



DOING THE RULE FOR FAMILIES

10₄ 30

Doing The Rule for Families is a simple way to encourage your children and your whole family to think and act more like Jesus for a month (**10₄30™**) and promote kindness, generosity and self-control in families.

Preparation

As a parent, or parents, ideally you should have read *The 10 Second Rule* book and begun living by the Rule yourself. Doing so will give you greater credibility and provide you with stories of what you've experienced, including the struggles and questions you've had in obeying Jesus.

1 Prayer

Begin praying for your family before you present *Doing The Rule* to them. Generally younger children will eagerly embrace it, but teenagers may be reluctant to participate. However, ask your teenagers to participate “to encourage their younger siblings” and you may be surprised how their attitude changes.

2 Plan

Plan a family meeting where to share your own experience in doing the 10-Second Rule and introduce the general idea of *Doing The Rule* for Families. Pass out the wristbands (more about these later) and read Lesson One. If your children

are small, you might want to choose to *Do The Rule* for only a week or two; you decide what's best for your family. These lessons have been prepared for children ages 6-15.

3 Teach

As your family schedule permits, perhaps around a meal, plan a regular time to read and discuss the seven lessons we've prepared for you. Ideally, the first six should be done in the first week to ten days to help your family listen and obey Jesus better the entire month. The seventh lesson is to be done at the end of the 30 days.

Most of the lessons intentionally repeat some previous teachings. Certain principles and truths are extremely important and need reinforcement.

We've purposely not attempted to cover everything Jesus taught. That would be a lifetime of studying Scripture. Rather our hope is to help parents teach their children the elementary skills of discerning the voice of God from all the other voices and messages coming at them. Our goal is to re-enforce the following truths:

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- The only voice we can ever trust completely is God’s voice.
- The more we immerse ourselves in the Bible, the better we’ll become at recognizing God’s voice and knowing with confidence how he wants us to live.
- Satan, the world, and our own sinful, selfish nature works to confuse us and tempt us to disobey God.
- Unless we make some pre-decisions, we’ll probably not make much progress, particularly in the area of resisting sin.
- We need to learn to take “baby-steps” of obedience and train ourselves in simple, spontaneous kindness and generosity by doing the next thing we’re reasonably certain Jesus wants us to do.

Teaching Hints

Each lesson has a teaching which you’ll read to your family, and examples to stimulate their thinking about the kinds of things Jesus might ask of them—and all of us. Read each lesson in advance of teaching it, customizing it for your own family as much as possible. Use these gatherings for family members to report stories of how they’ve obeyed the 10-Second Rule or they’ve seen other family members obey the Rule.

There are four sections to each lesson and, with the exception of Lesson 1, The Introduction, each has its own icon.



Sharing This is a time for checking in with your family.



Teaching This is what you’ll read and teach your family.



Obeying Here’s where you’ll challenge your family to apply what they’ve learned and obey Jesus.



Praying You’ll end each lesson in prayer.

To make it easy for you, we’ve put what you will read to your children in normal type. The bold text are reminders of personal examples to share, or instructions for you to do something. Quotes from the Bible are generally indented and in quotation marks.

When you read Scripture verses, make sure your family knows these are God’s words. Consider treating them differently, perhaps reading them in a more serious tone. You want to teach your children to “weight” and respect Scripture above all other sources of information.

After you’ve completed the first six lessons, try to gather at least once a week, perhaps on the way to church, after dinner or before bed time, to talk about the Rule with your family to re-enforce these ideas.

4 Rewards and Recognition

Before you begin, make a decision regarding if and how you will reward your children for obeying Jesus by using the 10-Second Rule. At the end of this section is a *10-Second Rule Servant's Chart*. On the lines on the left side of the page write the names of all your family members and put this chart up in a conspicuous place.

