

A NOTE TO PARENTS

*If I were rich, I'd have the time that I lack
to sit in the synagogue and pray,
And maybe have a seat by the eastern wall;
And I'd discuss the holy books with the learned men
seven hours every day:
That would be the sweetest thing of all ...*

These lines from *Fiddler on the Roof* communicate the intensity of Judaism's love of the Torah, the law of God. As in today's Psalm, "their delight is in the law of the Lord; they meditate on it day and night." As Christians, our view of the law of Israel is highly colored by Jesus' condemnation of the arrogant and elitist legalism he perceived in the religious power structure of his time. We tend to lose sight of the joy with which the Hebrew Scriptures approach God's statutes and commandments. Jesus shared this joy: he did not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it. He knew that the poor and ignorant, as well as the rich and learned, hunger for the ravishing "sweetness" of God's law; the clear, energizing vision of holiness that gives life to the rules and commandments.

Children have plenty of experience with both these ways of encountering the Law, or the "rules" that govern their lives. The rules may be a prison for them, a weapon that adults use against them and they use against each other ... or they may be a liberating vision of goodness and right. Ask your child to name some of the rules in your household. Probably the answer will range all the way from "Hang up your pajamas when you get dressed" and "No dessert till you finish your vegetables," to "No hitting, ever." You might try asking what is the single most important rule. When you've heard your child's suggestions (and they might surprise you!), you can use Jesus' summary of the most important laws of God as a model for expressing your own sense of the really basic, important principles in your family, the law that does not oppress but is "sweeter than honey." And remember that any such rule is binding on the parents every bit as much as on the children! Pray together for help to keep your rule with love.

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THE SUNDAY PAPER, 19 Colony Road, New Haven, CT 06511, USA
203 - 624-2520 • www.the-sunday-paper.com



THE SUNDAY PAPER JUNIOR

Year A
PROPER 25
TRACK 2

The Pharisees asked Jesus, "Which is the most important of all God's laws?"

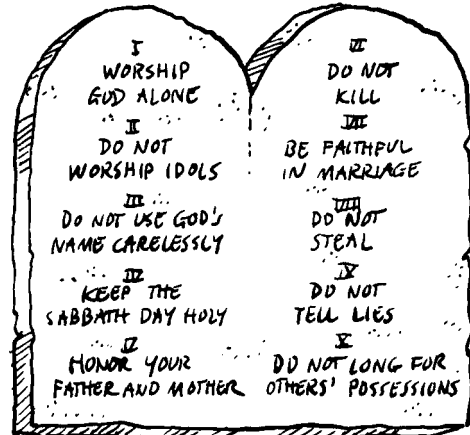


MATTHEW
22:36

In the Bible, there are many rules. They are called **COMMANDMENTS**, or **LAWS**.



Ten very famous ones are called the **TEN COMMANDMENTS**.



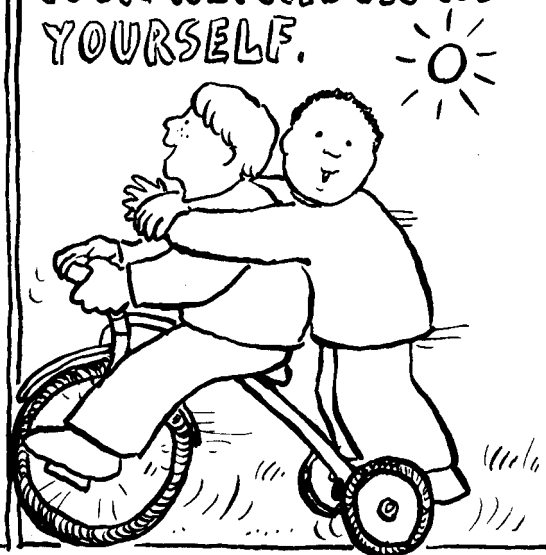
Jesus said, "All the other laws in the Bible come out of these two commandments."

The Bible tells us that God's laws are good and right. Draw a green healthy tree in the picture, to show that keeping God's laws makes us grow strong and good.

Jesus said that two commandments are greatest of all. One is:



The second is: **LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.**



Happy are those who delight in the law of the LORD

They are like trees

planted by

streams of water

Psalm 1:2-3

