



# Ten Commandments

Level C

Ages 11-14

**Exodus 19:1-20; 20:1-17 - selections**

**Series Theme:** The Lord leads and provides for us, and we can choose to follow Him.

**Lesson Focus:** The Lord teaches people how to live by means of the Ten Commandments.

**Reading Summary:** The children of Israel went into the Wilderness of Sinai. The Lord called to Moses from the mountain and said, “If you obey My voice and keep My covenant you shall be a special treasure to Me.” The people answered, “All that the Lord has spoken we will do.” Moses sanctified the people and told them not to come near the mountain. On the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a loud trumpet. The people stood at the foot of the mountain. Mount Sinai was covered in thick smoke, and the whole mountain quaked. The Lord came down on the top of the mountain, and Moses went up. The Lord said: “I am the Lord your God, you shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not take the Lord’s name in vain. Remember the Sabbath day. Honor your father and mother. Do not commit murder. Do not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness. You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife nor anything that is your neighbor’s.”

Lesson 5		Materials Supplied	Materials Needed
<b>1. Welcome Warm-up Activity</b> (2-3 minutes)	<b>Game</b>	<b>Game with No Rules</b> directions p. 2	dice
<b>2. Focus on the Word</b> Use all activities (5-7 minutes)	<b>Read the Word and Talk About It</b>	see <i>Reading Summary</i> above <i>The Ten Commandments Readings</i> p. 5 discussion guide p. 2	
<b>3. Learn by Doing</b> Choose 1-2 activities (15-20 minutes)	<b>Game</b> learn the order of the commandments and which commandments are on the first and second table through a lively card game	<b>Ten Commandments Trading Game</b> directions p. 3 <i>Ten Commandments Trading Game Rules</i> p. 6 <i>Commandments Cards</i> pp. 7-8 <i>Advanced Game Commandments Cards</i> p. 9	stiff paper for printing cards; paper cutter or scissors
	<b>Take Action</b> learn about the Lord’s leading and reflect on it while walking a labyrinth indoors, outdoors or at a table with your finger	<b>Path to Sinai</b> directions pp. 3-4 <i>Sinai Labyrinth</i> p. 10 <i>Path to Sinai</i> p. 11	<i>optional:</i> easily removable tape, such as masking tape, to create a labyrinth on carpet <i>or</i> chalk to create a labyrinth on pavement  <i>Note:</i> Alternatively, You can use printed copies of the <i>Sinai Labyrinth</i> as finger labyrinths for the students.
<b>4. Wrap It Up</b> (2-3 minutes)	<b>Take the Message Home</b> introduce the take home page	<b>Receiving the Commandments</b> p. 12	

# 1. Welcome Warm-up Activity

## Game with No Rules

*Supplies needed:* dice

Welcome students. Tell them you will be starting with a game. Hand out dice and invite students to play. There are no rules. Students will need to make up a new game that uses dice. Give students a minute or two to figure out what they want to do. As students come up with a game, ask questions or make suggestions. For example, “Who is making the rules?” “Why was [a particular rule] made?”

Stop the game after 2-3 minutes. Ask:

1. What happened when you started playing?
2. What problems came up?
3. Did you have to make up more rules as you went along in order to play?
4. Is it possible to play a game with no rules?

# 2. Focus on the Word

**Read:** Selections from Exodus 19:1-20; 20:1-17 on p. 5.

**What would the world be like if there were no rules?**

**What kinds of things might happen or not happen if there were no rules?**

**Why are rules important?**

**Three months after leaving Egypt the Lord led the children of Israel to Mount Sinai, in the Sinai wilderness. They stayed at Mount Sinai for about a year, and by the time they left they had become a nation. What was the first thing the Lord did there? Gave the Ten Commandments.**

**The Ten Commandments are essential for keeping order in the world. They are the foundation for our civil laws, and they are also the laws of heaven.**

**The Lord gave the commandments on two tables of stone. The first table contains the first three laws and part of the fourth law. These commandments are about the Lord. Why is it important to start with the Lord?**

**Without knowing who the Lord is, we cannot love Him. When the Lord is not the reason for doing what is right and good, we can easily take credit for doing what is right ourselves. We come into heaven when we do what is right *because it is what the Lord wants.***