As family members begin practicing the 10-Second Rule, encourage them by placing a sticker or star in one of the squares to the right of their name. As children see their "squares" fill up, they will be encouraged to be even more bold and alert for impressions from God to be obedient. There are only twelve boxes because 10-Second Rule impressions don't come every day, and it's best to encourage children by giving them a chance to get stickers in most of the boxes.

The criteria for receiving a sticker should be that your child or another family member reports an act of kindness, generosity, or forgiveness they've done or observed someone else doing. Encourage them to also relate stories of being tempted and resisting that temptation. Lesson One gives simple instructions you can read to your children to

prepare them for this. Be sure to reward stickers as soon as someone has done the Rule.

Regarding Rewards: Decide how to reward each child who gets a dozen stickers. Perhaps a reward could be breakfast out with a parent, a small gift, or simple praise in front of the family. Be careful not to create a competition between winners as opposed to losers. Pray about the most appropriate way to encourage obedience. The point is to encourage using the Rule for selfless service and to resist temptation.

5 Helpful Reminders to *Doing The Rule* for Families

Children love wristbands so we offer colored rubber wristbands for both children and adults on our website at reasonable prices. These wristbands will be a constant reminder for your children and your whole family to obey Jesus. On each band is embossed THE 10 SECOND RULE. Not only will wearing the bracelet serve as a reminder to your children, but other children and parents will notice, and it may encourage them to go to our website and *Do The Rule* with their own family.

Ready to get started? Read on!

An Introduction to the *10-Second Rule*

(Please read every lesson to your children only after you've read it and are prepared to discuss it.)



Teaching: *An Introduction to the 10-Second Rule*

Do you know that God speaks to us? Not many people hear his voice out loud, but he speaks to us in two other ways.

First, God speaks to all of us through the Bible. The Bible is God's message to humans—to us. In the Bible God tells us about himself and how he wants us to live. When Jesus came to earth, he taught many things, but especially how we are to treat one another. He knew we'd have a tough time remembering everything he said, so his disciples wrote down exactly what he said in the four gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) and the rest of the New Testament. We don't have any excuses, because God himself inspired the New Testament writers to write down everything we need to know to love God, believe in Jesus, be forgiven of our sins, and live a life that makes him proud of us.

Second, God speaks to all of us through the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that after he died and arose from the grave and went to be with his Father in heaven, he'd send us a helper. That helper is the Holy Spirit.

John 14:26 tells us, *“But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”*

The Holy Spirit is also God and two of his jobs are to remind us of all the things Jesus taught and to give us the power to obey them. What an amazing gift the Holy Spirit is to us!

Over the next week or so we're going to be talking about how to listen to the Holy Spirit when he speaks to us. I don't mean that you're going to hear an out loud voice, but there are times you will sense a strong feeling in your heart about what Jesus wants you to do. Don't be confused: sometimes we'll be talking about listening to the Father, other times to Jesus and at other times we'll talk about listening to the Holy Spirit. All three of these, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, are all God and all are to be obeyed.

You may have noticed that I/we have been reading a book called *The 10 Second Rule* (show them the book). The 10-Second Rule is this:

**Just do the next thing you're reasonably certain
Jesus wants you to do.**

*[and commit to it immediately—in the next 10 seconds—
before you change your mind!]*

Can you repeat the 10-Second Rule with me, out loud a couple of times?

I have been trying to live by the 10-Second Rule for a few weeks now and here's what God, has been whispering or reminding me to do. (Tell several of your own stories of obedience.)

A problem all Christians have is that we generally know when God is asking us to be kind or generous or forgiving, but often we just don't want to do it because we're stubborn or selfish. The Bible calls that sin. And, if we don't obey Jesus right away, we can think up all kinds of reasons not to obey. Excuses like, "I'll look like a nerd if I do that," or "I'm not going to forgive them because they didn't say they were sorry," or "that person hasn't ever done anything for me". The more excuses we come up with, the less likely we are to do the next thing we're reasonably certain Jesus is asking us to do.

