

Outline - Lesson 26



OPENING PRAYER

MEMORY WORK

QUIZ TIME

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Give two reasons why worship is not optional in your life.

Define worship in your own words.

What are two important reasons for worshipping your God?

What are three benefits you receive as you worship?

What are two things you know will occur as you leave worship each week?

LESSON OVERVIEW

In our last lesson, we began our discussion of the Third Commandment as we looked at what worship is, the benefits of worship, why we worship, and how we worship. Today, we continue our discussion of this third principle by considering how we disappoint our God and how we honor our God. We will also study our common worship liturgies and learn about the Church Year.

LESSON

As much as we would like to think differently, we, as God's people, break the Third Commandment multiple times every week. As we do, we break the heart of our God who deserves far better from us. In order to learn how not to break this basic principle of God, we need to consider how we have disappointed God in the past.

Turn to page 148 in your Handouts.

Disappointing God

Draw an "X" over the number of each statement that describes how you have disappointed God.

1. I have disappointed God by choosing not to worship.
2. I have broken my God's heart by going to church, yet not actively participating.
3. I have disappointed my God by singing the hymns, yet not paying attention to the significance of the words.
4. I have disappointed my God by speaking the words of the Confession of Sins without actually admitting those words applied to me.
5. I have broken God's heart by not applying the message to my life.
6. I have brought dishonor to my God by not paying attention at worship instead of focusing on the importance of worship in my life.
7. I have broken God's heart by choosing not to provide an offering as my expression of appreciation for His work in me.
8. I have disappointed my God by choosing not to read His Word during the week.
9. I have disappointed my God by believing nothing happens while I am at worship.
10. I have broken God's heart by staying in bed or choosing to watch TV instead of gathering for worship.
11. I have broken God's heart by forgetting my Baptism and the comfort it offers me.
12. I have disappointed my God by going to church only because I had to go.
13. I have disappointed my God by complaining because I was told I should go to church.
14. I have broken my God's heart by being a spectator at worship instead of a participant.
15. I have disappointed my God by believing His Word has no power to change my situations.

We aren't eager to admit we break this Commandment, yet obviously, it still happens. God's heart breaks each time we choose to dishonor Him, each time we fail to heed this basic principle.

Although we may disappoint our God frequently, He still wants us to do all we can to obey this Commandment.

Turn to page 149 in your Handouts so we can learn ways we can bring honor to our God.

Honoring My God

Put an exclamation point on the line in front of each statement that describes something you can do to honor your God.

- _____ 1. I honor my God by valuing His Word as a precious gift.
- _____ 2. I bring honor to my God by viewing the worship message as God speaking through the Pastor.
- _____ 3. I honor my God by eagerly looking forward to my next opportunity to worship.
- _____ 4. I honor God by listening carefully to His Word in order to learn what it means for my life.
- _____ 5. I honor my God by thinking about what His Word says and relating it to my life.
- _____ 6. I bring honor to my God by supporting His church through my offerings.
- _____ 7. I bring honor to my God by viewing my offerings as a very small way of showing my appreciation.
- _____ 8. I bring honor to my God by appreciating those who teach His Word in Sunday School.
- _____ 9. I honor my God by sharing His Word with my friends who do not know of God's love.
- _____ 10. I bring honor to His name by acknowledging my significant need for His work in my life.
- _____ 11. I bring honor to my God by treating Him as the most important part of my life.
- _____ 12. I bring high honor to my God by depending on Him only on Sunday mornings.
- _____ 13. I bring honor to my God by spending time each day praising Him and bringing my needs to Him.
- _____ 14. I bring honor to my God by actively participating in worship.

_____ 15. I bring honor to my God by showing others the love of God by my actions.

Honoring our God is what He expects of us in this Commandment. Although we may not accomplish this task all the time, our God still waits for us and expects us to do our best to give Him the honor He deserves.

Along with our discussion of worship, we need to take time to look at our liturgy, at the typical orders of worship used in our services.

Before we focus on the liturgies found in our hymnal, we need to understand the basic parts of a typical worship service, the basic elements that need to occur in every proper worship service.

(Hand out a hymnal to each student. The page number information below is referring to the Lutheran Service Book.)

In our typical worship services, you should be able to identify several basic components.

The first component is the Invocation.

If you look at page 167 in your hymnal, you will find the Invocation.

With the Invocation, we call on God to be present among us as we worship that all we do may be pleasing in His sight. As we hear the words, "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," we hear the words of Invocation as we invoke or ask our Triune God to be present with us as we worship.

As we hear those words, we are also reminded of our Baptism. Each time we hear the Invocation, it reminds us that we belong to the family of God, that we are children of the heavenly Father as we gather to worship.

The second component is the Confession of Sins and Absolution.

Following the Invocation, on the same page in your hymnal, you find the Confession of Sins and the Absolution, that is, the pronouncement of forgiveness.

In most services, this component occurs early in the service. Having sought God's presence and having been reminded of our relationship through Baptism, we go to our God to admit our sins and hear His wonderful word of forgiveness. This generally occurs early in the service so that, once we have the assurance of forgiveness, our burdens are lifted and we are ready to spend the remainder of our worship in prayer, Scripture, and praise. Until we have relief from our burdens, our hearts are not ready to offer words of incredible praise and thanksgiving.

The third primary component is the Scripture Readings.

On page 172, you find the notation regarding the Scripture Readings.

As we gather to worship, we gather to hear God speak to us through His Word. Once we are confident our past has been erased by means of God's forgiveness, our hearts are eager to hear His Word, to take in new information that will assist us in the week ahead. As the Scripture Readings are read, we are not hearing mere words. We are hearing God's Word, and as we hear His Word, the Holy Spirit enables our hearts to understand what we would otherwise be unable to understand. Each time you hear His Word read, you can know with confidence that the Holy Spirit is present within you by faith, that He will enable the Word to speak to your heart in remarkable ways.

The fourth primary component is the message.

On page 174, you see the typical location for the sermon or the message for the day.

God's Word is given to be presented and explained in such a way that we can relate it more readily to our personal lives. As the Pastor presents the message, he takes the Word of God and applies it to present day situations so we can grasp the intent of God's Word more fully. As the Pastor speaks, the Holy Spirit is at work guiding the Pastor's words and guiding our hearts so that the message impacts our lives. If the message you hear has no effect on your life, it is likely you have closed your heart to the workings of the Holy Spirit.

The fifth primary component is our Profession of Faith, the Creed.

Following the message, you see both the Nicene and the Apostles' Creed.

Having gathered as fellow believers, we join in our common profession of faith, a profession that unites us as the body of Christ. In the Creed, we not only profess what we believe in our hearts and as the combined body of Christ. We also declare this to be what we hold as truth regarding our Triune God.

The sixth component is the Prayers.

Following our Profession of Faith, we go to our God in prayer.

God's people are people of prayer. As we gather to worship, we gather in prayer. We gather to confess our sins, to offer our thanks, to lift our hearts in praise, and to bring our requests before His throne as the people of God joined together in worship. Our prayers, as a congregation, enable us to bring our concerns and thanksgiving to our God as a united whole. As we unite in prayer, God listens to our prayer and our faith-filled "Amen," which declares our complete confidence in God's power to answer prayer.

The seventh primary component is the Benediction, the blessing from our God.

On page 183, you find the words of the Benediction.

The Benediction is not a “maybe” or a “possibility.” It’s a statement of fact. The Lord will bless us and keep us. The Lord will make His face shine on us and be gracious to us. The Lord will look on us with His favor and give us His peace. As we hear those words near the end of our worship services, those words send us on our way with the confidence that, whatever we may face in the week ahead, our Lord will continue to fulfill His benediction within our lives.