**The second table of stone contains the rest of the laws, and these tell us how we should treat or not treat other people. The laws tell us how we are to act toward people in this world—and also how we are to treat people on a deeper spiritual level.**

**Let’s take the commandment, ‘You shall not commit murder.’ What does this mean on a natural level? Not to take another person’s natural life intentionally.**

**How might this commandment apply to the way we treat other people’s spirits? We should not destroy a person’s character or reputation by saying things that could hurt or kill their ability to be useful, e.g. by gossiping or telling lies about him/her.**

**How might this commandment apply to the way we treat the Lord?**

**The Lord Himself gave Moses the Ten Commandments. They are for all people in all times. They are the Lord’s rules about how we should live in order to inherit the happiness of heaven. The Lord provides the commandments so we can know how to follow Him. But we are free every moment to choose whether or not to follow the Lord.**

# 3. Learn by Doing

Choose one or two activities

## **Choice** Ten Commandments Trading Game

Learn or review the Ten Commandments by playing a card game. The goal is to complete a Ten Commandments set, or to collect cards representing the First Table (1-4) or the Second Table (5-10). To make it more interesting, add a bonus and penalty card (Israelites and the Golden Calf). This fast-paced game requires 3-10 players. For larger classes, split the group in half and run two separate games.



1. Can you recite the Ten Commandments in order? (Think aloud as a group.)
2. Which commandments were written on the first table of stone? (Commandments 1-3 and half of 4.)
3. Which commandments were written on the second table? (Half of 4, and 5-10.)
4. We are going to play a game in which we will sequence the Ten Commandments and remember which commandments are written on the first and second tables of stone. For the sake of the game, the 4th Commandment is included on the first table instead of shared between the first and second tables.
5. Go over the *Ten Commandments Trading Game Rules* (p. 6) with the group. Choose a dealer and play the game. If time allows, play again.
6. At the end of class, give each student a set of the cards to take home to help them remember the commandments.

### Materials Needed

*Ten Commandments Trading Game Rules* p. 6, a set of *Commandments Cards* pp. 7-8 printed on stiff paper for each student  
optional: 1 set of *Advanced Game Commandments Cards* p. 9, per game

### Prepare in Advance

Print *Ten Commandments Trading Game Cards* pp. 7-8 on stiff paper. Cut apart with paper cutter or scissors.

### New Church Concept The Commandments

Such great holiness and power were in [the Ten Commandments], because they were the complex of all things of religion. *True Christian Religion* 286

People who live according to the commandments are conjoined with the Lord. For the commandments teach life and also give life and open the way to heaven. *Arcana Coelestia* 8767



## **Choice** Path to Sinai

About three months after Lord brought the children of Israel out of Egypt they arrived at Mount Sinai. They remained there for about a year and received the Ten Commandments and other laws that would guide them on the rest of their long journey. The path to Sinai was not easy. The children of Israel could not clearly see where the Lord was leading them and complained many times.



We may also have difficulty seeing where the Lord is leading us. Some of our choices may appear to be dead ends—as if we were in a *maze*. In reality, the Lord's path for us is the true path. Though it may take twists and

### Materials Needed

copies of *Path to Sinai* p. 11 cut in half, copy of *Sinai Labyrinth* p. 10 to use as a finger labyrinth for each student *OR* tape to create a labyrinth on carpet *OR* chalk for on pavement

### Prepare in Advance

Print copies. Cut *Path to Sinai* p. 11 in half. If you make a large labyrinth, get supplies and construct a labyrinth for students to walk. Use *Sinai Labyrinth* p. 10 as a template or create your own.



## Path to Sinai *continued*

turns, like a *labyrinth*, it always leads to the center—to heaven—if we stay on the path. Our job is to go to “Mount Sinai” (the Word) to receive the Lord’s laws so we can follow His path. Unlike a *maze*, a *labyrinth* has only one path.

Students will walk a labyrinth to model following the Lord’s path. Choose between setting up a labyrinth indoors using tape on a carpet, outside using chalk on pavement, or at a table using a printed labyrinth and tracing a path with a finger.

