

### Children's Lesson Ten

# What's Yours is Not Mine

#### PURPOSE

**S**tealing, no matter what it is or how little it costs, is wrong. Often adults are not very good role models for this commandment. With trying to outdo the IRS, taking things from the job, rumors of scandalous politicians, and reports of "white collar" crime rising, it seems adults don't take this commandment very seriously. The children need to understand that they are diminished a little bit each time they steal. It is better to work hard for a little bit, then steal and have much. Often self-esteem suffers when someone steals something. The pride of a job well done is not there. Deception is a big part of stealing. When one steals he or she often has to lie and cheat also. Stealing only creates a bigger problem for the person. We don't want any of the children to become entangled in the deception of stealing because it only creates more problems for them. What is mine needs to stay mine and what is yours needs to stay yours, a lesson all need to learn.



#### OBJECTIVES

The children will

- Understand the eighth commandment.
- See that when one breaks this commandment it not only hurts those who are stolen from but also the thief.
- Understand that stealing not only involves taking something that doesn't belong to you, but it creates all sorts of situations where deceit can occur.

#### SCRIPTURE

- Exodus 20: 15

#### WHAT YOU NEED

- Commandment Crest with eighth badge
- Glue
- A copy of the story for each child
- Construction paper 8½"x11"
- Copies of the Deceit Web worksheet and the bug sheet
- Construction paper 4½"x11"
- Markers or crayons
- Pencils or pens
- Copy of eighth commandment to place on bulletin board

## SETTING THE SCENE

1. **Commandment Badge.** The students need to locate their Commandment Crests and affix the eighth commandment badge.

2. **Memory review.** On construction paper slips of 4¼"x11", write each commandment discussed so far, one commandment per slip of paper. Mix up the slips of paper. Have groups of two or three children arrange the slips on a table or floor in the correct order. After they are in the correct order the children can practice saying the commandments.

3. **Is it stealing?** Begin class once all of the children are in the classroom. Ask the children if the following situations are stealing or not. Ask them to explain their answers.

A. **At a Wal-Mart you get four notebooks off of the shelf. The clerk only rings up three of the notebooks, but puts all four of them in your bag. You don't get charged for the fourth notebook. You give her the money and hurry out of the store before she realizes her mistake.**

B. **A classmate takes your favorite pen at school because he doesn't have the money to buy one himself.**

C. **A person finds a bracelet on the playground. The rule for the school is to turn in anything found that doesn't belong to you. The person who found the bracelet likes the looks of it and decides not to turn it in.**

D. **A friend borrows your bike because he or she knew you would let them ride it for awhile if you were at home to say yes.**

E. **A clerk at the store gives you a five-dollar bill instead of a one-dollar bill for change. You notice the difference but walk out of the store anyway without telling the clerk.**

F. **Someone at your dad's work likes to take home paper, pencils, pens and other things from the office so he doesn't have to buy them at the store to use at home.**

G. **In science lab groups you discuss with your friends your idea for the science fair. Everybody thinks it is a good idea. You come to school the next day and learn that one of your friends has told the teacher about your idea, except he claimed it for his own.**

Or you may want to think of other situations more relevant to the children in the class.

## TRANSITION

Today it seems like stealing isn't a big thing. People take things that do not belong to them and really feel little guilt about it. But it is wrong, no matter what you take or how much it is worth. Taking something that doesn't belong to you and using it as your own is wrong. God knew that stealing could cause many problems among his people. That is why one of his commandments deals with stealing. Let's see what The Commandment Kids have to say about the eighth commandment.

## STORY

Distribute the story to the children. Read or have them read the story.

## QUESTIONS

1. **Have you ever had something stolen from you? How did it make you feel?**

(If you have had this experience you might share it with the class.)

2. **Why do you think Wilson stole those items at school?** (There could be all sorts of answers for this. In the story it states he stole because he liked the thrill of getting away with something he should not be doing.)

