

Carved in Stone

Embracing God's Value System

Children's Lesson Three

God First

PURPOSE

In this lesson we seek to challenge the children to place God first in their lives. Each day children are bombarded with choices they must make. Sometimes children make good choices and sometimes they make not so good choices with negative consequences associated with them. By the choices they make, the children are deciding what is important in their lives. For this lesson the children need to understand that God wants to be first in their lives. He wants to be the first choice in their decisions. For God to have this importance, children need to understand priorities, commitments, and choices. They need to understand they can choose to make God first in their lives by following the first commandment and living as Jesus instructed in Mark 12: 28-34.

OBJECTIVES

The children will:

- Learn about the first commandment.
- Understand that they can make choices in their lives.
- Realize that God wants them to choose him first in their lives.
- Understand how to put God first in their lives.

SCRIPTURE

- Exodus 20: 3
- Mark 12:28-34

WHAT YOU NEED

- Commandment Crest and first badge
- Glue
- A copy of the story for each child
- Choices worksheet
- Wheel of Importance worksheet
- 5" circles
- Four or five petals for each student; flower stem and two leaves
- Foam Fun
- Pencils or pens
- Magnets
- Sequins, glitter, etc.
- Copy of first commandment to place on bulletin board.



Setting the Scene

1. **Commandment Crest.** Have the children find their Commandment Crests they made last week. There are two ways you can work this activity in this lesson and all of the remaining lessons. For the younger children you may want to write the commandment being studied on their badges in advance so all they have to do is glue it on. For the older children you may want them to write the commandment themselves on their badge and then glue it on the Commandment Crest.

The badges are either pieces of construction paper cut into different shapes or you can use foam fun for the badges. The badge should only be large enough to write the commandment being studied for that lesson. One lesson the badge may be shaped in a square, the second badge may be a circle, the third badge may be a oval, and so on. You can also vary the color of the badges to add interest and variety to the Commandment Crest. The children can glue the badges going down their crests. There should be enough room for three columns with three or four badges per column.

2. **Choices Worksheet.** Children make choices everyday. Have students fill in their answers to their favorite items on the Choices Worksheet. Once they have completed this, discuss with them why some are their favorites and how and why they chose those items.

TRANSITION

We make choices everyday: what we eat, what to wear, and how to act. We also have the choice to decide what is the most important part of our lives. We decide who we put first in our lives. God wants us to choose him as the most important. God wants us to think he is the most important part of our lives. God is all-powerful and is the one and only true God. God wants us to put him first with all of our choices.

The first commandment deals with our choices. We need to put God first. He is to be our first choice and what he wants us to do should be more important than other choices we might have.

Place a copy of the first commandment on the bulletin board using the same wording from the Ten Commandment Worksheet introduced in lesson two. Read it and then have the children repeat it after you. Remind the children to be trying to memorize the Ten Commandments. This is the first memory verse.

STORY

Distribute copies of the story for the students to read aloud or you can tell the story to the younger children.

QUESTIONS

1. **Do you have a slogan for your school? Can you think of any you have heard or seen?** (Kindness is Contagious or Kindness Counts)
2. **Why is the slogan "God First" a better selection for The Commandment Kids than "Others First"?**
3. **To which commandment does the slogan "God First" refer?** (The first commandment.)
4. **How do you put God first?** (By thinking about what God wants us to do and putting that first over other choices. By keeping God first in our hearts, reading the Bible, going to church.)
5. **What can you do this week to put God first in your life?** (Answers may vary, but try to get the children to say very specific things they can do to show God is first in their lives.)

TRANSITION

God wants us to put him first in our lives, but how do we do that? We look to Jesus for direction with that question. Jesus said, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength" (Mark 12:30). It is when we love God with everything we are and with everything we have that we put God first in our lives. God is to be the center of everything we do: our relationships, our jobs, our activities. Ask the students to list things and people that are important to them. God should be even more important than all of those too. Our next activity will show you how God relates to everything in our lives.