1. Have you ever had experiences that turned out differently than you expected? What happened? (For example, you did not want to go on an outing with your family, but did and really enjoyed it)
2. Each day of our lives is like a journey. We make plans but we never know *exactly* what will happen. Does the Lord know what will happen to us each day?
3. Does the Lord want us to feel He is leading us? Why or why not? (The Lord does lead us directly, but He wants us to feel as if we make choices ourselves. Without the feeling that our choices are our own we could not go to heaven.)
4. How does the Lord lead us? (Through the Word. The Ten Commandments are a summary of everything in the Word.)
5. Just as the children of Israel were given the Ten Commandments at the start of their long journey, we need to learn the Commandments when we start out in life. Knowing them and doing what they teach can give us the greatest happiness in heaven.
6. Hand out *Path to Sinai* (p. 11). Read two or three quotes together.
7. Do you know what a labyrinth is? (It’s similar to a maze but has no dead ends. It has a *single* path through it to the center.) For centuries churches have used labyrinths as a symbolic meditative practice for walking the path of life. People often walk labyrinths in silence while thinking about ways the Lord is leading them.
8. Walk the labyrinth you have chosen.

## 4. Wrap It Up

### Closing

The Ten Commandments were given to teach the children of Israel—and all of us—how to keep order in this world and how to live a heavenly life. We are always free to obey the commandments or to reject them. If we follow them, naturally and spiritually, we will continue to come into greater connection with the Lord and His angels.

### Take the Message Home

Hand out a copy of *Receiving the Commandments* (p. 12) to each student. Read the quotations at the top of the page aloud together. Encourage the students to take the page home and think about it.



### New Church Concept The Lord Leads Us

The infinite ways the Lord leads us “appear as a labyrinth even before the angels...” *Apocalypse Explained* 1153.7

The Lord is constantly present and wanting to come in, but we have to use the freedom we have been given by the Lord to open the door. He says, “Behold! I am standing at the door and knocking. If any hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and will dine with them and they with me” (Revelation 3:20). *True Christian Religion* 285



# The Ten Commandments Readings

Exodus 19:1-3,5,7-8,14-20; 20:1-17 - *selections*

In the third month after the children of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt they came to the Wilderness of Sinai. So Israel camped before the mountain. And Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain, saying..., “If you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me.” So Moses called for the elders of the people, and laid before them all these words which the Lord commanded him. Then all the people answered together, “All that the Lord has spoken we will do.”

So Moses went down from the mountain to the people and sanctified the people, and they washed their clothes. And he said to the people, “Be ready for the third day.”

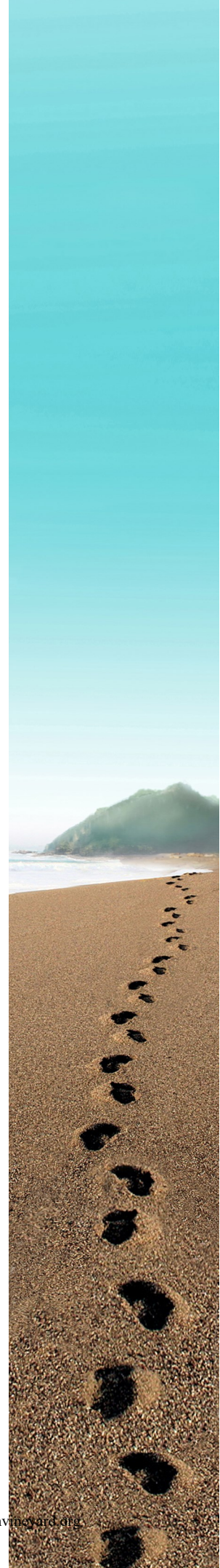
Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain.

Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire. And the whole mountain quaked greatly. And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice. Then the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain. And the Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.

And God spoke all these words, saying:

I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

- (1) You shall have no other gods before My face.
- (2) You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him innocent who takes His name in vain.
- (3) Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God.
- (4) Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.
- (5) You shall not murder.
- (6) You shall not commit adultery.
- (7) You shall not steal.
- (8) You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
- (9) You shall not covet your neighbor’s house.
- (10) You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor’s.