So for the next month we're going to practice listening to the Holy Spirit and being obedient to Jesus quickly before we change our mind. It's called Doing The Rule and here's how it works:

- 1 For the next few days we're going to read a short lesson about how to listen to God and obey what he says.
- 2 We're going to memorize what Christians call the Golden Rule.
"Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." (Matthew 7:12)
(Have them repeat that several times out loud.)
- 3 We're going to pray that the Holy Spirit speaks to each of us and reminds us to be more like Jesus and obey him in every way.
- 4 Every time you do something special and obey Jesus in some way, I'd like you to tell me/us. I don't want you to brag about it, but hearing your story will encourage the whole family! Then we'll put a sticker or a star behind your name on this chart. At the end of the month (or week) here's what we'll do. (Explain how you plan to encourage or reward them.) Also, if any of you notice any other family member being extra kind, or generous, or forgiving, tell me/us and they'll get a star.
- 5 To remind us all day, every day, I/we bought these wristbands that have written on them THE 10 SECOND RULE. When other kids ask you why you're wearing this wristband, tell them it's to remind you of the 10-Second Rule. When they ask what that is, tell them. And if they ask why you're doing it, tell them "This is something our family is doing to remind us to be more like Jesus and to obey him more quickly." If they want to know more, they can go to the 10-Second Rule website: www.the10secondrule.com.

Now let's talk about examples of the kind of things Jesus might want us to do. (This is a time of brainstorming with them. You may want to throw out a few ideas, but let them be creative. If your children are young, you may have exhausted their patience by now, so you could do this brainstorming another day.)

Here are some ideas of things Jesus might want us to do:

- Is there a new kid at school who needs a friend?
- Is there a kid at school who's being bullied and needs you to stand up for him?
- Is there anyone you've not forgiven and you know you should?
- Rather than insisting on watching your favorite T.V. program, DVD, or using the computer, could you let your brother or sister choose first?
- Is God asking you to give some money or help someone who is poor, or needs it more than you?
- Perhaps Jesus will impress you to help clean up a messy room for one of your brothers or sisters, or help with the dishes.
- Maybe there's someone who is always last to get picked to be on some team or to play a game. Maybe it's their turn to be picked first.
- Is there someone at school who your friends are telling stories about? (Gossiping)
- I'd like you to keep your eyes peeled for people we can help. It's not always wise or safe to help everyone, so you'll have to trust me if I tell you we can't help them. I'll try to tell you why when that happens.

Another way we can obey Jesus is by resisting temptation and not doing something you know is wrong.

Here are some ideas of things Jesus might want us to resist:

- If a TV program comes on and you sense Jesus might not want you to watch it, you can turn it off, or walk out of the room, even if the rest of the family wants to watch it.
- If you're with some friends and they suggest doing something you know God or we have told you not to do, you can choose not to do it.

Anytime you resist the temptation to sin, tell me/us and I'll give you a sticker because resisting temptation is obeying Jesus too. I/we will trust you to tell the truth. This isn't a contest with winners and losers. This is about you listening to Jesus and obeying him.



Praying

End by praying for the whole family that they'd not only understand, but would begin taking baby steps of obedience.

Voice Wars!



Sharing

Q Have any of you obeyed the 10-Second Rule since yesterday (or the last lesson)? Have you noticed anyone else doing the Rule?

(Wait a minute for them to think of a story. Even if they don't have one, this is a good lead-in for this lesson. If you're using stickers in your program, this is the time to put a sticker on the chart if someone has done the Rule.)

Q Has anyone asked you about your wristband?

Q What did you tell them?

Here's the short version for kids: "I'm trying to get better at obeying Jesus. The 10-Second Rule is 'just do the next thing you're reasonably certain Jesus wants you to do.' And I'm trying to obey Jesus more quickly, before I'm tempted to talk myself out of it."

(Make sure your children can explain what the 10-Second Rule is. You may want to ask each child, starting with the oldest, to practice by explaining out loud.)

Teaching: *Voice Wars!*



Has God ever spoken to you or communicated to you somehow?

