

This is a sample taken from the LC Mentor's Guide. The mentor uses this study guide to prepare him/herself to lead the mentee through the [LC Discussion Mentee's Guide - Fundamentals I](http://www.lifechangementoring.org/LCMenteeGuide.pdf). (<http://www.lifechangementoring.org/LCMenteeGuide.pdf>)

If you have question, please direct them to [O & A](#).

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## ***LifeChange Discussion Mentor's Guide: Fundamentals, Part 1***

***Texts: Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-8, 17-19; Exodus 20:12-17***

### **Purpose of the Lesson:**

Human beings by nature tend to rebel against rules and against structure. We like to be independent and in control. In fact, we often rebel “just because,” that is, we rebel “just because” someone or some rule has attempted to force us into a particular mold. Teenagers, who are striving for independence, are particularly susceptible to this thinking.

Rules, though—particularly God’s rules—have an important purpose. Rules not only help us to develop discipline (a necessary trait to complete this program successfully), but they also protect us from hurting ourselves and others.

The primary purpose of these first two lessons is to establish a proper foundation for this entire study. The goal of this specific lesson is to help the student understand why God gives us rules. A second goal is to help him/her understand the relationship between rules and behavior.

### **To Introduce the Topic:**

**Lead the student to complete questions #1 and #2 on the accompanying worksheet. Discuss the student’s responses.**

Describe a time when you [the mentor] broke a rule “just because” someone had forbidden you to do something. Briefly describe the consequences of your choice. Discuss with the student why we have a tendency to act rebellious. Again, briefly explain that the Bible tells us we are rebellious because we are sinners (Rom 3:23). God, though, gives us rules to help guide our lives.

### **Content of the Lesson:**

In this lesson, we will examine two biblical stories to understand why God gives us rules. The next lesson will address the relationship among rules, behavior, and consequences.

**Encourage the student to think specifically about rules in his/her life as you study these texts.**

*GENESIS 2:15-17, 3:1-8, 17-19—GOD’S RULES HELP PROTECT US FROM HURTING OURSELVES.*

When God created the first human beings, He placed them in a garden, commanded them to cultivate it, and warned them against eating from one tree: the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Gen 2:17). Eating the fruit was evil, and God warned Adam and Eve of the potential consequences of their actions. Hence, the rule, “from the tree of knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat,” was designed both to warn and to protect Adam and Eve. They, however, chose to ignore the rule, and both ultimately died (Gen 5:5). Breaking the rule of God cost them their own life.

**Using questions #3 and #4 on the worksheet, lead the student to examine Genesis 3:1-7, focusing particularly on the reasons Eve ignored the rule. The answers to the questions are provided below.**

- (1) Eve thought the fruit was good for food. It appealed to her physical, fleshly nature.
- (2) The food was inviting to the eyes. It looked good; it looked like fun to eat the fruit.
- (3) She thought that eating the fruit would make her wise and important.
- (4) She accepted the devil’s lie that she would not die (at least immediately).

Point out that we, too, choose to break rules for the same reasons. We choose physical pleasure over rules (immorality, addictions, etc.). We “try” things just because they look exciting. We follow the crowd so we might look important, feel significant, and be accepted by others. And, we assume that our actions will not have immediate consequences. So, we break the rules—and we hurt ourselves in the process.

**Discuss question #5 on the student’s worksheet. Which of the above reasons most motivated the student to make a poor decision? How did he/she hurt himself/herself in the process? Help the student understand that God gives us rules to help protect us from hurting ourselves.**

*EXODUS 20:12-17—GOD’S RULES HELP PROTECT US FROM HURTING OTHERS.*

God gave His followers a set of rules to guide their lives. Known as the “Ten Commandments,” these rules still today teach us how to live—and how to live in such a way that we do not intentionally hurt others.

The first five commandments relate to our relationship with God, and the second five guide our relationships with other people. The latter five commandments are the focus of this section of this lesson.

**Use question #6 on the worksheet to guide the student to understand the meaning of the terms in these commandments:**

*Honor* your father and mother: *Honor* is literally understood as “give great weight to,” and it suggests recognizing the authority and position of one’s parents.

**[Be careful not to get bogged down here, particularly with student whose parents are**

**less than honorable. The text demands that we respect parents, but it does not require us to validate or to affirm the sins of others.]**

You shall not *kill*: The verb *kill* in this context refers to murder; it is a call to respect life in general. It does not directly address such issues as capital punishment, death in war, etc.

You shall not commit *adultery*: The Old Testament concept of *adultery* focused primarily on unfaithfulness in marriage. Jesus expanded the concept to include the mind (Matt 5:27-28, Matt 15:19). The scriptures in general forbid sexual expressions outside of God's plan of marriage between a man and woman.

You shall not *steal*: Literally, this commandment forbids taking things from others. At its core, though, it is a command against being a "taker" rather than a "giver." Stealing from others (through theft, cheating, accepting pay for inadequate work, etc.) is contrary to the nature of God, who gave His best for us.

You shall not *bear false witness*: The text speaks of lying words, but the concept includes fraud, deceit, and any affiliation with untruth.

You shall not *covet*: The word *covet* speaks of craving something, of selfishly wanting something that belongs to someone else. Coveting leads to viewing the possessions of other people as more important than the persons themselves. Covetousness is one attitude underlying theft.

**Using question #7 on the worksheet, lead the student to describe ways that *breaking* these rules would likely hurt others. Though the question calls for one example, consider the same questions for at least one other commandment. Use question #8 to lead the student to describe ways that his/her breaking rules has hurt others in the past. Again, help the student understand that God gives us rules to help protect us from hurting others.**

### **To Conclude the Lesson:**

Adam and Eve hid from God when they broke His rules (Gen 3:8). Most people who break any of the last five Ten Commandments also try to cover up their actions. But, God does not want us to live in that kind of guilt, shame, and secrecy.

He wants us to live good lives for which we need not be ashamed. He gives us rules to guide our lives, and we should choose to follow them. Doing so will protect us from hurting ourselves and hurting others. Ultimately, following God's rules will bring good.

**At this point, allow the student to discuss current rules that he/she may not wish to accept. Help the student to answer the question, "How might this rule help protect me from hurting myself or others?" Using question #9 on the worksheet, lead the student to chart two rules he/she must follow this week. Guide the student to determine the purpose of the rule (why is the rule important?) and a proper motivation for following the rule (why**

**should I obey the rule?). Challenge the student to remember this study when he/she is confronted with rules this week.**

**Briefly look at the biblical readings for the week, explaining that these readings give further insight into today's lesson. Then, guide the student to consider prayer needs for the week. Be certain to give your own prayer concerns—invite the student to share in your life by praying for you. End the session in prayer, asking God to (1) help the student understand the reasons for rules and (2) give the student the courage and the wisdom to follow the rules.**

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