# Ten Commandments Trading Game Rules

## for 3-10 players

### BASIC GAME:

**Object:** To collect a set of The Commandments Cards by trading with other players. This game is based on *Pit*.

**Supplies Needed:** Set of Ten Commandments Cards for each player. Pen and scratch paper for keeping score

### Play

1. Prepare a single deck containing a set of Ten Commandments Cards for each player. Leave any extra cards out of the game.
2. Choose a dealer. The dealer shuffles the cards and deals 10 cards face down to each player.
3. Players pick up their cards. The goal is to collect a complete set of Ten Commandments Cards. Arrange cards into a set, being sure no one else can see the cards.
4. When everyone has sorted their cards, the dealer announces “Start Trading”.
5. Players start trading by taking between 1 and 4 duplicate cards that they do NOT need for their set out of their hand.
6. Players hold these cards so that their face value cannot be seen and call, “Trade one! One! One!” or “Trade Two! Two! Two!” etc. depending on how many cards you want to trade.
7. You may trade cards with any player who is calling out the same number of cards. If another player wants to trade fewer cards, you can lower your bid and trade the smaller number of cards, returning the others to your hand.
8. After each trade see what duplicate cards you still need to trade and call out that number to continue trading.
9. Continue trading until one player gets a full set of Ten Commandments Cards. The first player to do this calls out, “complete set” and all trading stops.

### Scoring

You may want to keep score after every round. Each complete set of the Ten Commandments has a score of 100. To make it more interesting, you may award other players points for completing the First Table (Commandments 1-4: 40 points) or the Second Table (Commandments 6-10: 60 points) as well. Decide ahead of time whether to have a “winning” score (e.g. 250 or 500). Repeat rounds until one player achieves this score.

### Variation | Silent Bidding

For a quieter version of the game, try silent bidding. If you wish to trade, hold up your free hand with your palm away from you. Show the number of cards you wish to trade by holding up the same number of fingers.

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### ADVANCED GAME:

**Object:** To collect a set of Ten Commandments Cards by trading with other players. This game is based on *Pit*.

**Supplies Needed:** Set of Ten Commandments Cards for each player **plus** 1 *Israelites* card and 1 *Golden Calf* card for the whole deck. (These work like the “Bull” and “Bear” cards in *Pit*.) Pen and scratch paper for keeping score.

### Play

1. When cards are dealt, two players will receive 11 cards instead of 10. To win, these “11-card” players need a complete set of the Ten Commandments and will have one card left over.
2. Play is the same as the Basic Game, except for the additional 2 cards. The *Israelites* card is *either* a bonus card or a penalty card, depending on what other cards a player holds. The *Golden Calf* card is always a penalty card.
3. The *Israelites* card can be used as a wild card to complete a set of commandments. A player who has 9 of the commandments and the *Israelites* card can call out “complete set”.
4. Players may trade the *Israelites* and *Golden Calf* cards at any time, just as you trade the other cards, in sets of 1-4 at a time. Deciding whether to trade or hold onto these cards is a matter of strategy.



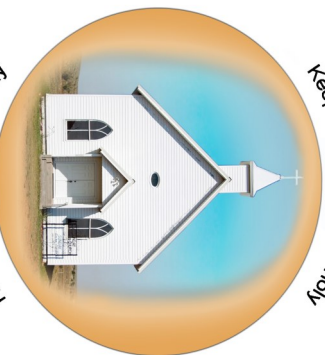

### Scoring

Any complete set of the Ten Commandments has a score of 100 points, including sets using the *Israelites* wild card. An “11-card” player with all Ten Commandments **and** the *Israelites* card, scores 110 points. However, if any player, including the “11-card” players, holds either the *Israelites* card or the *Golden Calf* card when another player calls “complete set” they lose 10 points. If any player holds both the *Israelites* card and the *Golden Calf* card when another player calls “complete set” they lose 20 points. Scores can go below zero.