3. **What would you say to Wilson?** (Once again, there could be all sorts of answers for this question.)

4. **What do you think it means when people say stealing hurts the thief as well as the person stolen from?** (The thief loses self-respect and sometimes his reputation along with other things, so the thief can lose as much or even more than the person stolen from.)

## ACTIVITIES

1. **Bumper stickers.** Ask students to tell you about some of the bumper stickers they have seen recently, or you may want to tell them about some you have seen. Say **Bumper stickers seem to be places people can make their opinion known to all those who read it. We want to create some bumper stickers that tell people they should not steal. Using the construction paper provided and the markers or crayons, create a bumper sticker that tells everyone that sees it that it is wrong to steal.** (For the older children, you may want to talk to them about license plates messages using only a few numbers and/or letters.) Give each child a piece of construction paper. Tell them they can use pictures, words, numbers, etc. to convey their message. After everyone is finished, let each child explain his or her bumper sticker.

2. **Web of Deceit.** When someone steals deceit is involved. Ask the students what deceit is. When someone is involved in deceit it is as if they are caught in a sticky web that is incredibly hard to get out of. Use the web design and bug sheets included in this lesson for the students to see exactly how sticky the web of deceit can be.

A. Have the students cut out the bugs.

B. The children then need to look up the following Bible verses and write that verse on the body of a bug. The verses are Proverbs 15:27a, Proverbs 12:20a, Proverbs 26:28, Ephesians 5:3, Hebrews 3:13. Or if you have other verses that would be appropriate, have them look up those.

C. The children glue the bugs onto the Web of Deceit. After that is done you may want to decorate the web with glitter.

D. For the younger children, you may want to write out the Bible verses on the wings so they only need to cut the bugs out and glue them on the web.

Explain the Bible verses to the children after all have completed the activity. **Stealing often causes people to do all sorts of other things that are not good. They may need to lie to cover up their stealing or they may covet things causing them to steal in the first place. Being aware that stealing is wrong and that God wants us to be trustworthy and honest is the first step in being an honest person, one who does not steal and take things belonging to others.**

Remind the children that awards will be given to each child who can say the Ten Commandments from memory. Encourage the children to begin memorizing the ninth commandment.

End with a prayer.

## STORY

- Chelsea: Teacher, I can't find my pink and purple barrette. I took it off after lunch and put it in my pencil box, but it's not there anymore. Have you seen it?
- T.J.: And I can't find my fancy pen that had the baseballs on it. My dad brought it back for me from one of his business trips. I'm very careful with it. I know I put it in my desk yesterday and now it's gone too.
- Teacher: There seems to be several things missing. I'm missing something too. Is anyone else missing something?
- Narrator: Several other people raised their hands. The teacher knew that not all those people could have misplaced their things. Something had to be going on. The Commandment Kids sent each other a signal that meant "meet at the oak tree after school." They all shook their heads yes. Later that afternoon they sat around discussing the missing items.
- Charlotte: It just doesn't make sense.
- Kassy: It doesn't. I made a list of all of the things missing hoping to see a pattern, but I can't see one. Maybe you guys can. Here is what is missing: Chelsea's barrette, T.J.'s pen, Frankie's package of bubblegum, five marbles, a chalkboard eraser, several other pens and pencils, a little school calendar, a lunchbox and possibly other things.
- Geoffrey: Boy, that sure is a lot of stuff. I wonder what is going on.
- Chelsea: I don't know. All I know is that I want my favorite barrette back.
- Geoffrey: Hey, I have an idea. It seems that we have someone who likes taking things that don't belong to him or her. How about if we try to trick whoever it is into taking something we lay out and we can catch them in the act of stealing it and maybe get all of our stuff back?
- Charlotte: That's a brilliant plan. What should we use for bait to catch the thief? It seems the person likes bright and unusual things.
- Chelsea: I have that new pencil sharpener that I just brought to school. It has stars and stripes all over it. I can make a big deal out of it so everyone knows I have it and then put it in my desk.
- Geoffrey: Great idea. We can stay close to the windows at recess and see what happens. How does that sound?
- Narrator: Everybody liked the idea so it was decided to put the plan into action tomorrow.