What are some different ways God speaks to us? (Ask your kids for ideas how he does.)

Of course, he speaks to us through the Bible. He also speaks through Christian songs we sing or listen to, even through creation—the beauty of the earth, sun, moon, and stars. He even speaks to you through us, your parents, through our pastor and our Christian teachers. God has all kinds of ways he communicates with us, directly or indirectly.

But the primary way God speaks to us is through the Bible. The Bible is our "boss", our authority. Remember, when I/we have told you kids, "Listen, I want you to remember something."? That's what God does in the Bible; he's saying "remember this". The more often we read the Bible or memorize verses, the more we're filling up our minds with truth from God. It says in Proverbs:

"My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding, and if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God." (Proverbs 2:1-5)

(Take a minute to explain this verse.)

When Christians give their lives to Jesus, the Bible says that the Holy Spirit enters that person and they are born again. So God, the Spirit of Jesus Christ, lives in you. Here's an amazing thing the Holy Spirit does: he takes all of the truth we've learned about God and reminds us of what God said. The Holy Spirit is like a good friend who reminds us to do the right thing. Have you ever had one of your friends say to you, "I wouldn't do that if I were you", or "Come on—let's do the right thing and help that person", or something like that? That's what the Holy Spirit does in your heart. The good voice you're hearing is actually coming from inside of you.

Jesus said this about the Holy Spirit: *"All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."* (John 14:25-26)

Here's an example of how the Holy Spirit works in real life: Jesus told us to forgive people, even when they've been unkind or hurt us. The next time someone hurts you or makes you mad, the Holy Spirit will remind you of Jesus' words. He does this by whispering to us—not out loud, but in a strong feeling that we shouldn't stay angry. Instead he wants us to forgive those who are mean to us, whether they're sorry or not.

That strong feeling is God speaking to us.

"Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, 'This is the way; walk in it.'" (Isaiah 30:21)

Have you ever felt God telling you or impressing you to:

- Be kind to a new kid at school?
- Give money for a special offering at church—money that you've been saving for something special for yourself?
- Help your brother or sister pick up their toys or help them with a job they have been given to do?
- Forgive someone who made you mad or didn't keep their promise?
- Can you think of a time God has spoken to you like that? (Give them some time to think and answer.)
- Did you always do what you felt God telling you to do? (Hopefully they'll say "no" to something.)
- Do you know why we don't always obey God?

I've found that almost every time I have one of these impressions from God to do something good, I hear another "voice". That voice tries to discourage me from doing what God wants. Those two voices are actually fighting against each other. They're at war and each one wants

to win. Remember my illustration about God whispering to you to be nice to a new kid at school? Well, this other voice will often say things to discourage us. Like:

- *You don't have to be kind to that new kid; your friends will think you're weird. That kid will find someone else to play with.*

Or remember when I talked about God impressing you to give some money away for a special offering? This other voice says things like:

- *You don't need to give that money away. It's yours, you worked hard for it. You've been saving that money for a new video game. If you give it away you'll never get that game.*

Have you ever had those kinds of thoughts when there's something good you're reasonably certain Jesus wants you to do, but you just don't do it because you've listened to this other voice telling you not to? That's what the 10-Second Rule is all about.

Does anyone remember what the 10-Second Rule is? (Wait for an answer. If they can't say it, then everyone should repeat it several times out loud after you.)

The purpose of the Rule is to learn to obey God quickly before the other voice can talk us out of it. Tomorrow we're going to talk about where the other voice, the bad voice, comes from.



Obeying

Tell a story of how you or someone you know lived out the Rule. Try to share a story that reinforces this lesson.

Over the next couple of days we're going to keep learning about just whose voices are speaking to us. And we'll learn where the bad voices comes from.

We're also going to learn to listen to the good voice better. Any questions? Let's pray.



Praying

Dear God, thank you for (name anyone's name who reported doing the Rule). Thank you for their faithfulness. God, please help us to listen to your voice and to obey quickly, before we're tempted to disobey. Thank you for being a God who speaks to us. We love you. Amen.