# Commandments Cards: First Table

Print one set for each player

<p>1</p>  <p>You shall have no other gods before me</p> <p>1</p>	<p>2</p>  <p>You shall not take the Lord's name in vain</p> <p>2</p>
<p>3</p>  <p>Keep the Sabbath day holy</p> <p>3</p>	<p>4</p>  <p>Honor your father and mother</p> <p>4</p>

# Commandments Cards: Second Table

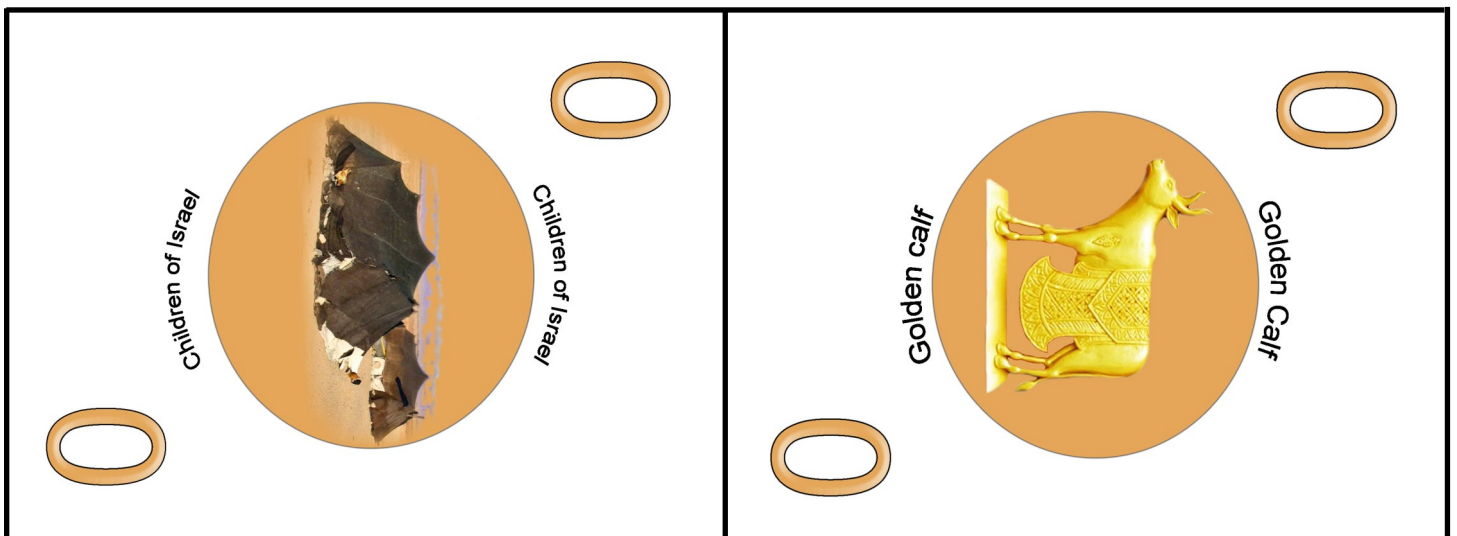
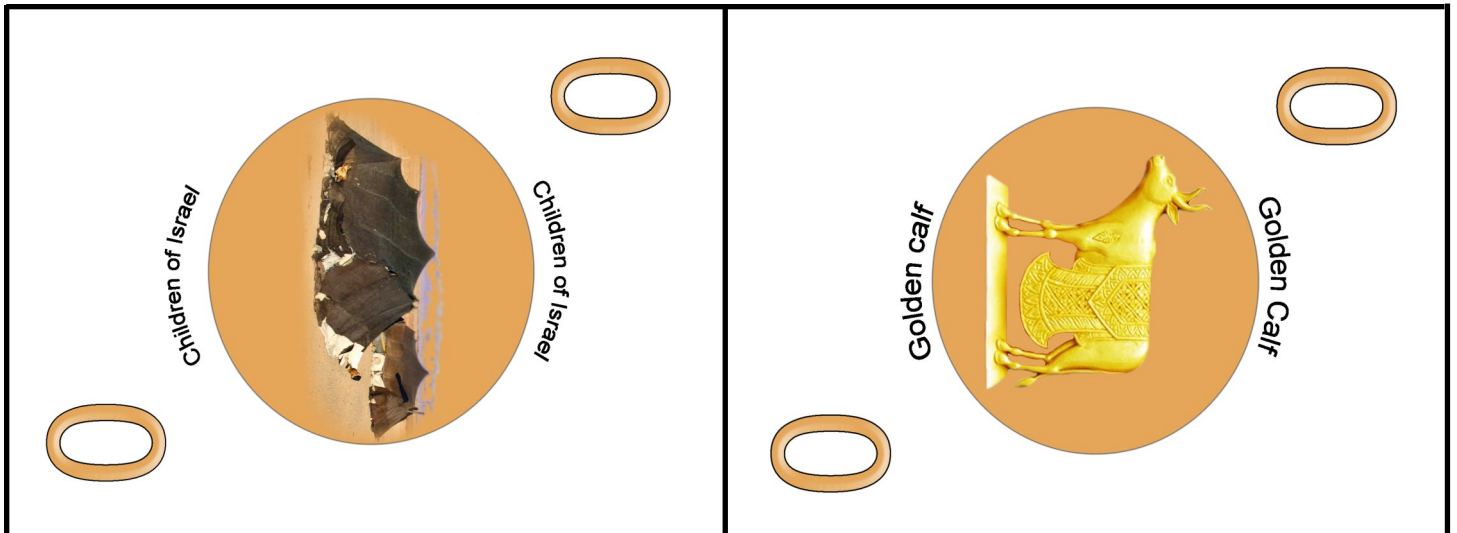
Print one set for each player