Chelsea: (The next day right before recess, talking really loudly) Guess what Shelley? (Shelley sits in the seat next to Chelsea.) I have this new pencil sharpener. My mom bought it for me this last weekend. Isn't it cool. It has all of these colors and is brand new.

Shelley: Yeah, it looks great Chelsea.

Narrator: The plan has been set and it will only take some time until The Commandment Kids catch who is stealing items from the classroom. They didn't have any idea who it might be, so it was a complete surprise when they finally did catch the thief. The Commandment Kids were trying to be cautious as they watched the windows to their classroom during recess. Nothing happened during the first recess, but after lunch was a different story.

Chelsea: I hope something happens this recess. I'm getting tired of standing around watching this window. I want to go play four square or swing.

Kassy: Sssshhhhhh. I see someone in the classroom.

Charlotte: Who do you see? Who do you see?

Kassy: You'll never believe this. I can't believe it, but he is going for Chelsea's desk. Now he's looking in it. Go get T.J. We just caught a thief.

Narrator: While Charlotte ran to get the guys, Chelsea and Kassy saw Wilson James II take out the pencil sharpener and place it in his pocket. The Commandment Kids then told their teacher who asked Wilson to stay after school. After school the teacher and The Commandment Kids asked Wilson if he had seen Chelsea's pencil sharpener.

Wilson: Have I seen the pencil sharpener? No, why do you think I have seen it? I didn't know it was missing. Why did I have to stay after school? And what are those kids doing here?

Chelsea: What is that in your pocket, Wilson?

Wilson: Oh nothing.

Teacher: Wilson, I need you to take out what is in your pocket.

Wilson: I don't have to listen to you.

Teacher: Well, we can call your parents and have them come over if you want.

Wilson: (He pulls out the pencil sharpener and hangs his head in shame and embarrassment) Here it is. How did you know I had it?

Teacher: Chelsea, is that your pencil sharpener?

Chelsea: Yes.

Teacher: Okay kids, you can leave now. I need to talk to Wilson.

Narrator: The principal, the teacher, Wilson, and Wilson's parents had a conference where Wilson told them he didn't need the things he had stolen, but he liked the thrill he got doing something he wasn't supposed to do. Often when things are stolen, they are stolen not out of need, but out of being selfish and deceitful. Later on The Commandment Kids were talking about this very idea.

Chelsea: I can't believe Wilson was the thief. He's the richest kid in school. Why would he do it?

Charlotte: I don't know. Maybe he liked doing something he wasn't supposed to do or maybe he was just being selfish and thinking only about himself.