Now that we have these primary components in place, we want to walk through the most common liturgies we use in our services so that you understand the purpose of each part and the significance it has in our worship.

(Choose the most common liturgies you currently use and walk through each part by part explaining each part, the significance it has in worship, and how each part fits together to create a unified worship service.)

Before we leave the Third Commandment, we also need to learn about the Church Year.

The Church Year follows a different calendar than our traditional January - December calendar because the church calendar coincides with significant events in the life of Christ. The first significant event in Christ’s life on this earth was His birth.

The season of preparation for the celebration of the birth of Christ is the season that begins our Church Year. Since this season begins in late November or the first Sunday in December, our Church Year begins the last Sunday in November or the first Sunday in December instead of on January 1st.

Turn to page 150 in your Handouts as we learn more about the Church Year.

As I mentioned, the Church Year revolves around the life of Christ. At the same time, the Church Year also provides guidance for our Christian lives. With each season or Sunday of the Church Year, you will also notice that our paraments, located on the altar, the lecturn, and the pulpit change colors based on the appropriate color for the season.

Before we look at the seasons of the Church Year, we need to realize the significance of the various colors used throughout the Church Year.

Look at the bottom of page 150 in your Handouts.

(Note: The information as it appears in their Handouts is on page 254 in your Outlines.)

There you see the basic colors of the Church Year.

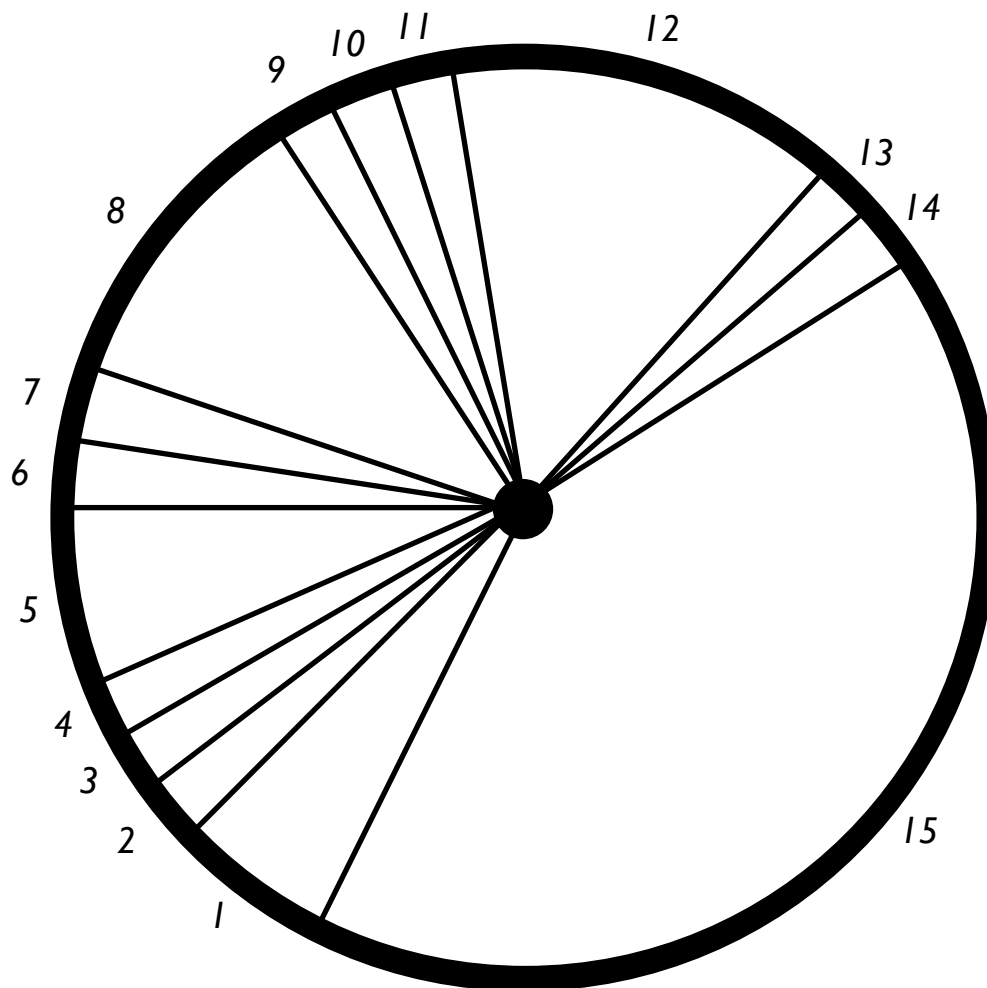
Green - symbol of growth; encourages Christian growth

White - symbol of purity; associated with the events of Christ

Blue - symbol of renewal
Purple - symbol of humility and suffering
Red - symbol of celebration
Black - symbol of death

Now that we know the colors used in our Church Year, we want to identify the seasons of the Church Year and their corresponding colors.

The Church Year



(The information contained in numbers 1-15 below are blank lines in the Handouts. As you provide the information, the students should write it on the appropriate lines in their Handouts.)

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Advent - Blue | 9. Maundy Thursday - Purple |
| 2. Christmas - White | 10. Good Friday - Black |
| 3. Epiphany - White | 11. Easter Sunday - White |
| 4. Baptism of our Lord - White | 12. Easter Season - White |

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 5. Epiphany Season - Green | 13. Pentecost Sunday - Red |
| 6. Transfiguration of our Lord - White | 14. Trinity Sunday - White |
| 7. Ash Wednesday - Purple | 15. Pentecost Season - Green |
| 8. Lent - Purple | |

Green - _____

Blue - _____

Red - _____

White - _____

Purple - _____

& _____

Black - _____

As you gather to worship each week, notice the color of the paraments; recall the season of the Church Year. Then, remind yourself of how the parament color and the season relate to your worship experience.

REVIEW OF THE DAY

What are two ways you have disappointed your God at worship?

What are three things you can do to honor your God in worship?

What are three basics of a proper worship service?

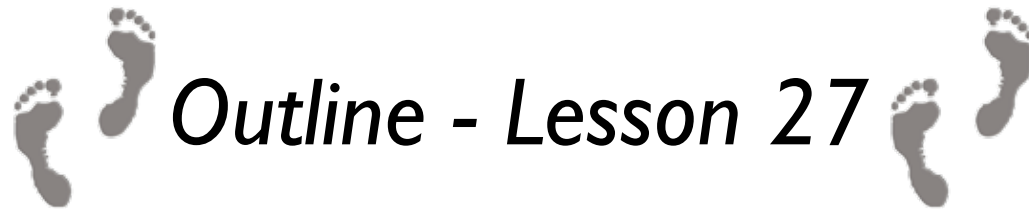
Name three seasons of the Church Year.

PREVIEW OF NEXT WEEK

Next week, we move into the Second Table of the Law as we focus on the Fourth Commandment. As we look at the Fourth Commandment, we will talk about how we view ourselves, learn what God asks us not to do, and also learn the importance of and ways we can show respect.

CLOSING PRAYER

ADDITIONAL MEMORY WORK



Outline - Lesson 27

OPENING PRAYER

MEMORY WORK

QUIZ TIME

REVIEW QUESTIONS

What are two ways you have disappointed your God at worship?

What are three things you can do to honor your God in worship?

What are three of the basics of a proper worship service?

Name three seasons of the Church Year and their corresponding colors.