Never Trust The “Other” Voices



Sharing

- Q Have any of you obeyed the 10-Second Rule or have you noticed anyone in our family obeying it? (If someone has, put a sticker on the chart.)
- Q Does anyone remember the Golden Rule?
- Q Here’s a question that’s going to require you to be very honest. Have you ever sensed Jesus telling you to do something, but you didn’t listen and didn’t do it?

While you think about it, I’ll go first. (Share with your children a time when you knew you should have done something, but you failed and didn’t do it.)

(Now give them a chance to share a story of how they, too, failed to obey Jesus.)

Today we’re going to think about why we don’t always obey.



Teaching: *Never Trust the “Other” Voice*

There is an angel who disobeyed God a long, long time ago, before God created the world. His name is Satan. Because he rebelled against God, God kicked him and many other angels out of heaven and they have been the enemies of God ever since.

Satan and his demons, these fallen angels, do nothing all day except tempt people to disobey God and encourage them to serve Satan or other false gods, like false religions, or money, or fame. People who believe Satan’s lies don’t know that Satan has tricked them. Those people are not our enemies; they’re actually victims of Satan.

Because Satan is God’s enemy, that makes him our enemy too. One of the tricks Satan uses to turn us from God is to whisper things to us that are the opposite of what Jesus taught us. When Jesus says, tells us not to lie, Satan whispers to us things like, “*Come on, everybody lies; it’s fine. Do it; nobody will ever find out.*”

Satan’s purpose is to tempt Christians from loving and obeying God. There are millions of people in jails today or addicted to drugs or being selfish and sinful, because they listened to Satan’s whispers and obeyed the bad voice and not the good voice. Even Christians—especially Christians —can be tricked by Satan.

The Apostle Paul 2000 years ago wrote this about Satan and his demons: “*For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*” (Ephesians 6:12)

There is another voice that also tempts us to not listen to God. That's the voice of "the world". By "the world" we mean people who do not love God, so they don't obey God. There are movies, TV programs, websites, and books that encourage us to disrespect, hurt, and even kill people. They show kids talking disrespectfully to their parents or other adults, or doing things behind their backs, even lying to their parents or other kids. They make disobeying God look fun—like it's the cool thing to do. Advertisements make us want to buy things we don't need —things that may not even be good for us, like certain video games, phone apps, dolls, toys, or even foods.

Not all these TV programs, movies, and advertisements are made by people working for Satan. They don't know they've been deceived by him. Most of them don't know any better because they don't love God or the things of God. They simply don't know the truth. "The world" can also be our non-Christian friends, neighbors, kids at school. They may not be "bad" people, but they don't value the same things Jesus does.

John, one of Jesus disciples warned us about being influenced by the world. He said, "*Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the father is not in them. For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.*" (I John 2:15-17)

(You may want to take a minute to explain those verses.)

There's a final reason we're sometimes disobedient. Sometimes we just want what we want, don't we? We want to be angry. We want to have that nice new game. We don't want to take the time to help other people. Even Christians sometimes are just plain selfish and sinful. I am, and I don't like that about myself, and you shouldn't like that about yourself either.

The Apostle Paul said this about our sin nature: "*The moment I decide to do good, sin is there to trip me up. I truly delight in God's commands, but it's pretty obvious that not all of me joins in that delight. Parts of me covertly (that means secretly) rebel, and just when I least expect it, they take charge.*" (Romans 7:21b-23, The Message)

Just because we sin and fail sometimes, don't let that discourage you. We can't be perfectly obedient for the rest of our lives, but that's the special power of the 10-Second Rule. Even though we can't be perfect, here's something we *can* do. "Just do the next thing you're reasonably certain Jesus wants you to do."... That's something every one of us can do. Right?

