

PERFECT, PERFECT—WHO IS PERFECT?

CONCEPT

God is perfect and offers grace to sinners.

GOAL

Christian students will learn that the law was given so we would know we are sinners and in need of God's grace.

Non-Christian students will learn that the only one in the universe who is perfect is GOD. We have all broken God's law and need His forgiveness.

PASSAGE: EXODUS 20

Key Verse: "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." Matthew 5:48

PLANNING AHEAD*

Lesson Supplies

Lesson:

- Printed Ten Commandments, 1 set/classroom

Learning Activity #1:

- Velcro
- Bandanna

Craft Supplies

Activity Stations:

- Printed cardstock bookmarks, 1/student
- Clear contact paper
- Hole punch
- Markers
- Glitter crayons
- Scissors
- Yarn
- The Ten Commandments activity page, 1/student
- *The Awesome Book of Bible Facts*, Sandy Silverthorne
- GOD'S TRAVEL PLANS map, 1/student
- Cinnamon imperials ("red hots"), 7/student

* **Teachers please note:** For clarity, the shaded areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag. **Items followed by an asterisk* are to be supplied by the teaching team.**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION/TEACHER HELPS

"[The Ten Commandments] are a focal point for all understanding of O.T. theology. Here Yahweh summarized for His people the main stipulations of the Mosaic covenant. Thus, a new age began in God's relationship with man. The Decalogue (Ten Commandments) is not merely a collection of prohibitions and mandates. It also constitutes a theological expression of the nature of God Himself."¹

Matthew 5:48 says "You are to be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." This means that we are to keep the Law perfectly. But can we? Certainly not by Jesus' definition (Matthew 5: 21-22; 27-28). Jesus says that even our thoughts and attitudes must be perfect! Romans 3:23 says that all of us have sinned, none of us is perfect. Why, then, did God give us a Law which He knew we wouldn't and couldn't keep?

"*God's Value System*. At Mount Sinai, God gave them His Law which included the Ten Commandments, and in so doing revealed His Value System. These are the reasons God gave the Law to His People:

1. To give the Israelites a **separate national identity** and to provide a **workable civil government**. This is why there are multitudes of seemingly unimportant rules.
2. The Law reveals a perfect ethics system and is therefore a **picture of God's character**. The intent of this Law is most clearly described in the Sermon on the Mount (see Matthew 5-7), in which Jesus took the Old Testament Law and interpreted it from God's point of view. There, Jesus said, 'You have heard...you shall not commit murder...but I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of hell's fire' (see Matthew 5:21,22). 'You have heard...you shall not commit adultery...but I say that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart' (see Matthew 5:27,28). In summary, Jesus goes on to say, 'You are to be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect' (see Matthew 5:48). If you and I really read the Sermon on the Mount honestly, there is no one of us who can believe he has kept the law or will ever be able to keep it.

"What Jesus did was explain God's perfect Law and in doing so, revealed God's Value System. Jesus showed us in the Sermon on the Mount that God really does not judge so much the external performance of the Law as He does the condition of a person's heart. Realistically we would have to agree. The condition of our hearts is deceitful, as Jeremiah the prophet verifies when he states, 'The heart is the most deceitful thing there is, and desperately wicked...' (Jeremiah 17:9 LB).

"The significance of this second reason for the Law is there is **absolutely no way to measure up to God's Value System**. God's Value System is perfection, either 100 percent perfection or 100 percent failure (see James 2:10). God does not grade on the curve! There is no sin so little that God will overlook it, and no sin so great that God has not made provision for it.

"...The second reason for the Law, then, is to **help us understand our own need**. This is described in Romans 3:20, where Paul states, "His laws serve only to make us see that we are sinners" (LB).

3. The third reason the Law was given was to **condemn sin**. God makes it very clear that sin has caused the separation between Himself and man and must therefore be judged (see Isaiah 59:2). Even our most righteous deeds are but filthy rags in God's sight (see Isaiah 64:6). Keeping the Law, it should be remembered, is like forging a chain. It is only as strong as its weakest link and breaking the Law in one point, even one evil thought, is in God's Value System equivalent to breaking all of it (see James 2:10). The condemnation or judgment for breaking the Law is clear: God's only wage for sin is eternal death (see Romans 6:23).
4. The fourth reason for the Law is that it **diagnoses man's problem which is rebellion**. The Law does not change human nature or provide a solution to man's problem; rather, it serves as an X-ray of the problem. It reveals the problem but does not solve it. In fact, it produces rebellion within people (see Romans 5:20; 7:7, 8).

¹ *Believer's Study Bible Notes*, QuickVerse, 1994, Parsons Technology, Exodus 20:1.