ACTIVITIES

1. **Flowers of Importance.** Give each student one large circle at least 5" in diameter. Have them write God in the middle of this circle. Give each student four or five petals approximately 3"x6". Have the students write one item, person, or thing that is important to them on each petal. The students then glue the petals around the center of the flower. You may want to give the students a stem and two leaves to glue on to the flower.

Say **This illustrates that God is the center of our lives and he affects all the other important things in our lives. When we love God and want to act like he wants us to, then that affects how we act toward our parents, our material possessions, etc. Can anyone think of an example of this?**

2. **Wheel of Importance.** For older students, have each student complete a Wheel of Importance worksheet included in this lesson. This activity also shows the students that God should be first in their lives and placing him first affects all other things. Have the students write "God" in the middle of their wheels. On the spokes of the wheels the students can fill in names of people, places, or things that are important to them. Have students share their items of importance with other students. After the students have completed the activity, discuss with them how placing God in the center of life affects everything else.

3. **Being a Commandment Kid.** Everyday we must decide we are going to put God first. To help you remember to do this we are going to make "God First" buttons, magnets, or book markers. The teacher will need to decide which activity to do. For each of the items use foam fun.

- A. Pins: Cut 4" circles and glue on pin holders. Have each student write "God First" on pin. Decorate with sequins, glitter, etc.
- B. Magnet: Same as above but glue a small strip of magnet on the back
- C. Book markers: Cut a 2"x5" strip of foam fun. Have students write vertically "God First." Decorate as above.

Today we have learned that God wants us to put him first in our lives. We do that by loving him with all of our hearts, souls, and minds. I challenge you this week to put God first. When you need to make a decision, try to think what God would want you to do first, before you make your decision.

You might want to encourage the children to continue practicing the first commandment and begin memorizing the second commandment.

End with a prayer.

STORY

- Narrator: It is the start of a new school year at Springdale Elementary School. The principal, Mr. Trembly wants the students to be kinder to everyone this year, so he has started a contest to see if each classroom can think of a slogan to be used all year to help the students remember to be kind. The Commandment Kids are discussing this under the oak tree they call the club's home.
- T.J.: Well, what kind of slogans have your classes come up with?
- Charlotte: Our class thought the short and simple saying of "Be Kind" would be best.
- Frankie: Yeah, that's okay, but we want to have a slogan that has some zip and zing to it. Our class thought of "Be kind all the time." It has a catchy rhyming sound to it.
- Geoffrey: Our class thought the slogan "Be kind because that is what you're supposed to do" was okay.
- Kassy: Our class I think, has the best saying "others first." It is short, sweet and you have to be kind to put others first. I just know our slogan will win.
- Narrator: After many class votes the slogan chosen for the kindness campaign was "Others First." Everyone in the school liked it except T.J. He's not quite sure about it and decides to tell his friends about it one day after school as they met under the oak tree.
- T.J.: You know, I'm kind of bothered by the new school slogan.
- Chelsea: What's wrong with it? I like it. It has a certain ring to it.
- T.J.: Now remember, we're The Commandment Kids and I think we have a commandment about this very thing. Here let me read it for you. "You shall have no gods before me." See, we are to put God first. God is to be more important to us than anything or anyone. Others first is good, but for Christians our slogan should be "God First."
- Geoffrey: I see what you mean. If we put God first then we will be kind and generous and think of others because that is what God wants us to do.
- T.J.: I know we can't change the school slogan but how about we make "God First" our slogan for The Commandment Kids.
- Charlotte: I like it! Let's do it!
- Narrator: All of the other Commandment Kids agreed.





CHOICES

Fill in the blank with the answer to the following questions.
What is your favorite ???