LESSON OVERVIEW

In our last lesson, we completed our discussion of the Third Commandment as we focused on honoring our God, our common liturgies, and the Church Year. In our lesson today, we move to the Fourth Commandment. As we do, we will talk about how we view ourselves, consider how we break this Commandment, and then learn the importance of and ways we can show respect.

LESSON

With the Fourth Commandment, we arrive at the Second Table of the Law which includes Commandments 4-10. Each of these Commandments turn our attention to our relationship with each other.

Only after we have the first three Commandments set in our minds, we are prepared to focus on how we interact with those around us. If we could have kept the first three Commandments perfectly, we would already know how to treat one another.

Yet, God knew we would fail at the first three Commandments. Therefore, He gave us the remaining seven Commandments as basic principles for interacting with others.

The summary of the Second Table is to love our neighbor as ourselves.

To love our neighbor as ourselves, we need to ask, “How do I view myself? What do I believe about myself?”

How we view ourselves is often referred to as our self-image. When we talk about self-image, we could say that it’s what we think about ourselves based on what other people say.

If we think we are inferior to everyone else, we will become inferior.

If we think we have no talents, we will convince ourselves we have none.

If we think we are worthless, we will eventually convince ourselves we have no worth in the world.

If we think only of our failures in the past, we will live them out in the present and the future.

Our God created us in His image. He created us to like who we are, to place high value on ourselves, and to view ourselves as important and significant in God’s great plan.

Turn to page 151 in your Handouts where we will learn what God says about us.

(Break them into groups of 2-3.)

In your group, look up the passages and fill in the blanks concerning what God says about you. If necessary, use a form of the words from the passage to complete the sentence.

(As the students work, watch to see how well each of them know the Bible and where to find various passages. If finding the location is too time consuming, consider doing this as a group with each person looking up a different passage.)

God Speaks

1. Ephesians 2:10 - God says I am His workmanship.
2. Ephesians 2:19 - God says I am a member of God’s household.
3. Ephesians 1:4 - God says I am chosen in Him.
4. Galatians 3:26 - God says I am a son (or daughter) of God.
5. II Corinthians 5:17 - God says I am a new creation.
6. I Corinthians 3:16 - God says I am God’s temple.
7. I Corinthians 15:49 - God says I bear the likeness of the man from heaven.
8. I Corinthians 12:27 - God says I am the body of Christ.
9. Philippians 4:4-7 - God says I am to rejoice always.

10. John 3:16 - God says I am loved.
11. John 8:31 - God says I am His disciple.
12. I John 3:1 - God says I am a child of God.
13. I John 4:11 - God says I am loved.
14. I John 3:16 - God says I am important. (Hint: What are you in God's sight if He would give His Son for you?)
15. Galatians 3:29 - God says I am an heir.
16. Romans 6:4 - God says I have a new life.
17. Romans 5:1 - God says I am justified and that I have peace with God.
18. Romans 8:30 - God says I am predestined, called, justified, and glorified.
19. Romans 8:37 - God says I am a conqueror.
20. I Peter 2:9 - God says I am chosen, royalty, holy, and that I belong to God.

Look at the poem on page 152 in your Handouts.

The Man in the Glass

When you get what you want in your struggle for self,
 and the world makes you king for a day,
 just go to the mirror and look at yourself,
 and see what that man has to say.
 For it isn't your father or mother or wife,
 whose judgement upon you must pass;
 the fellow whose verdict counts most in your life
 is the one staring back from the glass.
 Some people might think you're a straight-shootin' chum,
 and call you a wonderful guy,
 but the man in the glass says you're only a bum,
 if you can't look him straight in the eye.
 He's the fellow to please, never mind all the rest,
 for he's with you clear up to the end.
 And you've passed your most dangerous, difficult test
 if the guy in the glass is your friend.
 You may fool the whole world down the pathway of years,
 and get pats on the back as you pass.
 But your final reward will be heartaches and tears
 if you've cheated the man in the glass.

When you fail to believe in yourself, when you put yourself down, or convince yourself that you are somehow less valuable, less talented, less gifted than those around you, you cheat the man in the glass and you bring sadness to your God.

You have great value and worth. You are important. Your life matters. Don't cheat the man in the glass and don't bring sadness to your Creator by believing anything less of yourself. If your God who created you believes in you, then you need to believe in yourself, and you need to believe God has great plans for your life.

Below the poem, you find a pledge that encourages you to value yourself every day. Before we leave the topic of self-esteem, we want to read the pledge together.

The Pledge

I pledge to acknowledge each day that I am a child of God, created in His image, worthy and valuable to Him.
I pledge to bring all my concerns, past, present, and future to His throne of grace and leave them there.
I pledge to accept what God has in store for me in my life without complaining, yet always seeking to make the most of every day He grants me.
I pledge to stop living in the past and live as the new creation He has made me to be.
I pledge to stop worrying about what others might think of what I do, and concentrate on what God thinks of me and my work.
I pledge to base my worth not on the value others place upon me, but on the value God has placed on my life.
I pledge to replace my negative self-talk with the positive self-talk which is found in the Word of God.
I pledge to believe I can improve my situation knowing I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.
Above all, I pledge that I will strive with every fiber of my being to let go of my life and let God take over, reform me, and mold me into the person He created me to be.

I encourage you to use that pledge each day as a reminder of your value. On those days when you question your value most, allow those words to reassure you of your incredible value.

As we leave the topic of our self-image, we need to consider what God forbids in this Commandment. By learning what God forbids, we also obtain a better understanding of what God expects.

Turn to page 153 in your Handouts as we learn what God asks us not to do according to this Commandment.

God Says “No”

Circle the number of each statement that identifies something you are not to do according to the Fourth Commandment.

1. Treat my parents nicely only because I want to get something from them
2. Show disrespect to my parents, teachers, or anyone else in a position of authority
3. Get angry with my parents when they ask me to do something
4. Treat my parents as I want them to treat me
5. Hurt my parents by deliberately doing what they tell me not to do
6. Disobey my parents because I don't agree with their decision
7. Be rude or disrespectful toward a teacher I dislike at school
8. Act like I am listening to my parents, but do the opposite when they are out of sight
9. Develop a hatred toward my parents because I don't like the way they discipline me
10. Deliberately run my parents down when they are not around
11. Show disrespect by talking back or refusing to do what I am told.
12. Treat my parents as if they don't know anything
13. Accuse my parents of being unfair in their treatment toward me
14. Argue with my parents because I must always be right
15. Make them tell me to do something multiple times before I finally do it
16. Show them respect because they are God's representatives

God makes it clear in this Commandment that we are not to show disrespect to our parents, teachers, or anyone else in a position of authority. Instead, we are to treat them with a high degree of respect.

As we consider the matter of respect, we need to realize God has high expectations for each one of us as we interact with our parents and others in authority. Lest we think it a simple task to show respect, we need to look more carefully at God's expectations.

Turn to page 154 in your Handouts.

Great Expectations

Draw a star on the line in front of each statement that indicates how you can fulfill God's great expectations.

