

“FOOTSTEPS”

Come, follow Me,” Jesus said

Mark 1:17

Kingdom Kids

The Ten Commandments

Exodus 20:14

The Seventh Commandment

“You shall not commit adultery”

The Point: Keep your promises.

Moms and Dads: As you prepare to talk about Sunday’s lesson with your children, please continue to pray for wisdom and guidance when presenting this delicate and sensitive topic.

Let’s begin with a couple of definitions that can explain what our topic this week.

Commit is: Making a promise to do a certain thing.

Adultery is: When you are married, falling in love with a person you are not married to.

In explaining this to your children you may choose to avoid a heavy discussion about sex. If older children ask you questions that are inappropriate for little ones, tell those children that you will talk privately.

We know that many American husbands and wives break God’s commandment, “You shall not commit adultery.” In the debris of this catastrophic devastations are the children in broken homes asking, “Why don’t Mommy and Daddy live together anymore?” or “Why does Daddy have a girlfriend? or “Why does Mommy have a boyfriend?”

A lifetime can be a very long time to stay faithful to one person. Is God asking too much? How is the Seventh Commandment relevant to children? While children can’t control their parents, they are never too young to learn the concepts behind God’s commandments, even

adult issues such as this one. *By focusing on what children do understand (broken promises), you can help children to appreciate a God who asks the grown-ups in their world to keep their vows. It’s never too early to teach children God’s ways. As God’s values are reinforced, they become a vital part of children, affecting their choices throughout their lives.*

A Better Offer:

(In this story, a child promises to go to a birthday party but then gets a better offer. What will he do? As you read the story, pause when you reach bracketed and *italicized* text, allowing the darling children to fill in the blanks. Children can come up with their own ideas, or you can suggest the ones we’ve supplied.)

Read: When Mr. Spencer wrote the Seventh Commandment on the board [*“Be true to your husband or wife”*] Colton checked out. As he made paper planes he thought, “I don’t have to listen now. I don’t have a wife, and I don’t want one when I grow up.”

Mr. Spencer walked over to Colton. Towering over him, he looked down at Colton and said, “Of course, you all know this commandment means that [*“we need to keep our promises”*]. Colton put his paper airplanes away.

On Tuesday, when he got home, Colton threw his backpack on the table and raced to answer the phone. “Yeah, cool, I’ll be there. Wait a minute . . . Colton called his mom to the phone, “Mom, come talk to Brooks’ mom. Brooks has a great birthday party planned this Friday night.”

After she had talked to Brooks' mom, Colton mom said, "Sounds like fun. And you're the only one invited to the party."

"Yeah, I get to *[sleep over and go fishing the next day!]*"

Colton's mom said, "I'm sure it means a lot to Brooks that you can celebrate his birthday with him, especially since *[he doesn't have a brother or sister and since he's new in our area.]*"

Colton and his dad went out the next day to buy a present for Brook. Colton explained to his dad, "We have to make this a super-special gift since I'll be the only one at the party!"

First they went to a store called *[Walmart]*, but they didn't find anything there. So they went to *[Toys a Million]* and found the perfect gift. It was a *[Space Alien Lab]*. Colton came home and wrapped it in newspaper comics. To make the package look more special, he added a *[big swirl lollipop]*.

In school the next day, Brooks said, "Hey Colton, when you spend the night we can *[sleep in a tent in the backyard]*". Colton promised to be there.

On Thursday, Colton's mom handed him an invitation. It was from *[name]*, Colton's best friend. *[Name]* was having a sleepover party the same night as Brooks' party, and the next day the party guests were going to Colton's favorite place *[Action Odyssey]*. The more Colton thought about missing out on the action, the angrier he felt about being stuck at Brooks' house. "Oh, man," thought Colton, "I'll just tell Brooks that *[I'll come to his house another night]*". He picked up the phone. Before he could dial Brooks' number, these words came back to him: "Keep your promises. Keep your promises."

Colton picked up the phone. He put it down. He picked up the phone. He put it down. "What are you doing?" his dad asked.

"I'm thinking of calling Brooks and telling him I can't go to his party," Colton said?"

"Why can't you?" his dad asked.

Colton handed him the invitation to *[Name]*'s party. "I see," his dad said. "You got a better offer. This is a big choice for you. You need to learn now to keep your promises. What if I got a better offer for a wife? "There are a lot of friendly, smart women at my office."

"What does that have to do with . . . Come on, dad, that's a stretch."

Not really, Colton," his dad continued. "God commanded me to be true to my wife. I made a promise to do that. It's all about keeping promises, even when we don't feel like it."

"OK," Colton sighed. "Deep down, I knew I needed to keep my promise to Brooks."

Colton went to Brooks' party. They had a blast. They *[ate popcorn, jumped on his trampoline, and caught polliwogs in the creek]*. Colton had so much fun that he never even thought about the other party. Later, Brooks wrote Colton a thank-you note that read, "*Thanks for making my birthday the best I've ever had!*"

Colton thought about God and His ways. He thought, "Yep, it's all about keeping your promises. I'm glad I kept my promise to Brooks."

Parents: Now thank your darling children for their help.

Ask:

- What was the better offer that Colton got?
- How does this remind you of God's Seventh Commandment, "*Be true too your husband or wife.*"?
- Has it ever been hard for you to keep a promise? Tell about it.

Say: Keeping promises can be tough. Sometimes we have to say no to things we really like. It's good to keep your promises. Build your promise-keeping muscles now so that you can be true to your husband or wife when you grow up.

Remind them if they and your family have ever been to a wedding. Ask if they recall hearing the bride and groom say: "Until death do us part"?

That means that even when life is hard, and there are times when it's hard keep our promises to our husbands/wives. That's when we remember that it is God Himself who commands us, "*You shall not commit adultery.*"

I understand that this Commandment can be sensitive and difficult to explain; just try to keep it in their level of understanding. While this is difficult, the paragraphs below are even more so, and you may choose not to mention them.

In Matthew 5, which is a chapter on personal relationships, Jesus Himself takes the Seventh Commandment, and others regarding murder, anger etc., to a higher level.

In verses 27 and 28, Jesus said, ²⁷ "*You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.'*" ²⁸ *But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*

Wow! There are some tough scriptures and high standards in Chapter 5. Sometimes our life as Christians can be overwhelming. BUT isn't it wonderful to know that God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit will help and strengthen us ---just for the asking.

Biblegateway.com is a good source for reading and studying. When I looked up "His mercy endures forever", there are 42 references with that phrase alone. 42! Now, that is something worth shouting with joy!!

That is what we need to tell our darling children!