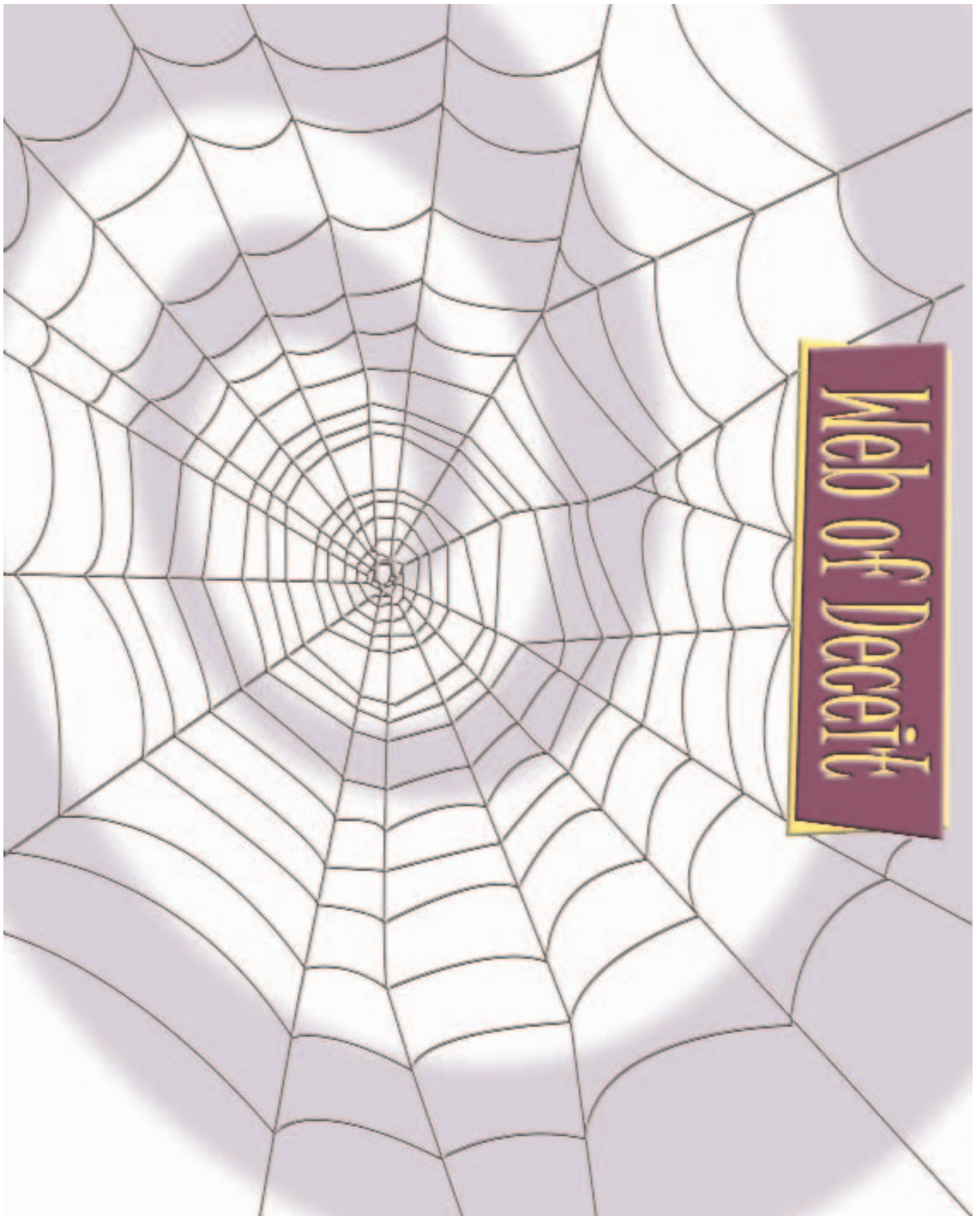
T.J: Well, I hope he's learned his lesson. Apologizing to everyone and sessions with the school counselor should teach him not to steal anymore. As Commandment Kids we know stealing goes against how God wants us to act. Remember commandment eight. God tells us, "You shall not steal." When God tells us not to do something and we do it anyway, you know something is going to happen.

Goeffrey: You know, he hurt himself as well as everyone he stole from. Everyone he stole from lost their things for awhile and now everyone knows it was him and everyone thinks less of him now.

Frankie: That's the way it is with stealing. Everyone is hurt. I bet Wilson didn't think taking those little things would hurt him, but all thieves get caught some time and then they have to face the consequences of what they did.

Narrator: It is true. A thief not only hurts others, but also him- or herself. Stealing always includes selfishness and deceit. God does not want us to act in that way. He can help us not to steal and to take pride in working for the things we have.





**CARVED IN STONE ARTWORK, LESSION TEN - WHAT'S YOURS IS NOT MINE, WEB OF DECEIT WORKSHEET**