have not the true God. For these two belong together, faith and God. That to which your heart clings and entrusts itself is, I say, really your God.”

—Luther’s Large Catechism

BIBLE STUDY

GOD, THE CREATOR AND FATHER

READ Isaiah 44:6 and Isaiah 45:5-7.

1. How many Gods are there?
2. By what names is God called in Isaiah 44:6?

6. Read the following passages and match them to the authorities they are telling us to respect in the column on the right. Draw lines between the matches.

Titus 3:1



Government
Officials

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13



Elders

1 Peter 2:13-14

Romans 13:1-7



Pastors/
Spiritual
Leaders

1 Peter 5:5

Hebrews 13:7

WHY DO WE NEED AUTHORITIES?

READ 1 Timothy 2:1-2.



Because of sin, which deeply influences every human being, people are constantly tempted to disregard rules and laws, neglect responsibilities to the larger community because of self-centeredness, and fail to think of others because of a preoccupation with personal pursuits and ambitions. If people were permitted to do as they please, without supervision, human community would be impossible and life for all would be chaotic and disastrous.



RESPECTING THE PROPERTY OF OTHERS

"You shall not steal."
—Exodus 20:15

BIBLE STUDY

ROBBING OTHERS

Check the following statements if you think they are examples of breaking the commandment concerning stealing:

- _____ 1. Someone looks at a fellow student's answers on a test and uses them for her own.
- _____ 2. A local store clerk accidentally undercharges ten dollars for a purchase. When the buyer discovers the mistake, he keeps it to himself.
- _____ 3. A woman makes \$4,000 in one year teaching piano lessons, but fails to report the income to the IRS so she won't have to pay taxes on it.
- _____ 4. A youth copies a friend's music CD so he doesn't have to buy his own.
- _____ 5. An employee uses the company copy machine to make personal copies without permission and without paying for them.
- _____ 6. Another employee calls work and tells her boss she is sick so she can go the beach to suntan.



Your job as teacher to unbelieving students is to love them, faithfully teach the material, and then regularly pray that the Spirit of God would convince them of their separation and need for God and then to work faith in them. Your prayers are essential since only God's activity through the Spirit can accomplish the work of salvation.

Your objective for the believing students is to help them see the depths of their moral failure. This needs to be done for two reasons. First, if your students believe they are good enough to merit life with God because of their own goodness, then they will spurn God's grace in Christ and lose the humility that keeps them in faith. The second reason is to groom students to live a life of ongoing repentance. In infant baptism, Jesus lays hold of the children and claims them as His own. The problem is that as a baby becomes an adult, it is possible to lose the faith. This is a Lutheran belief. Infant baptism (a death of self) saves a child, but ongoing repentance (death of self) and faith keep the adult in saving grace. Consequently, we need to teach our children that repentance is the way in which the waters of baptism remain alive and effective. We also should teach them how to repent.

A class on the Ten Commandments can help satisfy both of the above objectives. An honest look at the Ten Commandments helps destroy a person's self-righteousness. The Commandments also remind Christians how they continue to fail their Lord and draws them to renewed repentance.

Teachers are encouraged to go through the Ten Commandments with the students at the beginning of every class. It would also be enriching to regularly incorporate a time of confession and absolution during class, probably at the close. It could be very simple, or it could incorporate your congregation's liturgy from your hymnbook. The goal of this class is not just to teach the Ten Commandments but also to teach repentance for not obeying them. If your congregation uses the *Lutheran Book of Worship*, you may want to use the general confession on page 56.

DYNAMICS OF THIS CURRICULUM

PREFACE TO THE LESSON

Opening

Take time to greet students as they arrive and visit a while before beginning the lesson. Consider starting each session with prayer. At times there is an *Opening* section in the lessons. It would be a good idea to go through the Ten Commandments as a class every week at this time.

Objectives and Background

These sections of the *Teacher's Guide* prepare you for the lesson. Look at these carefully.

LESSON

Object Lessons

This section is optional. Its purpose is to help reinforce the meaning of the particular Commandment addressed in the lesson or the meaning of the Ten Commandments as a whole. Before class, look at this section in the *Teacher's Guide* to see what items you will need.

BIBLE STUDY

You can do the Bible Study either as a class, in small groups before going over the answers, or a combination of the two. It often helps break up the routine of doing everything as a class by having students discuss the questions in small groups first.

ABOUT THE COMMANDMENTS

The purpose of this section is to teach students about the history of the Ten Commandments as well as their value in life. If you don't have time, you could omit this part.

Closing

As suggested earlier, it may be of great value to close all or most lessons with some sort of confession and absolution. This could be general or relate to sins committed having to do with that lesson's commandment. You can do this on your own or use printed resources (such as the *LBW* which has several beautiful confessions of sin).

Conclude the class with a prayer. You can pray your own prayer or use the prayer in the *Teacher's Guide*. A great option would be for students to volunteer to lead the prayer time.

PRAY, PRAY, PRAY

Pray regularly for your class. Pray that the Holy Spirit would convince your students of their sin and of their need for Christ. Pray that God would increase their faith through His Spirit. Pray for their protection and for strength to meet the problems they face. Pray that your students would encounter Jesus Christ in the Word they read and hear during the lessons, in the lessons themselves, and through your love and example.

The Teacher's Guide

1st Commandment: Respecting Only One God

PREFACE TO THE LESSON

Objectives

1. Remind students there is only one true God, but humans are naturally drawn to idols.
2. Help students understand they can break the Ten Commandments either by deliberately doing something or by failing to do something.

Background

There is a universal hunger for God in every human heart. All peoples throughout history in all parts of the world have sought religious fulfillment. Since the dawn of the Enlightenment, however, many rationalists have prophesied that with the rise of reason, religion would die out. Centuries later, the search for God is as strong as ever.

The reason for this is simply that there is a God. As the body cannot live without water, we cannot live without Him. If we do not have a relationship with God, we