
“Be Content”

The Ten Commandments for Kids
Lesson #11 on Do Not Covet (Tenth Command)



You shall not covet your neighbor's house... or anything that belongs to your neighbor.



mandy groce '19

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[God's Good Rules](#): Lesson #11 Be Content

Main idea: When we are content, we can have happy relationships with God and with others.

Gather Lesson Supplies: Bible; dry erase markers or chart paper and markers; small household objects or balls; hula hoops or baskets; “10th Commandment” coloring page; “Heavenly Treasure Box” craft page; scissors; glue; coloring supplies. For more teaching ideas, don't miss our [Ten Commandments for Kids](#). We feature lessons, teaching activities, and more craft ideas.

Memory Verses: Psalm 119:1-2 “Joyful are people of integrity, who follow the instructions of the Lord. Joyful are those who obey his laws and search for him with all their hearts.”

Scripture references: Exodus 20:17, Ephesians 5:5, Philippians 4:11-13, Hebrews 13:5, 1 Timothy 6:6-8, Matthew 6:19-21

- See our printable [10 commandments for kids](#) version
- [PDF Worksheets on the 10 Commandments](#)
- [Commandments Preschool Booklet](#) [pdf] and [Mini Book](#) [pdf]
- [Go Fish Guys sing the 10 Commandment Song](#)
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Devotion / Teacher Preparation:

Read Scripture references, Mark 7:20-23, 1 Kings 21:1-16, and Colossians 3:5-6

Take time to meditate on this week's Scripture and think about your own life. Our world is saturated in advertising, telling us that enough is never enough.

You will never own enough, do enough, or be enough. It can become overwhelming and all too easy to allow our hearts to slip into a wrongful sort of desiring, to fill our lives with the things of this world instead of the things of God.

While we may not necessarily covet our neighbor's house or the newest car on television, we may still fall into the sin of covetousness. We may desire more abstract things, such as looks or power or prestige.

Be on the lookout this week for anything in your life that may sneak in and steal away the worship that belongs to God alone and take time to pray for freedom from any form of idolatry.



Lesson Introduction / Game: Fill Your Home

The goal of this game is to show that you cannot steal from others to fill up your own life. For each team, place a hula hoop or basket into a corner. Put ten or so balls in each team's "home." You could use bean bags, balled up paper, or a collection of small, (safe to throw) objects. Make sure each "home" has the same number of objects. Designate equal teams to each home. Explain that in order to win the game, they must take objects from other people's homes and place them in their own home. They can only move one object at a time. If you wish, you may allow tagging. If a player carrying an object is tagged, they must return the object. The game ends when one team has all the objects from all the other homes. As you can guess, this is impossible, as each team of continue to steal from one another, frustrating the students until they realize the point: being happy with what you have is the only way to win in life.



Bible Lesson Message: Be Content

Open in prayer, then say, did you all enjoy today's game? It was pretty frustrating work, trying to fill up your home with things when everyone keeps taking them from you. That is kind of the point of today's commandment. Today we are learning about the tenth and final commandment given to Moses. Let's look it up now. Turn with me to Exodus 20:17. (Read, or have a student read, Exodus 20:17.)

"You must not covet your neighbor's house. You must not covet your neighbor's wife, male or female servant, ox or donkey, or anything else that belongs to your neighbor."

The first thing we need to understand when studying this commandment is, what does covet mean? (Allow students to answer.) To covet means to want something selfishly, without caring about what others think or feel.

Let me say this right at the beginning of this lesson: it is perfectly fine to want things. It is not okay to want something so much that you think about it all the time or may take it from someone else or be jealous of someone who has what you want. Coveting is being jealous for what others may have.

Now Exodus 20:17 lists a few different things that we may jealously want. Look at the verse and tell me what things it tells us we must not covet. (Allow students to answer. The verse lists our neighbor's house, wife, male or female servant, ox, donkey, or anything of our neighbor's.) So this verse lists some things that most of us probably don't have. I don't have any



servants or oxen lying around. But it ends by telling us to not covet anything that belongs to our neighbor. And remember, our neighbor is not just the people who live in the houses right next to ours. Anyone we meet is our neighbor. So we must be careful to not jealously want anything that anyone else has.

That sounds really difficult, doesn't it? Some people may even wonder, what's the big deal? Are we really hurting anyone by wanting their stuff? (At this point, you may have older students discuss. For younger students, just go on with the explanations.) The problem with coveting is that it is a sin that happens in your heart. No one can see where coveting starts except you and God. But whatever happens in our heart is what leads to other sins. (Mark 7:20-23).