- _____ 1. God expects me to obey my parents even when I don't agree.
- _____ 2. My God expects me to demonstrate appreciation to my parents by the words I speak toward them.
- _____ 3. My God is waiting each day for me to treat my parents and teachers as God's representatives.
- _____ 4. My God is watching to see if I show honor to my parents even when I don't like what they tell me to do.
- _____ 5. My God expects me to do all I can to help my parents rather than expecting them to do everything I want when I want it done.
- _____ 6. My God expects me to serve my parents by doing all I can to provide for their needs.
- _____ 7. My God expects me to show respect to my teachers unless they are disrespectful toward me.
- _____ 8. My God expects me to gladly obey my parents as an indication of my love for my Lord.
- _____ 9. My God expects me to appreciate my parents and view them as a precious gift from God.
- _____ 10. My God is waiting each day for me to do some random act of kindness as a way of showing honor to my parents.
- _____ 11. My God expects me to listen to my teachers even when I don't particularly like them.
- _____ 12. My God expects me to show high respect to the elderly.
- _____ 13. My God expects me to appreciate my grandparents and great-grandparents and the wisdom they possess.
- _____ 14. God expects me to offer my best efforts on the job as one way of showing respect to my boss.
- _____ 15. God expects me to treat my parents with the same value and respect I want to receive from them.

As you can see, God has great expectations of us, expectations that are not easy to fulfill. Even so, He waits each day for us to offer our best efforts to bring honor and respect to our parents and others in authority.

Since bringing honor and respect are challenging tasks, turn to page 155 in your Handouts so we can learn proper ways to offer honor and respect to your parents and/or others in authority.

Time for Respect

Draw a box around the number of each statement that indicates something you can do to show honor and respect.

1. After moaning and complaining, decide to do what my parents asked me to do
2. Tell them about my day and provide them with more information than they request
3. Speak kind words about my parents even when they are not listening
4. Tell my friends about the good things my parents do instead of complaining about them
5. Ask my parents what I can do to help them with their day
6. Choose not to argue with my parents even though I may think I am right and they are wrong
7. Watch my attitude around my parents so that my attitude demonstrates respect
8. Appreciate my teachers at school and their efforts; let them know they are appreciated
9. Be cooperative and helpful at school even if my friends or classmates choose to act very differently
10. Thank my parents frequently for all they do for me
11. When my parents get upset with me, do what I can to make things better instead of reacting in the same way
12. Be understanding of my parents, the stress they face, and their busy schedules
13. Be willing to give up something I want to do so my parents can do what they would like to do
14. Do my best to understand that it's very difficult being a parent
15. Whenever I have opportunities, hold up my parents as important and very valuable in my life

As we look around, we see a great deal of disrespect. Yet, our God asks us to show respect, to honor and appreciate our parents and all those in positions of authority. When we show respect toward others, we will also find that same respect offered toward us.

REVIEW OF THE DAY

Describe three things God says about you in His Word.

What are two things you are not to do according to the Fourth Commandment?

Describe two things God expects you to do in this Commandment.


What are three things you can do to show respect to your parents?

PREVIEW OF NEXT WEEK


Next week, our focus turns to the Fifth Commandment and valuing life at all stages. We will discuss abortion, teen suicide, and learn ways we can help others as we fulfill this basic, God-given principle for life.

CLOSING PRAYER

ADDITIONAL MEMORY WORK



Outline - Lesson 28



OPENING PRAYER

MEMORY WORK

QUIZ TIME

REVIEW QUESTIONS

What are three things God says about you in His Word?

What are two things you are not to do according to the Fourth Commandment?

Describe two things God expects you to do in this Commandment.

What are three things you can do to show respect to your parents?

LESSON OVERVIEW

In our last lesson, we focused on honor, respect, and valuing ourselves. Today, we move to the Fifth Commandment, yet, as we do, we return to the topics of value and respect because the Fifth Commandment directs us to value and respect life. As we focus on valuing and respecting life, we will look at the topics of abortion and teen suicide. Later in our lesson, we will learn ways we can live under the umbrella of this basic principle.

LESSON

In our discussion of the Fourth Commandment, we recognized the importance of showing respect. As we move to the Fifth Commandment, that same topic follows us. As it follows us, it intensifies significantly as the Fifth Commandment directs us to value life at all stages, to show respect for all of life whether it be our own or that of another person.

Turn to page 156 in your Handouts as we learn more information about respecting life.

Respecting Life

On the line in front of each statement, write “yes” or “no” as your response to the statement.

- _____ 1. I respect life when I view my life as a precious gift from my God.
- _____ 2. I respect life when I do my best not cause mental or emotional harm to those around me.
- _____ 3. When I encourage my friends to see their lives as valuable and significant, I am respecting life.
- _____ 4. When I view every individual as important and significant, I demonstrate respect for life.
- _____ 5. I respect life when I believe that an unborn baby is as valuable as I am to God.
- _____ 6. I respect life when I make a point not to cause physical harm to another person.
- _____ 7. I respect life when I believe that only God determines when my life here ends.
- _____ 8. I respect life when I do my best not to make those around me angry or bitter.
- _____ 9. I respect life when I only hold a grudge against those who really deserve it.
- _____ 10. I can look for revenge and still show respect for life.
- _____ 11. I respect life when I value the elderly as much as I value my own life.
- _____ 12. I respect life when I treat those who are handicapped as important and valued in God’s sight.
- _____ 13. I respect life when I choose to be forgiving toward others, including those who choose not to forgive me.
- _____ 14. I respect life when I encourage all people to protect life and uphold life rather than considering a way to bring life to an end.
- _____ 15. I respect life when I appreciate my gifts and talents and also the gifts and talents of others.

Whether you realized it or not in the past, the Fifth Commandment is all about respecting life. God expects us, commands us to respect life.

Yet, there are those who fail to respect life, those who think of life as something much less than an incredible gift from God. Because of that, we find two major issues that relate directly to this basic principle.

One of those issues focuses on the unborn, on those who cannot speak for themselves or defend themselves. It's the topic we commonly refer to as abortion.

In the minds of some, the life of an unborn child is their's to determine, their's to decide. Some even go so far as to say that the unborn child isn't actually a baby until it is born.

It is with thoughts such as these that people consider or choose to have an abortion. With an abortion, respect for the life of the unborn faces a serious blow. With an abortion, people pretend to play God, to do what only God rightfully has the power and authority to do.

Before we go any further in our discussion, we do need to point out that there are rare situations where an abortion may be acceptable, but those situations are extremely rare and often involve saving the mother's life by taking the life of the unborn child.

As we return to the typical circumstances where abortions occur by choice, we turn to pages 157-158 in your Handouts.

(Have students take turns reading each date entry.)

The Day I Died

October 5

Today my life began. My parents do not know it yet; I am as small as the seed of an apple, but I already exist. I'm to be a girl. I will have blond hair and blue eyes. Just about everything is settled, even the fact that I will love flowers.

October 19

Some say I am not a real person yet, that only my mother exists. But I am a real person, just as a small crumb of bread is bread. My mother is and I am.

October 23

My mouth is just beginning to open now. Just think, in a year or so I will be laughing, and later on I'll be talking. I know what my first word will be: Mama.

October 25

My heart began to beat today all by itself. From now on, it will gently beat for the rest of my life without ever stopping to rest! After many years, it will get tired. It will stop, and *then* I will die.

November 2

I am growing a little every day. My arms and legs are beginning to take shape. But I have to wait a long time before these little legs will lift me to my mother's arms, before these little arms will be able to gather flowers and hug my father.

November 12

Tiny fingers are beginning to form on my hands. I can't believe how small they are! I'll be able to play in my mother's hair with them.

November 20

It wasn't until today that the doctor told mom that I am living here under her heart. Oh, how happy she must be! Are you happy, mom?

November 25

My mom and dad are probably thinking about a name for me. But they don't even know I am a little girl. I want to be called Kathy. I am getting so big already.

December 10

My hair is growing. It is smooth and bright and shiny. I wonder what kind of hair mom has.

