

BASIC BIBLE THEMES

SESSION 2: LAW

TEACHER

Background Scripture: Matthew 19:16-20; Galatians 5:6; 6:2; James 1:2-5

Main Ideas:

- Religion as the source of morality has been replaced with personal feelings and societal programs.
- To know God is to enjoy the freedom that grows out of faithfulness, and this is the only true liberty there is.
- Real freedom emerges through self-discipline and integrity.

Learning Goals:

- To examine the false foundations of our society.
- To learn that true freedom exists only as we follow God's law.

1. Engage Interest

Bring to the session a number of magazines and newspapers with lots of pictures. Invite your adults to find pictures and headlines that illustrate the Ann Landers comment that opens the Session Content: "[Our culture] is sick."

Use these questions to stimulate a brief discussion of the items chosen:

- What is the "sickness" of society that this picture or headline illustrates?
- What moral law do you think it violates?

Presentation Option

Share this with your group: It has often been said, "A building is only as solid as its foundation." This is also true of our lives. Then, invite your adults to name some of the "foundations" people seem to base their lives on. (For example, drug culture, making money, seeking power, physical attraction, etc.)

2. Explore the Word

Divide the participants into three groups. To each, assign one of the following Scripture passages:

- Matthew 19:16-20
- Galatians 5:6; 6:2
- James 1:2-5

Ask each group to consider the following questions:

- What do these verses reveal to us about God?
- How does this scripture relate to today's society?
- What does this passage say to the Church?
- What can we learn from this scripture that will make us better disciples?

- How can we state this passage in our own words in one sentence? (Examples: Matthew 19:16-20, "Keep the commandments." Galatians 5:6; 6:2, "Share each other's troubles and problems." James 1:2-5, "Accept difficulty as an opportunity to grow and gain wisdom.")

Reassemble into one group and share the answers from each small group.

Presentation Option

Write each of the Ten Commandments on a separate 8" x 10" card or sheet of paper (without identifying numbers, of course).

- [1] You shall have no other gods before me.
- [2] You shall not make for yourself an idol.
- [3] You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.
- [4] Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.
- [5] Honor your father and your mother.
- [6] You shall not murder.
- [7] You shall not commit adultery.
- [8] You shall not steal.
- [9] You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.
- [10] You shall not covet.

Invite 10 persons to come to the front and each take one of the cards. Challenge them to line up the commandments in biblical order without looking at their Bibles. If the lineup is not correct, invite the rest of the adults to help make needed changes. (See Exodus 20:3-17.)

Review the commandments by asking someone to read each commandment aloud before the person holding that card is seated, and then briefly discuss what the commandment means.

3. Examine Life

Read each of the following statements one at a time aloud to the group. After each one is read, ask them to say whether they agree or disagree with the statement. Then discuss their reasons for their response.

- Living rightly requires religious roots.
- Religion as the source of morality has been replaced with personal feelings and societal programs.
- Only one out of three Christians surveyed believe faith should shape his or her lifestyle.
- Too many "believers" are like chubby physicians who tell their patients to lose weight.
- Today's youngsters think mainly about their own feelings and frustrations.
- The most perilous threat to the free society today is neither political nor economic. It is the poisonous, corrupting culture of relativism.
- Real freedom emerges through self-discipline and integrity.
- Good relationships need boundaries, limits, "dos and don'ts."
- As we wonder how to decide what's right and wrong, what's good and bad, we discover that Jesus Christ is the answer to humanity's deepest hunger for truth.
- Pastors, parents, teachers must reclaim their rightful responsibilities to point out and teach moral values, wresting them from television talk shows, movie stars, politics, and street gangs.

Presentation Option

Ask for six volunteers to have a brief debate on one or more of the following subjects. Limit the participants' "speeches" to one minute each, three defending the statement and three arguing against it.

- Moral permissiveness constitutes a "free and democratic" society.
- Human beings have forgotten God.
- Happiness and self-esteem go hand in hand.
- Because of Christ, Christians no longer have to obey the Ten Commandments. (See Hebrews 7:22b; 8:10-13a.)

4. Exercise Your Faith

Give each person a recipe card or sheet of paper. Then invite their participation with this:

- Based on what you have discovered in today's session, write a recipe for living righteously with God.

Give them several minutes to compose the "recipes," then ask several to share their results. Encourage each one to place his or her recipe in a place where it will be a personal reminder of God's plan for holy living.

Presentation Option

In the Session Content, Dr. Reed states, "The Lord seeks to draw us into a covenant bond, a lasting union, a spiritual marriage with himself."

Invite participants to take the following vows with you:

Having taken Jesus Christ to be my Lord and Savior, I, [state your name], covenant to love and serve Him for better—for worse, for richer—for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, until I am finally at home with Him in heaven.