It is like a little seed, buried deep in our hearts, which will grow like a weed and turn into other sins. For example, a marriage promise can be broken if a husband or wife is jealous of their friend's husband or wife. If you want something so bad that it makes you jealous of a friend, you may lie or steal to get what you want. There is even a story in the Bible of an evil king who coveted a field and murdered the field's owner so he could have it. (1 Kings 21). Coveting leads to other sins.

Of course, even if you never lie or steal or kill when you jealously want things, coveting is still a big problem. Remember, the Ten Commandments are divided into two sections. The first four commandments are about how we can have a good relationship with God.

The last six commandments are about how we can have good relationships with our neighbors. When we covet, when we want something so bad that we think about it all the time, we stop thinking of



our neighbors how we should. We focus on their stuff instead of focusing on how we can love them best. We cannot respect and love our neighbor when we are focused on wanting their stuff.

Like we said, coveting is a sin that happens in the heart. It does not start out as something we do, but as something we feel. Only God can see what is in our hearts. And when we covet, God sees that we are not content with what he has given us.

Think about it. When we want more and More and MORE, it tells God that what he has given us is not good enough. When we focus on what other people have, we forget to thank God for what we have. That is a big problem, because God has given us so much! Let's have a sword drill to help us understand the big problem with coveting. Take all bookmarks and fingers out of your Bibles and hold them closed above your heads. When I say go, turn to Ephesians 5:5. Go! (Read, or have a student read, Ephesians 5:5).

“You can be sure that no immoral, impure, or greedy person will inherit the Kingdom of Christ and of God. For a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world.”

If we worship the things of this world, we cannot worship God. Coveting means stuff is more important to us than God. When we covet, we cannot respect and love God like we should.

So we can see that coveting hurts our relationship with God and with our neighbors. So what are some things we can do to help us not covet? How can we protect our hearts from wanting more and more and more, and



from being jealous of other people's stuff, when the world tells us that that's okay, and even a good thing? Well, of course, the Bible the answer for us.

The first verse to help us protect our heart from coveting can be found in Philippians 4:11-13.

“Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. ¹³ For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.”

In these verses, Paul tells us that no matter what, even in hard times when he didn't have much, he knew how to be content, because he has Jesus to help him be strong.

Next let's look at Hebrews 13:5. “Don't love money; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, ‘I will never fail you. I will never abandon you.’”

We can trust God more than money. Money won't last forever, but God promises to be with us always. So we can be happy with what we have.

One more verse. Turn to 1 Timothy 6:6-8.

“Yet true godliness with contentment is itself great wealth. ⁷ After all, we brought nothing with us when we came into the world, and we can't take anything with us when we leave it. ⁸ So if we have enough food and clothing, let us be content.”



There is no point in being greedy and trying to have as much stuff and we can, because none of this stuff is coming to heaven with us. So we should be content with what we have.

Do you see a pattern here? What word or idea pops up in all these verses? (Allow students to answer.) In these verses, we find the opposite of covetousness: contentment. (Write “contentment” on the board.)

When we are happy with what we have, we won't be jealous of what our neighbors have and we won't make an idol of stuff instead of worshipping the one true God. When we are content, we can have happy relationships with God and with others.

Now before we start our craft, I want to explain one thing: treasure is not necessarily a bad thing. It's okay to really, really want things. Just make sure you are wanting the right things! Matthew 6:19-21 says,

“Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.”

Be sure to store up your treasures in heaven, by loving God and obeying him!

End in prayer.



Craft: 10th Commandment Coloring Page

by Many Groce

Have children write their name on the coloring page. As they color, discuss with them what they learned today. They may take the coloring pages home, or you may collect them to put together into a book to be sent home at the end of the unit. You can download the entire [10 Commandment Coloring Book](#) on our website.