December 13

I am just about able to see. It is dark around me. When mom brings me into the world, it will be full of sunshine and flowers. But what I want more than anything is to see my mom. What do you look like, mom?

December 24

I wonder if mom hears the whispering of my heart? Some children come into the world a little sick. But my heart is strong and healthy. It beats so evenly: tup-tup, tup-tup. You'll have a healthy little daughter, mom!

December 28

Today my mother killed me. I was only 3 months old! Why did I have to die? Who will protect all the other ones like me who are too little to protect themselves? Didn't I deserve to live just like you?

Our society may allow abortions. It may have grown to accept abortions as a normal part of life. Yet, life is precious at all stages and life is meant to be respected at all ages from the unborn child to the elderly. It is not God's plan nor God's will that our society allow abortions. It is entirely man's doing, an act of man that ignores the basic principle of the Fifth Commandment.

We all realize that abortion takes the life of an unborn baby, yet, before we leave this topic, we want to look at some significant events in an unborn baby's life as we reinforce the need to protect and respect the life of the unborn.

Look at page 159 in your Handouts.

Banner Moments

1. At 17 days, the new life has developed its own blood cells; the placenta is a part of the new life and not something from the mother.
2. At 18 days, there are occasional movements of a muscle; that muscle will be the heart.
3. At 19 days, the eyes start to develop.
4. At 20 days, the foundation of the entire nervous system has been set in place.
5. At 24 days, the heart is beating regularly. (This is a legal sign of life.)
6. At 28 days, 40 pairs of muscles are developed along the body of the new life; arms and legs are also forming.
7. At 30 days, regular blood flow within the system is occurring. The ears have also begun to form.
8. At 42 days, the skeleton is complete and the reflexes are present.
9. At 43 days, brain waves can be recorded, indicating that “thinking” is taking place in the brain. The baby is now a thinking person.
10. At 49 days, the baby looks like a miniature doll, complete with fingers, toes, and ears.
11. At 56 days, all the organs are functioning, the stomach, liver, kidney, and brain. The lines in the palm of the hands are visible.
12. By the ninth or tenth week, the baby can squint, swallow, and move his tongue.
13. By the eleventh and twelfth week, the baby can move its arms and legs and suck its thumb. The fingernails are starting to appear.
14. By four months, the baby can kick, grasp with its hands, and turn somersaults.
15. By 18 weeks, the baby can cry.
16. By 20 weeks, hair appears on its head; it weighs about one pound and is about 12 inches long.

Now that you have some basic information about the need to respect the life of the unborn, we need to turn our attention to an equally important and equally serious topic - teen suicide.

When an abortion occurs, one can possibly view the unborn baby as little more than tissue and thereby make the reality less real. Yet, when a teen suicide

occurs, reality cannot be ignored, modified, or changed. When a suicide occurs, life has ended prematurely and respect for life has either been forgotten or ignored. The evidence is overwhelming because the evidence is right before our eyes.

We can say, "It doesn't happen in our community; it only happens somewhere else!" Yet, it still happens. It happens in every community and it can and does happen in our community. According to one statistic, 2 million teens attempt suicide every year and 30,000 take their life every year. That equals 70 suicides in our country every day of the year.

But why would anyone attempt suicide?

Turn to page 160 in your Handouts as we do our best to make sense of teen suicide.

Making Sense

Circle the number of each statement you believe to be true.

1. Suicides only occur among the uneducated, lower class population.
2. Some attempt suicide simply because they want the pain to go away and they know of no other way to make it happen.
3. Some suicides occur because the person feels they are unable to live up to the expectations of their parents.
4. Most people who attempt suicide actually do not want to die.
5. Suicides are a permanent solution to a problem that is only temporary.
6. Those who attempt suicide feel like life is hopeless and they are helpless to do anything about it.
7. Some suicides occur because they feel like they can't handle life's pressures.
8. Only people who are mentally ill attempt or commit suicide.
9. Most people who attempt suicide give some warning signs of their intentions.
10. When individuals are surrounded by friends who care about them, they are less likely to consider suicide.
11. Anyone who thinks of suicide is mentally ill and needs professional help.
12. Individuals who think of suicide are very likely to commit suicide at some point in time.
13. Suicide is hereditary. It often runs in families.

14. Once someone gets the idea of suicide, it is nearly impossible for them to get rid of the idea.
15. Suicide attempts always follow long periods of depression and sadness.
16. Some attempt suicide because they fail to realize their value and significance.

For most, if not all of us, it's difficult to imagine how anyone could ever attempt suicide. Although that may be true, there are some warning signs we need to consider.

Look at page 161 in your Handouts.

Watching for Signs

Below are some signs that could indicate someone is seriously considering suicide.

Remarks about dying
Jokes about suicide
Preoccupation with death
Change in mood
Tendency to cry or be sad without apparent reason
Wanting to be alone
Getting little pleasure out of anything
Feeling worthless or ugly
Putting self down
Difficulty concentrating
Doing nothing but listening to music or watching TV
Tumbling grades
Inability to vent anger
Noticeable changes in eating or sleeping patterns
Excessive behavior of any kind - drinking, drugs, etc.
Cutting off friends
Being overly humble
Suddenly dressing in strange ways
Giving away cherished possessions
Taking silly risks or dares
Talking about hurting self; hinting he or she won't be around long
Obvious signals such as purchasing weapons
An everything-seems-to-go-wrong attitude
Helplessness - doesn't seem to know or care how to get back on the right track
Hopelessness - all hope is gone

Being aware of the warning signs is helpful, but we also need to have some idea of what to do if we see something that indicates suicide may be a possibility.

On the bottom of the same page in your Handouts, you will find some very basic things you can do if you feel someone may be considering suicide. Keep in mind that this list is only a very basic list of possible actions.

Time for Action

Below are some things you can do if it appears someone is considering suicide.

Take any threat seriously; don't argue or criticize
Encourage them to talk about what is troubling them
Listen, listen, listen
Try to understand their feelings
Let them know you care by asking probing questions
Try to restore feelings of personal worth and dignity
Do what you can to help them concentrate on living
Discuss the effect of suicide on family and friends
Encourage them to seek professional help
Encourage them to talk to an adult they trust
Keep in contact with them through phone calls and visits
Let them know they are always valuable and important in God's sight

Teen suicide is real. It happens, but you can help by knowing the signs and acting when the signs give you reason to believe suicide may be a possibility.

Before we leave the Fifth Commandment, we need to consider how we are to function on a day-to-day basis based on this Commandment. Protecting and respecting life may be the obvious things we need to do, yet as we function under the umbrella of this basic principle, there are many other things God expects from us.

Turn to page 162 in your Handouts.

Under the Umbrella

Using "A" for agree and "D" for disagree, respond to each statement below.

- _____ 1. To live under the umbrella, I need to be willing to help others without expecting anything in return.
- _____ 2. To live under the umbrella, I need to offer my assistance when someone else is in need.
- _____ 3. To live under the umbrella, I need to show kindness toward others as long as they treat me in the same way.
- _____ 4. I live under the umbrella when I am patient with my brother or sister who gets on my nerves.

- _____ 5. I live under the umbrella when I choose to forgive and forget instead of holding a grudge.
- _____ 6. I live under the umbrella when I choose to offer kindness to those who do not expect it.
- _____ 7. To live under the umbrella, I need to offer my care to others only when they have done the same for me in the past.
- _____ 8. I live under the umbrella when I choose to avoid anything that could harm my body such as drugs or the misuse of alcohol.
- _____ 9. I live under the umbrella when I forgive someone who doesn't deserve my forgiveness.
- _____ 10. To live under the umbrella, I need to be humble and give God the credit He deserves.
- _____ 11. I live under the umbrella when I do what I can to keep my friend from using drugs or any other substance that could injury his/her body.
- _____ 12. I live under the umbrella when I ask my God each day to show me what I can do to touch the heart of another person before that day ends.
- _____ 13. I live under the umbrella by doing what I can to keep peace or make peace between others.
- _____ 14. I live under the umbrella by choosing to speak well of others instead of running them down.

