

NEW RULES

Timeless Truth: Following God's laws results in righteousness.

Bible Basis: Exodus 19:1–8; 20:1–17

Key Verse: [God's people] answered with one voice. They said, "We will do everything the Lord has told us to do." —Exodus 24:3 NIV

Resource: *The Story for Children*, Chapter 5: "New Rules"

PARENT TIPS

Read the key point from the Sunday school class your child(ren) attended. Use the Table Talk questions to start a discussion around the dinner table during the week. The Living Faith activity is designed to help your family discern what a lie is and always strive to tell the truth. The Extra Mile looks at current teen ethics trends and encourages your children to be different. Plus, a fun game will help your family memorize the Ten Commandments.

GET THE POINT

God gave us rules so we can know him. I can know God by learning his laws.

TABLE TALK

- Why did God's people need rules?
- Those rules are pretty old now. Do they still apply today? Why?
- Which one of the Ten Commandments is the hardest for you to follow?
- What are some other important rules that the Ten Commandments don't cover?

LIVING FAITH

Play the "Two Truths and a Lie" game as a family. In this game, each family member has to think up two real things and one falsehood to say out loud. Then everybody guesses which thing is the lie. Try to make the lie sound believable. Parents will have an easier time stumping their children, but be aware about what you reveal about yourself. Also, try to have the true statements sound outrageous, then you can share the story behind your "truth." (Example: "I never had detention in high school; I once hit a golf ball and broke a car's windshield; I made my little brother drink pickle juice." In this case, if the lie was about detention, then the truths could lead to interesting stories.)

Ask:

- What was the hardest part about this game?
- Did you learn anything new about your family?
- Was it easy to disguise a lie in the truth?
- How come it's easy for little lies to slip out in everyday life?
- What are some ways that we can always strive to be truthful?

EXTRA MILE

Use these ideas to drive home the importance of the Ten Commandments.

1. In the Cards—Get a deck of cards and remove all the face cards (jacks, queens, kings, and jokers). Shuffle the deck. Bring out a Bible and review the Ten Commandments in order. For younger children, you can paraphrase the Commandments like this: 1. God is the one true God; 2. Do not worship anyone or anything but God; 3. Do not misuse God's name; 4. Rest one day a week; 5. Respect your father and mother; 6. Do not kill; 7. Husbands and wives should keep their promises to each other; 8. Do not steal; 9. Do not lie; 10. Do not be jealous of others.

Put the deck on the table. Have the youngest family member start by drawing a card and trying to say the corresponding commandment (example: 8 = Do not steal). If the person says the correct commandment, he gets to keep the card. If it's incorrect, the card is put face-up next to the deck. Go through the entire deck of cards. The person who ends up with the most cards gets a prize, such as being able to choose a special dessert the following night.

2. Teen Scene—Look up **"The Ethics of American Youth—2008 summary"** online. Based on a random survey of 30,000 high school students, this study found that 35 percent of boys and 26 percent of girls stole from a store in the past year. Twenty-three percent stole from a parent or relative, and 20 percent stole from a friend. Lying was an even bigger issue. Eighty-three percent admitted to lying to a parent about something significant. Cheating is also a problem that appears to be getting worse in that 64 percent of students cheated on a test in the last year. High schoolers couldn't even be totally honest on this anonymous survey—26 percent said they lied on one or two questions.

Ask:

- Do these numbers on lying, cheating, and stealing seem about right in your school and among your friends? Would you say the problem is larger?
- Why do you think so many students lie, cheat, or steal?
- Have you ever cheated on a test or been tempted to cheat?
- Is cheating the same thing as lying? Why or why not?
- What's one way that teenagers could be encouraged to lie, cheat, and steal less?
- Can you think of the underlying cause of this behavior? (Selfishness, fear of getting bad grades, etc.)
- What can we do as parents to help you not lie, cheat, or steal?