5. A fifth reason for the Law is that it shows man the **necessity of depending on God's Provision for his sinful condition**. When people understand the full meaning of the Law, they stop trying to be self-righteous by their own human effort and cry out to God for help. Sin was forgiven in the Old Testament only by trusting in God and using His Provision in the temporary sacrificial system (see Hebrews 10:4). *Why would God give His People the sacrificial system if He expected them to keep the Law?* The Law points them to God but access to God has always been on the basis of *faith*. **If we allow God's Law to do its job in our hearts, it will drive us to the Messiah, who is God's Provision, the One Perfect Sacrifice** (see Hebrews 10:12)."²

The law points to God, but access to God has always been by faith. Israel's obligation was to "obey God's voice and heed His covenant, *not* 'in order to' live and have things go well for her, *but* 'with the result that' she will experience authentic living... (Deut. 5:33)."³ As with Israel, so it is also with Christians.

² Martha McCallum, Jane Hamblin, *God's Incredible Plan*, pp. 45-47.

³ Walter Kaiser, Jr., *Toward an Old Testament Theology*, ©1978 Walter C. Kaiser, Academie Books, Zondervan Publishing, p. 111.

LESSON PLAN

<p>SET UP</p>	<p>Instructions: Hang the Ten Commandments on the white board and draw a large tablet around them.</p>
<p>INCORPORATION -- 15-20 MIN</p>	<p>Activity Stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research – The Ten Commandments Instructions: Give each student a worksheet and follow the instructions. • Map Review Instructions: Give each student a GOD'S TRAVEL PLANS map and review the locations and their significance up to this lesson. Location #1: Ur, from where Abraham was called. Location #2: Haran, city to which God called Abraham. Location #3: Canaan, where Jacob settled with his family. Location #4: Egypt, where Joseph was sold into slavery and his family moved to survive the 7-year famine. The Hebrews lived in Egypt for 400 years and became the slaves of the Egyptians. God raised Moses up to lead the people out of Egypt. Location #5: They crossed the Red Sea on dry ground. Location #6: The Hebrews grumbled and complained. God brought water out of rocks and manna from the sky. He provided everything they needed. Where are the people now? (They are still in the desert.) Where do they want to go? (Promised Land.) The Promised Land is back in Canaan. Remember that God told Abraham and Jacob He would take the Hebrews back to Canaan. • Craft – Bookmarks Instructions: Put out bookmarks, contact paper, hole punch, yarn, glitter crayons, markers and scissors. Cut bookmarks around the outside line. Cut 2 pieces of contact paper that are the same size but slightly larger than the bookmark. Decorate the bookmark with markers and/or crayons. Peel the backing from one piece of the contact paper. Center the bookmark over one piece of contact paper and press it to adhere smoothly. Put the other piece of contact paper on the other side to laminate the bookmark. Punch a hole in the top of the bookmark and knot some yarn through the hole. • Missions Prayer Instructions: Talk about and pray for Oasis Giving campaign and adopted missionary child.
<p>LESSON -- LG GROUP 10 MIN</p>	<p>This week we are going to talk about perfection. There is only one person in the universe who is perfect—GOD. We may think we're pretty good and, compared to some people, we may be. But compared to God, we're not because He is perfect. Today we'll hear about the time God gave His Law to Moses. The law shows us that God is perfect and we are not. Our key verse is, "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). Does that confuse you? Why do you think the Bible tells us to be perfect if it also tells us we aren't and can never be perfect? Everyone grab a Bible and we'll look into this.</p> <p>Open your Bible to Exodus 20 and read verses 1-17 along with me.</p> <p>This is the account of God giving Moses the Ten Commandments at Mt. Sinai. Another name for the Ten Commandments is God's Law.</p> <p>Look at Exodus 20:12. How would you keep this commandment perfectly? (You would always do what your parents say to do, <u>always</u> have an <u>attitude</u> of respect for your parents.) What happens when your parents tell you you're not allowed to watch television or have a snack? Don't you want it all the more? That is your sin nature at work. No one can keep this commandment perfectly.</p> <p>Look at Exodus 20:17. What does it mean to covet? (It means to <u>really</u> want something that belongs to someone else.) Have you ever felt jealous of what someone else has and really wanted it? If so, you "coveted." Have you ever wanted the latest computer game or outfit someone else has? If you have ever, even once, coveted what belongs to another, you haven't</p>