REVIEW OF THE DAY

Describe three ways you can show respect for life.

Describe three different events that occur in the life of an unborn baby.

What are two things you know about suicide and the causes of suicide?

What are three things you can do to live under the umbrella of the Fifth Commandment?


PREVIEW OF NEXT WEEK

Next week, we begin our topic of relationships. We will consider the right reasons for a relationship, why parents are often cautious about entering relationships too soon, consider what you can do before you enter into a relationship, and how you


can fine tune a relationship along the way. Near the end of our lesson, we will consider some of the rough waters you may face and how to “calm” those rough waters.

CLOSING PRAYER

ADDITIONAL MEMORY WORK



Outline - Lesson 29



OPENING PRAYER

MEMORY WORK

QUIZ TIME

REVIEW QUESTIONS

Describe three ways you can show respect for life.

Describe three different events that occur in the life of an unborn baby.

What are two things you know about suicide and the causes of suicide?

What are three things you can do to live under the umbrella of the Fifth Commandment?

LESSON OVERVIEW

In our last lesson, we focused on respecting life as it relates to the Fifth Commandment. We discussed abortion and teen suicide and also looked at how we can fulfill God's expectations regarding this basic principle. In our lesson today, we move into the topic of relationships as part of our discussion of the Sixth Commandment. We will look at how relationships can have God's blessing, why parents are sometimes cautious about relationships, how to plan ahead for a relationship, and how to fine tune a relationship along the way.

LESSON

In the next few years, relationships will likely become one of the most significant topics on your mind and one of the most significant issues in your life.

By our very design, God created guys and girls to be attracted to each other. It's part of His plan to populate the earth. If God hadn't created that interest, the world would have had only two people. Since our God designed relationships and blesses those that exist for the right reason, we need to consider what it takes to have a relationship that is blessed by God.

Turn to page 163 in your Handouts.

Blessed by God

Using “A” for agree and “D” for disagree, respond to each statement below.

- _____ 1. When I am willing to meet the proper needs of the other person, my relationship will have God’s blessing.
- _____ 2. As long as we both agree on what we decide to do, our relationship will surely have God’s blessing.
- _____ 3. When I show the highest respect for my boyfriend/girlfriend, my relationship will have God’s blessing.
- _____ 4. As long as I keep my boyfriend/girlfriend happy, my relationship will have God’s blessing.
- _____ 5. When I am more interested in what he/she can do for me than what I can do for him/her, my relationship can still have God’s blessing.
- _____ 6. When I ask God for His guidance and follow His direction, my relationship will have His blessing.
- _____ 7. As long as I am happy in the relationship, my relationship will have God’s blessing.
- _____ 8. As long as I have some boundaries in my relationships, those relationships will have God’s blessing.
- _____ 9. As long as our relationship isn’t merely a physical relationship, it will have God’s blessing.
- _____ 10. As long as we never sleep together, our relationship will have God’s blessing.
- _____ 11. As long as no one else objects to our relationship, it should have God’s blessing.
- _____ 12. When everything I do always has God’s approval, my relationship will have His blessing.
- _____ 13. When I expect more and more from the relationship, I am creating a relationship that will not have God’s blessing.
- _____ 14. As both of us do our best to meet the proper needs of the other person, God will be happy with our relationship.
- _____ 15. As long as I always stop just before the point of no return, my relationship will have God’s blessing.

Many relationships today do not have God’s blessing because they are not appropriate relationships. They exist for selfish reasons, for what one person can get from the other person. When relationships exist for selfish reasons,

those relationships would be better off not existing at all. Sooner or later, the relationship will end and someone will get hurt.

One of the things God does to promote proper relationships is to give us wise and caring parents. Many times, kids criticize their parents or accuse them of being out of touch in the area of relationships. Yet, parents have great wisdom provided to them by God.

That wisdom leads them to be cautious, to delay dating until they deem it best or to alter the dating relationship for the sake of protecting you, their son or daughter.

Turn to page 164 in your Handouts.

Yellow Light, Green Light

Look at each statement below. If you believe the statement is an appropriate reason why parents are cautious, circle the stoplight.

1. Parents are cautious because they are overprotective.
2. They are cautious because they care about me and love me.
3. Parents often delay dating relationships because they know from experience that dating too soon is not what is best.
4. Parents delay dating relationships because they want to show me their power.
5. They are cautious about when I date because they don't want me to get hurt in a relationship.
6. They are often cautious because they want what is best for me.
7. Parents sometimes put up the red light because they know I'm not ready for that kind of a relationship.
8. Parents operate with caution in dating relationships because they know the value of friendships before relationships.
9. Parents act like they are cautious because then they can use it as a punishment when the need arises.
10. Parents delay giving me the "green light" on dating because they want me to wait as long as they had to wait.
11. Parents are cautious about letting me date because they don't want me to make the same mistakes they made or almost made.

12. Parents often create a “red light” on dating because they want me to wait until my hormones settle down.
13. Parents operate with caution because they really do know what they are talking about regarding dating relationships.
14. Parents operate with caution because God has given them the incredible responsibility of raising their kids.

The responsibilities God has given parents are enormous. In your mind, you may think all sorts of things about how your parents operate. Yet, before you criticize your parents, remember their motivation. They are cautious because they care, because they love you. Be grateful they care that much about you.

Aware of their motivation, it is wise for you to “look before you leap,” to plan ahead, to have certain basics in place before you enter into a relationship. Those who jump into a relationship without planning ahead usually find themselves bailing out because what they expected doesn’t match what actually occurs.

Look at the next page in your Handouts.

Looking Before Leaping

Before I enter a dating relationship:

I will create a friendship before I create a relationship

I will enjoy what I have rather than looking for more

I will determine how far I will not go

I will tell the other person where my boundaries are *and* insist they agree to them

I will rely on my parents for proper guidelines and boundaries

I will respect and value myself enough to think things through carefully

I will not allow my dating relationship to become a purely physical relationship

I will do what we decide is right for us, not what friends may think we ought to do

I will not date someone for my benefit or because my friends are dating

I will always treat the other person as my most valued friend, never as someone to give me what I want

I will respect their boundaries and follow them, even if their boundaries are stricter than my own

I will always give 110% of myself to the relationship without expecting anything in return

When the other person challenges my boundaries, I will not back down regardless of what kind of pressure they may use

I will maintain the highest respect for the other person and for myself

I will accept the other person as they are and not try to change or manipulate them

I will operate with the understanding that when the date is over, it is over

Looking before you leap into a dating relationship is a wise plan. Yet even the best plan needs adjustment along the way. The true mark of a good relationship is the ability to adjust, to fine tune your relationship as needed.

Turn to page 166 in your Handouts.

Fine Tuning

From the list below, choose 10 statements you believe would be the *best* things you could do to fine tune your relationship. Put the number of those 10 statements on the line below.