Heavenly Treasure Chest

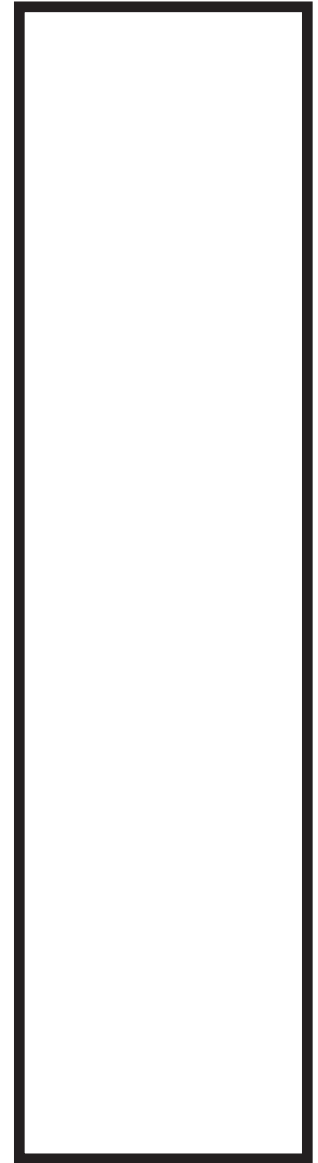
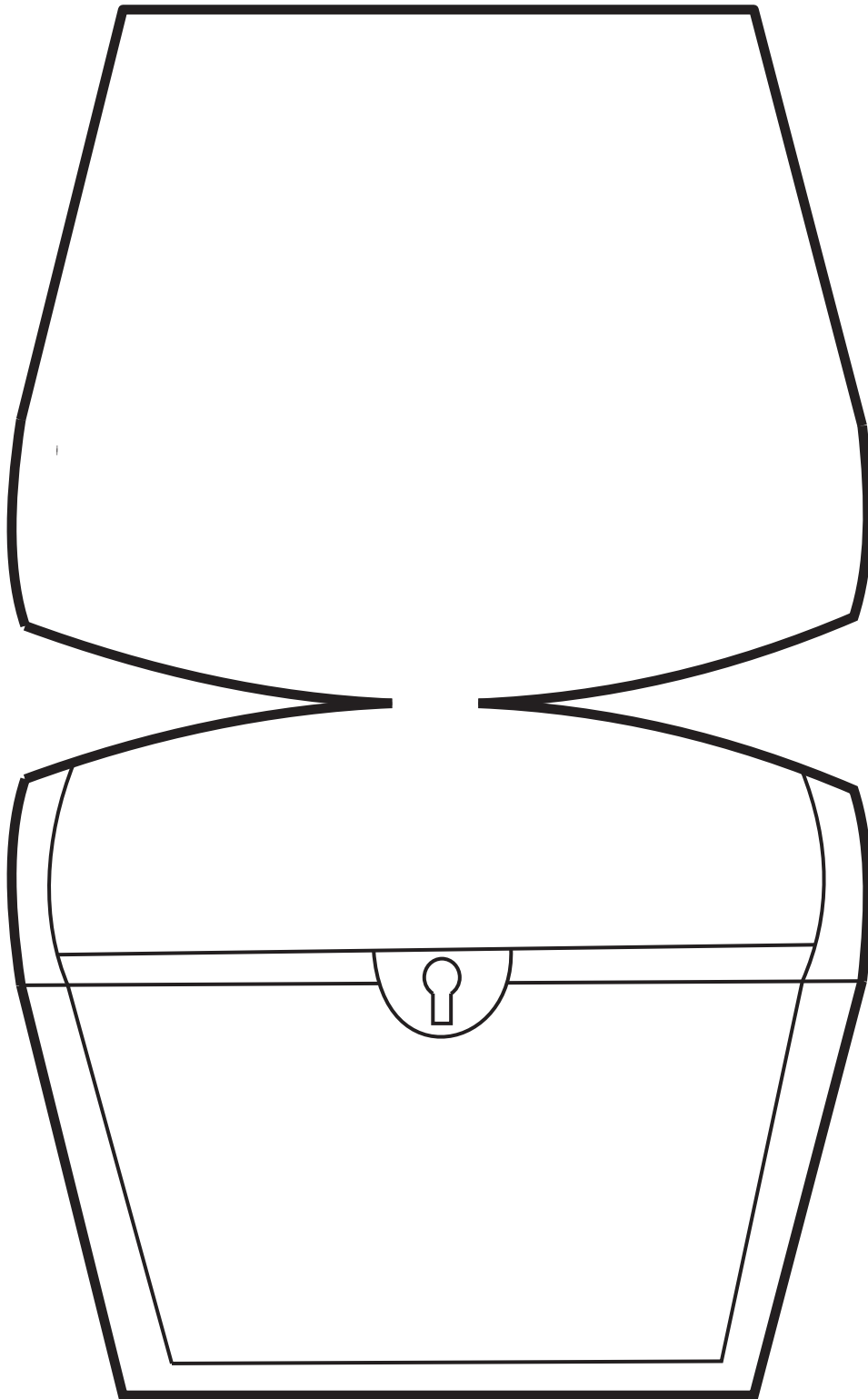
Have students cut out the treasure chest (along the bold lines) and decorate the inside and outside any way they wish. Fold the treasure chest in half, like a greeting card. Cut out the long rectangle and accordion fold it, back and forth. Glue the bottom square of the folded rectangle to the inside of the treasure chest card, to the blank back side. Cut out and glue the Bible verse onto the top of the accordion folded rectangle. When the card is closed, it will press down the verse. When students open up their treasure chest, the Bible verse should pop out at them.





You shall not covet your neighbor's house... or anything that belongs to your neighbor.





*My treasure is
in heaven!
Matthew 6:19-21*

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