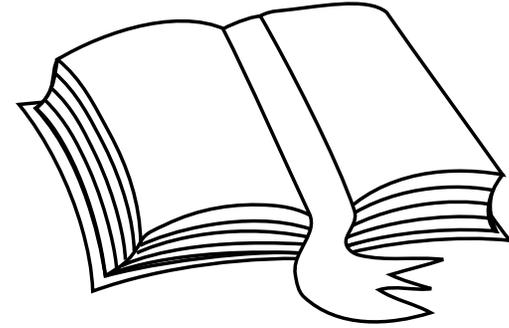


NOTES



GOD'S LAW

SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

- A. What are laws and why do you think people have laws?
- B. What are some *laws* or *rules* in society in your country that talk about people's relationships with other people?
- C. How do we usually feel when we don't obey those rules? Why?

SECTION II. Adam and Eve disobeyed God and broke their wonderful relationship with Him. God sent them out of the Garden of Eden, but He still loved Adam and Eve. He showed His love by promising to send a Savior to redeem the people and restore the broken relationship between Him and humans. Read Deuteronomy 32:3-4.

- A. How is God described in these verses?
- B. How does the writer describe God's actions?

C. How does the writer seem to feel about God?

SECTION III. In spite of God's goodness and love, people continued to sin against Him. God decided to give people written laws so that they would understand how God wanted them to live. God gave us the Ten Commandments through a man named Moses. Later, during His life on earth, Jesus talked about the main ideas in the Ten Commandments as the two *Great Commandments*.

A. Read Matthew 22:35-40.

1. What is the greatest commandment in Moses' teachings?
2. What is the second greatest commandment?

B. Read Deuteronomy 6:24-25.

1. Why did God give the Israelites the Law?
2. If the Israelites obeyed all of the Law, what do the verses say would happen?
3. How do you think our lives would be different if people obeyed God's Law all the time?

C. Read Romans 2:12-13.

1. Are people who don't know God's Law excused from obeying the Law and being judged according to the Law?

presence. He is right to demand perfection and He is justified in punishing us.

SECTION III.

You will need to make clear at this point that the Bible has many ways of talking about God's Law. They include: the Law, God's Law, the Ten Commandments, Moses' Teachings (Moses' Teachings and the Prophets) and the Two Great Commandments. If you wish to (and have time), you might want to read the Ten Commandments in Deuteronomy 5:6-21 with the students or have a simple sheet with the Ten Commandments written in easy English.

The section in Romans 2:12-13 makes it clear that no one is exempt from the law for any reason whatsoever.

SECTION IV.

Question A 3 is intended to provoke discussion about God's reason for punishing people who do not obey His Laws.

God is perfect and totally just, He cannot be in the presence of evil and sin, so He must demand perfection. Thus He must punish sin. God punishes people in order to make them aware of their sin and bring them back to Him. At the same time that God demands perfection and punishes sin because of his perfection and justice, He is a loving God. Because He is love, He wants to redeem us from our sin. Before Jesus came to redeem us, the Law was given as a control in our lives (See Galatians 3:24-26.) and as a way for us to understand how God wants us to live. Even in the Old Testament times, people were justified by faith, not by obeying the Law. (See Hebrews Chapter 11.)

SECTION V.

Although this section has only a few questions, it is very important to emphasize it. The Law alone *kills*. It makes us want to give up. Tell students that they must hear the *rest of the story* next week. God had a plan that would be the best news in the world. Tell them to be sure to come!

GOD'S LAW LEADER'S NOTES

This is the first study in a series of three studies that are intended to be done consecutively. The other two studies are: "Jesus and God's Law" and "Free at Last". Presenting the Law without the Gospel message leads people to despair. Even this first study on the Law ends with the promise that we can have God's approval through faith in Jesus. It is important that students realize that the Law is not God's last word to us. Otherwise they will say, along with others, "God is not kind, but very harsh and demanding."

SECTION I.

Laws and rules are a part of every society. They vary according to culture and faith, but all societies include laws or rules. Some people think of laws only in terms of legal or governmental laws. These are important, but there are many *rules* which people live by. They can be purely cultural, such as the practice in the Far East of taking off one's shoes when entering a house. Or they may be a religious law such as "Love your neighbor as yourself." Most of us are not really aware of how many *rules* we adhere to in our lives. Explore some of the various *laws* we live by and how we feel when we break them. This is a preparation for looking at God's Law and the impossibility of fulfilling it through our own attempts to obey it perfectly.