-
1. When something in my relationship is questionable, I will ask for advice before I move forward.
 2. When the emotions appear to be taking over, I will back away and allow myself time to get things back under control.
 3. When I'm not comfortable with what's happening, I will tell the other person immediately.
 4. If our relationship hints of becoming merely a physical relationship, I will insist we return to a previous, more comfortable level.
 5. If my parents point out things that are different about me while I'm in a relationship, I will look for an explanation and change what needs to be changed.
 6. If grades, friendships, or other things change due to my relationship, I will make adjustments in the relationship, not in the other areas.

7. If the other person won't listen when I say, "No," I will walk away immediately.
8. If the other person is or has been drinking, I will not go out with him/her at that time.
9. When I don't know what to do or things seem to be heading toward the "danger zone," I will ask for advice from a trusted adult.
10. When the other person appears to be using me, I will tell them how I feel; if things do not change quickly, I will end the relationship.
11. When my friends tell me my dating relationship is bad news, I will listen and change the relationship or get out of it.
12. If I notice that our relationship is diminishing our friendship, I will insist that things change.
13. If either of us have a difficult time maintaining our boundaries, I will insist that we slow down our relationship.

Even when you make the effort to fine tune your relationship, your relationship still won't always be a walk in the park. Even if you do everything you can possibly think of, your relationship will still face some rough waters.

Turn to the next page in your Handouts as we consider some of the rough waters you may face and how you might "calm" those rough waters.

Rough Waters Ahead

Which issues below could create rough waters in a relationship? Which statements might prompt you to "bail" out of a relationship? Circle the number of each of those statements.

1. He/she is 2-3 years older than I and has more dating "freedom."
2. I feel like he/she is manipulating me to get what he/she wants.
3. I'm doing whatever he/she wants me to do because I don't want to create any waves.
4. My relationship is causing me to become very self-centered.
5. My relationship appears to be an "I give and he/she takes" relationship.
6. I'm losing interest in my typical extracurricular activities.
7. He/she won't listen when I say, "Enough is enough."
8. I have little interest in spending time with my other friends.

9. My grades are slipping and I don't really care.
10. We never have any arguments.
11. My parents keep saying that I'm different after I've been around him/her too long.
12. He/she always wants more from the relationship.
13. He/she has become very jealous and possessive.
14. I do whatever he/she wants whenever he/she wants it just to keep him/her happy.
15. He/she has very few boundaries regarding our relationship which is leading me to ignore my boundaries.
16. The physical is what matters most to him/her. The other things we share have become a way to "get to" the physical.
17. Because I want to be with him/her so much, I've become a real "bear" to live with around home.

(As you discuss the statements, ask them, "What could you do to 'calm' this type of rough water if it occurred in your relationship?")

Rough waters will come in relationships. Sometimes, you will be able to weather the rough waters and get things back on course. Other times, you may need to "bail out" rather than compromise who you are and what you know to be best. God created relationships and He also created the need for some relationships to end. When the right person comes, He will show you, and He will keep that relationship on the proper course.

When rough waters occur, the wisest person is the one who makes the best choice, not the one who refuses to see the waves coming. Breaking up may be hard to do, yet it will only get more difficult if you think you can ride out a hurricane when all you've got is a paddle and a canoe!

REVIEW OF THE DAY

What are two things you can do in a relationship to know it has God's blessing?

Give me three reasons why parents are often cautious about you entering into a relationship.

What are two things you can do before you enter a relationship so it has a better change of being a good relationship?

Describe two things you could do to fine tune your relationship after it begins.

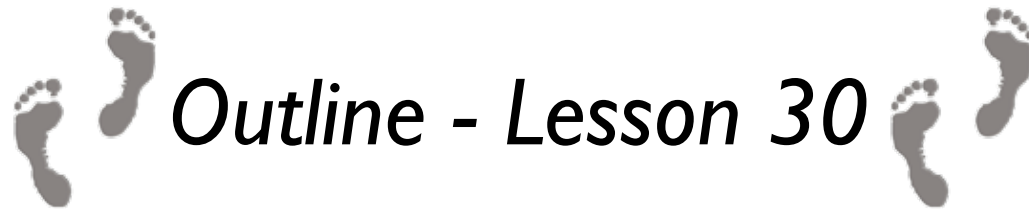
What are two issues that could create some rough waters in your relationships?

PREVIEW OF NEXT WEEK

Next week, we will continue our discussion on relationships as we discuss how to ride out the rough waters, how to pick up the pieces when a relationship ends, and how to make a good relationship better. After that, we will spend a little time discussing marriage, the challenges and the benefits.

CLOSING PRAYER

ADDITIONAL MEMORY WORK



Outline - Lesson 30

OPENING PRAYER

MEMORY WORK

QUIZ TIME

REVIEW QUESTIONS

What are two things you can do in a relationship to know it has God's blessing?

Give me three reasons why parents are often cautious about you entering into a relationship.

What are two things you can do before you enter a relationship so it has a better change of being a good relationship?

Describe two things you could do to fine tune your relationship after it begins.

What are two issues that could create some rough waters in a relationship?

LESSON OVERVIEW

In our last lesson, we began our focus on relationships as we talked about how our relationships can have God's blessing, why parents are often cautious regarding your relationships, what to do before you enter into a relationship, and some of the issues that could create rough waters. Today, we continue our discussion of Sixth Commandment issues as we complete our discussion of relationships and also focus on the topic of marriage.

LESSON

We ended our last lesson talking about some of the rough waters that may occur in relationships. Aware that rough waters will occur, we need to consider ways you can ride out the waves and return your relationship to calmer waters.

Turn to page 168 in your Handouts.

Riding Out the Waves

Circle the number of each statement indicating something you could do to bring calm to a turbulent relationship and still maintain God's blessing.

1. Insist we talk about the issue and agree on what we each will do differently
2. Tell my boyfriend/girlfriend the relationship is over and walk away
3. Pretend everything is fine so I don't rock the boat
4. Agree with whatever my boyfriend/girlfriend wants just to make the conflict go away
5. Fly off the handle at my boyfriend/girlfriend so they realize how important the issue is to me
6. Just be patient and let it fix itself
7. Agree on what we need to do differently and then do my best to hold up my end of the agreement
8. Use past issues to get my point across and to prove I'm not the problem
9. Ask myself, "Why am I in this relationship," and then consider the possibility of getting out of the relationship if that seems best
10. Continue to hold my own and not back down so I can prove I am right and he/she is wrong
11. Identify the issue; agree to discuss it, and then choose something I will do to resolve the issue
12. If the issue continues to repeat itself, walk away from the relationship
13. Since it's normal for a relationship to have conflict, just accept the conflict as part of the relationship
14. Ask someone I trust for advice and suggestions
15. Ask myself, "What could I do that might make a difference," and then try it
16. Look for the good things in the other person; offer them compliments and appreciation for what he/she is doing right

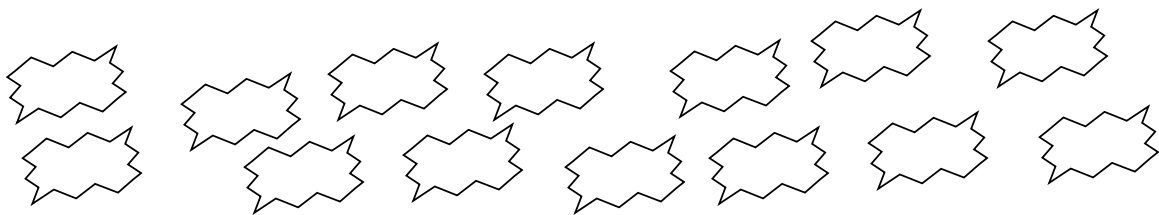
In every relationship, you will need to learn how to ride out the waves. Because there are always two imperfect people in every relationship, there will always be a need to work through issues, to solve problems, to find solutions. Sometimes, the best solution will be to walk away rather than to remain in a relationship that only makes you both miserable.