	<p>kept this commandment. You've broken the Law.</p> <p>Even if you think you do keep these commandments (point to commandments), Jesus tells us in the New Testament that God's whole law can be summed up in one sentence—love the Lord your God with all your heart and love your neighbor as yourself. If you loved God with all your heart, how would others know? (List responses on board. You would: always pray to Him, always be willing to give things up for Him, always believe that God would help you whenever you needed it and always ask Him to help you, always be grateful because you know He has given you everything you need, always want to know and do what God wants for you, etc.) If you loved your neighbor as much as you love yourself, how would others know? (List responses on board. You would: never be cruel to anyone, always share even your most precious belongings with others, never fight with your brothers and sisters, never think a bad thought about anyone, always have a loving attitude towards others, always look to meet others needs before your own, etc.) Do you know anyone who loves God with <u>all</u> his or her heart <u>all</u> the time? (No.) Do you love others as much as you love yourselves? (No.) Does God love us as much as He loves Himself? (Yes.) How do we know that? (He sent His Son Jesus to die for our sins.)</p>
<p>TRANSITION – 2 MIN</p>	<p>So, the law shows God's value system and that God keeps it perfectly. We're going to play a game to learn another reason why God gave us His Law.</p>
<p>LEARNING ACTIVITY #1 – LG GROUP 15 MIN</p>	<p>GAME - Silly Scarf³</p> <p>Goal: Students will be aware of their rebellion when given a law.</p> <p>Instructions: Place Velcro starting lines at one end of the room. Choose one student to hold the bandanna and stand across the room from the starting line. Instruct the other students to stand on the starting line. The student holding the bandanna will drop it. On that signal, all the students must start laughing and hop on one foot towards that student. When the bandanna is picked up, the other students must stop laughing and freeze in place. If they laugh before the bandanna is dropped again, they must go back to the start line and begin again. The first one to make it to the bandanna is the winner. Play only until students get the point and quit <u>before</u> it ceases to be fun.</p> <p>We are going to make a law about laughing. When the bandanna is dropped, you are all to start laughing and hop on one foot toward the bandanna. But you must watch the bandanna, because when (student who is across the room) picks it up, you must stop laughing and freeze in place. No giggles, no grins, no moving! If you laugh before the bandanna is dropped again, you must return to the starting line and begin again. The first one to make it to the bandanna and pick it up is the next bandanna dropper.</p> <p>Debrief: Did you learn anything about yourself while playing this game? When you knew you weren't allowed to laugh what did you want to do? (Laugh.) Did you want to laugh even more because you knew you weren't supposed to? Did anyone <u>not</u> want to laugh when you knew you were supposed to start laughing?</p> <p>What about when you were caught breaking the rule? Some of you argued and claimed that you hadn't broken the rule, didn't you? We want to win the game and not take the consequences of breaking the rules so we are tempted to lie and cheat to reach that goal.</p> <p>So, this game showed us some things about the Law and ourselves. When we are given a rule or a law, we naturally want to disobey or break it. Or we try to keep it perfectly and we can't. And when we break the rule or law, we sometimes sin more (e.g., lie) to avoid the consequences. The Bible says the law was given so we would know we are sinners. You experienced that truth in the game.</p>

³ Adapted from *Instant Games for Children's Ministry*, Susan L. Lingo, 1995, Group Publishing, Loveland, Colorado, p. 17.

TRANSITION – 2 MIN	Let's get into small groups to talk a little more about this and to pray.
LEARNING ACTIVITY #2 – SM GROUPS 10 MIN Rationale: to apply scripture to real life.	<p>So, now we know we naturally want to sin. This means we're not perfect. But God said what? "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • So why did God give us the Law if He knew we couldn't keep it? The Israelites thought they could keep this law. They promised they would do everything God told them. But hard as they tried, they were unable to consistently obey God. <p>God gave His law to show us: (1) that He is perfect, (2) what sin is (3) that we are imperfect can never by ourselves live the kind of life God requires and (4) how desperately we need the Messiah whom He promised to send. Jesus came to earth and lived a perfect life as a man. Because He was perfect, His death on the cross paid for all the times we've not obeyed the Ten Commandments. Jesus' death paid for ALL sin. If we want God to forgive us, we must be willing to admit we sin and need God's forgiveness. When we put our trust only in the promised Messiah—Jesus—God forgives us.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If God has forgiven you, do you think you are perfect? (Allow to answer.) No, you aren't perfect—you will continue to sin. When Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins, it was for all of our sins. It is for sins we did in the past, do today and will do in the future. The Bible tells us that when we become Christians, nothing will ever separate us from God's love and grace. His grace means He loves us, accepts us and forgives us because He paid for our sins. So when we sin, the best thing we can do is to be honest about what we've done and thank God that He still loves us and has already forgiven us. • Those of you who are Christians, what do you do when you sin? Do you try to be good to earn God's favor? Do you find it hard to pray or talk to God? Do you withdraw from Christian friends or refuse to talk about what's going on? Do you rationalize or deny your sin? Are you open and honest with God and others about your sin and thank God that He has already forgiven you? • So when you sin, is it hard to admit you've been wrong? Why do you think that is? Why is honesty the best thing you can do? (Sin puts a barrier between us and God. Even though He still loves us and we are still His children, we feel guilty when we sin. If we are honest it clears our conscience and opens the relationship w/others & God again. We experience God's forgiveness.) <p>Let's pray and thank God that He loves us so much. He loves us even though we aren't perfect and has given us a way to be forgiven. When we tell God we know we sin and ask Him to count Jesus' death on the cross as our punishment, He instantly forgives us. Those of us who already have Jesus' forgiveness can ask God to help us be honest when we sin and then thank God for His grace.</p>

The Ten Commandments

Instructions: Refer to pages 20 & 21 in *The Awesome Book of Bible Facts* to answer the following questions.

List the Ten Commandments.

What does a tutor do? How is God's law like a tutor?

Give three reasons why God gave the Law.

Jesus summed up the law in 2 commandments. What are they?