<p>5</p>  <p>You shall not murder.</p> <p>5</p>	<p>6</p>  <p>You shall not commit adultery.</p> <p>6</p>
<p>7</p>  <p>You shall not steal.</p> <p>7</p>	<p>8</p>  <p>You shall not lie.</p> <p>8</p>
<p>9</p>  <p>You shall not covet your neighbor's house.</p> <p>9</p>	<p>10</p>  <p>You shall not covet anything that is your neighbor's.</p> <p>10</p>



# Advanced Game Commandments Cards

Use *one* set per game.



# Sinai Labyrinth



# Path to Sinai

Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.  
Psalm 119:105.

You will show me the path of life. In Your presence is fullness of joy. At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore. Psalm 16:11

Everyone who has any religion thinks about heaven and wishes to go there. Yet heaven is granted only to those who know the way to it and walk in that way. This way can be known to some extent from knowing the character of those who make up heaven, and from knowing that no one becomes an angel or comes into heaven except a person who brings an angelic character with him from the world. Present in an angelic character is a knowledge of the way from walking in it, and a walking in the way through a knowledge of it. See *Divine Providence* 60

The spiritual world has in it actual paths which lead to every society of heaven and to every society of hell. People see their own paths as though of themselves. They see them because there are paths there for every love, and love reveals the paths and leads people to their societies. No one sees any other paths than those of his or her own love. See *Divine Providence* 60



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# Receiving the Commandments

The Ten Commandments are called “the tables of the covenant” because they are the means for joining together the Lord and His people (see Arcana Coelestia 1038.5).

“Covenant” means conjunction with the Lord and when Divine truth is received by a person, conjunction with the Lord takes place (see *Apocalypse Explained* 701).

In any covenant or contract, there are at least two people involved, and each person has a part to play. In our covenant with the Lord, His part is to give us His life—His good and truth. Our part is to receive that good and truth.

This statement might sound as if we are pretty passive, but actually, receiving the Lord’s good and truth is an active choice. Think about any ball game. You have to work at being a good receiver—watching the passer carefully, learning timing, figuring out how to grip the ball, etc.

We choose to take part in a covenant with the Lord when we put His truths—particularly His commandments—into use in our life. Pick one of the commandments (listed clockwise on the right). What is one thing you can do to *actively receive* that commandment into your life?



1. You shall have no other gods before Me.

2. You shall not take the Lord's name in vain.

3. Remember the Sabbath.

4. Honor your father and mother.

5. You shall not murder.

6. You shall not commit adultery.

7. You shall not steal.

8. You shall not lie.

9. You shall not covet your neighbor's house.

10. You shall not covet anything that is your neighbor's.