SECTION II.

Before beginning this section, you will want to check if the people in your group know the story of Adam and Eve and their disobedience. If not, tell the story briefly.

The section in Deuteronomy 32:3-4 is intended to give the background of God's attributes. He is worthy of our worship because of his greatness. He is perfect, He is a rock, his ways are fair (just), and He is faithful and cannot do wrong. He is honorable. If God were any other kind of God, we could question his laws and our responsibility to obey him. But because He is perfect and does no wrong, He cannot look on sin or be in its

2. Who will have God's approval?

SECTION IV. God gave the Israelites the Law so that they would know what God wanted. But knowing what God wanted was not enough.

A. Read Daniel 9:11.

1. According to Daniel, how did the Israelites treat God and God's Law?

2. What did God do? Why do you think He did that?

3. God gave humans the Law and He told us we must obey the Law. Read James 2:10-11.
 - a. How many laws must we keep perfectly in order to fully obey God's Law?

 - b. What happens if we break even part of one of them?

B. Read Romans 3:10-12.

1. How many people search for God? How many people do what is good and have God's approval?

2. Do we usually think that we can gain the approval of people and of God by doing good things?

3. Do you think that people's reaction to God's Law is any different today than it was when Jesus was alive? If it is different, how is it different?

SECTION V. All of this sounds very difficult. If God is great, loving, just and good, how can He expect us to obey His Law perfectly? He clearly shows us that we cannot do this. If it is impossible to fully obey the Law, why did God give us the Law?

A. Read Romans 3:19-20.

1. Can we obtain God's approval through obeying the Law?
2. What do the commandments (or Law) do for us?
3. How does knowing about your sin make you feel?
4. How do you feel when God tells you that you cannot receive His approval by doing good things?

B. Read John 1:16-17. The Law comes through Moses, but where does kindness and truth come from?

C. Read Romans 3:21-22. Since we cannot have God's approval by obeying the commandments and doing good, what can we do to have God's approval?

Romans 3:19-20

applies (to apply)	to put into use
influence	power to get results
judgment	official decision

John 1:16-17

the Word	Jesus Christ
kindness	helpful, considerate
truth	fact, reality
existence	being, state of being real

Romans 3:21-22

plain	clear, simple
faith	belief that does not rely only on logical proof or material evidence

demand require

Daniel 9:11

Israel the Hebrew people

ignored to not pay attention to

refuse unwilling to accept

curses evil

swore promised

oath testimony

teachings God's law

James 2:10-11

break disobey

commit to do something wrong

adultery sexual relations between people not married to each other

murder kill

Romans 3:10-12

Scripture the Bible, God's written Word

turned away to refuse to look at

rotten spoiled, decayed

core the very center of something

D. God tells us that we cannot gain his approval by being *good* and He gives us the Law (the Ten Commandments) to show us that we cannot completely obey Him. But THIS IS NOT THE END OF THE STORY! In fact, the wonderful GOOD NEWS that we read in Romans 3:21-22 seems too good to be true. Please come next time to hear more about God's great gift to us.

**GOD'S LAW
VOCABULARY**

In the introductory paragraphs:

Savior	Jesus Christ, the second person in the triune God, who came into the world to save people from their sin
relationship	connection
redeem	set free by paying a price
Garden of Eden	beautiful garden where Adam and Eve lived
restore	make right, bring back to original condition

Deuteronomy 32:3-4

proclaim	announce publicly
deserves	is owed
perfect	very best, without fault
fair	just, honest
faithful	loyal
honorable	worthy of great respect and honor
reliable	dependable

Matthew 22:35-40

expert	a person skilled through knowledge or training
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Moses' teachings	God's law
commandment	rule, law
soul	spiritual nature of man, unseen part of a person that God gave only to humans
Moses' teachings – the prophets	God's law and the teachers of the law
depend	rely

Deuteronomy 6:24-25

fear	to have a reverent awe
preserve	keep alive, safe from injury
approval	the act of thinking (and often saying) that what was done was good, or that a person is thought of favorably
presence	being with God

Romans 2:12-13

sins	thoughts, words or actions that are against God's will
condemned	to say officially what someone's punishment will be
destruction	ruin completely
judge	to form an opinion whether right or wrong
merely	only