If you find yourself walking away from a relationship, you will likely feel like you have just crashed into a brick wall at thirty miles per hour. Surviving, picking up the pieces may appear nearly impossible.

Turn to page 169 in your Handouts as we look at ways you can pick up the pieces and move forward.

Picking Up the Pieces

On the “pieces” below, write the numbers of the statements that indicate something positive you could do to pick up the pieces after a relationship ends.



1. Believe no one could ever like me again
2. Always remember that breaking up can happen so I don't get so involved that I can't function without them
3. Tell myself as often as necessary that if God wanted it to work, it would have worked
4. Look for someone else to date as soon as possible so I could forget about the other person
5. Believe God will provide someone else at the right time
6. Devalue myself and think there must be something wrong with me
7. Focus my energy on other areas and interests so I don't spend too much time thinking about our past relationship
8. Analyze what I did wrong in the hope of figuring out what not to do in the future
9. Think about the good times we shared and what I learned
10. Spend time telling myself, "It was never meant to be. He/she wasn't right. I should have seen it coming sooner!"
11. Relax and enjoy life knowing it's not the end of the world; other opportunities will come
12. Get angry at them; do all I can to make their life miserable

13. As much as possible, remain friends
14. Accept it as part of life and part of being involved in a relationship. Don't make it a mountain when it's only an anthill compared to the rest of life

As difficult as it may be, you will very likely face a relationship that doesn't work out, a relationship that needs to end. It may not be easy to adjust, yet you can and you will adjust. When you learn something from each relationship, you will be better prepared for the next relationship and for the relationship that will turn into a marriage.

Although that may be true, relationships don't turn into marriages by accident. Relationships take work and marriage also takes work. Yet, before you think about marriage, there are things you can do in a relationship to make a good relationship better, things that will one day turn a better relationship into a good marriage.

Turn to page 170 in your Handouts.

Making It Better

Write the word "yes" on the line in front of the statements you think would make a good relationship better, a relationship that might one day have the possibility of becoming a marriage.

- _____ 1. Offer compliments to my boyfriend/girlfriend each day
- _____ 2. Choose to talk through issues rather than letting them simmer
- _____ 3. Be grateful and appreciative of my boyfriend/girlfriend rather than taking them and what they do for granted
- _____ 4. Enjoy our time together; always make the most of our time rather than acting like it doesn't matter if we are together
- _____ 5. Ask myself every week, "What can I do to make our relationship better?"
- _____ 6. At least once a month, ask my boyfriend/girlfriend if there is anything I can do to make our relationship better
- _____ 7. Talk to God about my relationship; ask Him for guidance and watch for His direction
- _____ 8. Be aware of what my friends and others are saying about my relationship. If they are saying something negative, check to see if something needs to change

- _____ 9. Respect the advice my parents may offer and find ways to use their advice
- _____ 10. When I face a tough situation, ask an adult I trust for advice
- _____ 11. Choose to be satisfied with where the relationship is instead of thinking I need more to be happy
- _____ 12. Tell my boyfriend/girlfriend how much I appreciate them and what I appreciate about them
- _____ 13. Choose one thing in my relationship each month that I will choose to change for the better
- _____ 14. Express my feelings to my boyfriend/girlfriend using statements like, "I feel like," or "I would like to see," instead of "I want"
- _____ 15. Thank my boyfriend/girlfriend for the good things he/she does for me instead of only for the great things he/she may do

So much more could be discussed regarding relationships. Yet, since our time is limited, we need to move into the topic of marriage as we continue our discussion of the Sixth Commandment.

Marriage may be the furthest thing from your mind right now. It may even seem like a topic not worth discussing. Yet, even at this stage in your life, basic information about marriage can be useful. That basic information can set the stage for what you do when you choose to enter a relationship.

Turn to page 171 in your Handouts as we consider some basic information regarding marriage.

Setting the Stage

Read each statement below. Circle the number of each true statement about marriage.

- 1. Marriage will take more effort than anything else I do in life.
- 2. Communication is absolutely essential to a good marriage. Without it, everything else will eventually fall apart.
- 3. Married people need to make time to spend with each other no matter how busy they may be.
- 4. Children seldom add new challenges to marriage and more often add more joys.
- 5. In most marriages, conflicts seldom occur.

6. If a husband and wife aren't able to resolve their issues, every other area of their marriage will suffer.
7. Most problems occur in marriage because they didn't know each other well enough before they got married.
8. I must be willing to compromise and adjust if I intend to maintain a good marriage.
9. Marriages where both have a strong Christian faith are far more likely to survive than those that do not.
10. When my partner does something that hurts me, I need to hold on to it until they apologize.
11. I must always be willing to give 100% of myself to the marriage, even if the other person isn't doing the same.
12. I need to overlook some of the minor habits of my partner that bother me.
13. I need to regularly and consciously look for ways to improve our relationship.
14. As long as I do my part, that's good enough. He/she needs to do his/her part to make it work.
15. When problems occur that we can't fix ourselves, we need to talk to someone who can help us.
16. If our marriage doesn't seem to be working as we expected, getting a divorce is a simple option.

Anyone who believes marriage is easy hasn't been married. Although marriage has many joys, it also has many challenges. There is no easy way to have a great marriage. As you enter into a relationship, prepare yourself for work because relationships and marriages both take work. If you aren't willing to work at marriage, don't get married because marriage and work always go together.

If marriage takes so much work, why get married?

(Allow them to offer their ideas of why people get married.)

Before we end our class today, we need to ask, "What makes marriage worth the effort?"

Turn to page 172 in your Handouts where we will see some of the benefits of marriage.

Still Worth It

Draw a star next to the number of each statement you believe expresses a benefit of being married.

1. Marriage is worth the effort because marriage is God's plan.
2. Marriage is worth the effort because we are able to share our entire lives with each other.
3. Marriage is worth the effort because it creates an even closer bond than can be found in a relationship.
4. Marriage is worth the effort because it demonstrates a commitment that cannot be found in a relationship.
5. Marriage is worth the effort because God created marriage to bring children into the world.
6. Marriage is worth the effort because it brings joys that cannot exist in a relationship.
7. Marriage is worth the effort because God promises to bless us through marriage.
8. Marriage creates a life-long companion who is there on my good days and my bad days.
9. Marriage gives me the right to tell someone else what to do and when to do it.
10. Marriage creates an opportunity for me to demonstrate my care more fully.
11. Marriage enables us to be parents who, with God's help, are molding the next generation.
12. Marriage is worth the effort because it enables two people to become more than they would have become remaining single.
13. Marriage enables me to know there is always someone there for me when I need them.
14. Marriage is worth the effort because God has promised it's worth my effort.

Every marriage faces challenges, yet, with God's assistance, we can move beyond the challenges and realize that marriage is worth the effort, that the rewards do outweigh the difficulties.

REVIEW OF THE DAY

Describe two things you can do to ride out the rough waters of a relationship.

What are two beneficial things you can do for yourself when a relationship ends?

Describe three things you could do to make a good relationship better.

Give me two reasons why marriage is still worth the effort.

PREVIEW OF NEXT WEEK

Next week, we move ahead to the Seventh and Eighth Commandments as we discuss how we have turned God's blessings into curses, how to treat our possessions as gifts, how to be caretakers of His gifts, and how to protect our reputation and the reputation of others.

CLOSING PRAYER

ADDITIONAL MEMORY WORK