Food _____

T.V. Show _____

Color _____

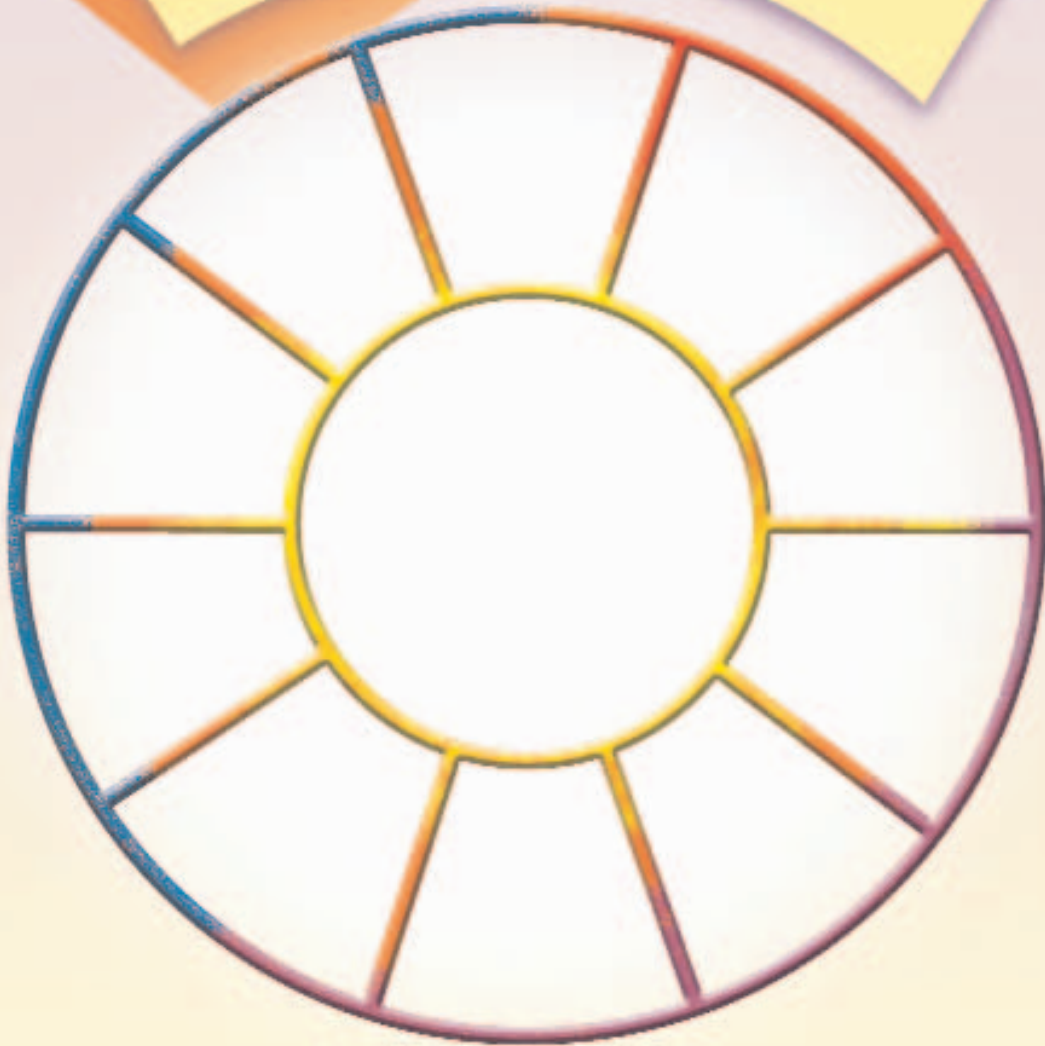
Sport _____

Candy _____

Subject in School _____

CARVED IN STONE ARTWORK, LESSON THREE - GOD FIRST, CHOICES WORKSHEET

Wheel of Importance



CARVED IN STONE ARTWORK, **LESSON THREE - GOD FIRST**, WHEEL OF IMPORTANCE WORKSHEET