Here's the point: When you hear a voice or have a feeling that Jesus is telling you to do something good, kind, or generous, you can expect another voice to be right there whispering to talk you out of it. But you don't have to obey the bad voice. ***Don't buy the lie!***



Obeying

Q Can you think of a time when someone, maybe a friend or kid at school, suggested that you do something bad? Maybe it was to be unkind to another kid, or steal something, or watch something on the computer, something you know you shouldn't do? By the way, I don't need to know exactly what it was unless you want to tell us.

(As you ask these questions, give your children time to answer.)

- What went on in your heart when your friend made that suggestion?
- Did you feel voices fighting inside of you?
- If you gave in and did the thing you knew was wrong, how did you feel afterward?
- Did you ever confess that sin to God?
- If not, let's pray right now, silently, and ask God to forgive you from the sinful things you did and ask the Holy Spirit to give you the will power to say "no" to sin and "yes" to the way Jesus wants us to live.



Praying

I'd like you to listen while I pray out loud to God, so that you can hear how I confess to him the things I've done wrong.

(Then give them a brief time to pray silently and confess to God how they have failed to be obedient and ask his help to do better in the future.)

Making Pre-Decisions



Sharing

Q Who has obeyed the Rule since last time, or seen someone else in this family *do* the Rule?

Q Were any of you tempted to listen to the bad voice, but resisted and said “no”?

(Give them a few seconds to share a story. Award stickers even if the story is not verifiable by another person. Encourage transparency even at the risk of having them make up a story. We’ll get to that later.)



Teaching: *Making Pre-decisions*

Q Can anyone guess what a “pre-decision” is?

Q What does the word “pre” mean? (Before)

Q What is a decision? (It’s a choice we make.)

Q So what is a pre-decision? (It’s a choice we make ahead of time.) Let me explain.

Let’s say I watched a TV program, that when I really think about it, I’d be embarrassed to watch with Jesus. Even if it’s funny and other adults watch it, I know it’s not the kind of entertainment that helps me be a better follower of Jesus. Now I have a choice to make: If I say to myself, “The next time that program is on, I’m going to change the channel before it begins.”, then I’ve made a pre-decision. A pre-decision is a choice to behave differently the next time I’m tempted—hopefully, even *before* I’m actually tempted.

Here are some pre-decisions that *you* could make:

- The next time my brother or sister is watching a TV program they really like but I’d like to change the channel, I’ll ask them first if I can watch my channel. If they say “no”, I’ll do something else and not insist on having my way.
- The next time I’m in a store, I won’t take things that I don’t pay for because that is stealing.
- The next time I’m with my friends and they start gossiping about another kid, I’m going to say, “I don’t think we ought to talk about someone behind their back, even if it’s true.”
- The next time I’m tempted to listen to music with words I know hurt Jesus’ feelings, I’m going to delete it from my iPod, or computer, or throw away that CD.
- How about this one: For the rest of the **10₄30** time, when we go shopping, I’m not going to ask my mother to buy me anything I don’t really need.

- Here's one you may never have thought about: God has given us, your parents, authority over you. When we, your parents, have made a decision about something you should or shouldn't do, you ought to make a pre-decision to obey us. That's one of the ways to keep the commandment to "*honor your father and your mother*".

Pre-decisions are very important if we want to be more like Jesus. After we've done something wrong, most of us know we've sinned. We feel bad and confess to Jesus, and, of course, he forgives us. But what about the next time we're tempted to do the same kind of sin? Like when we hear those voices telling us things like, "*You deserve that candy or that toy in the store so just take it,*" "*You'll be sad if you don't have it. Besides the people who own the store have plenty of money and they can afford it.*"

It's the nature of sin to make up excuses for why it's okay to sin. One of the best ways to defeat sin is to make a pre-decision. A good pre-decision about stealing from stores is this: "*I won't ever take anything that I don't pay for.*" That way, the next time you're tempted, you've already decided what you'll do. You've made your choice even before the bad voice begins to tempt you. That's what the Bible calls training yourself to be godly.

Paul told Timothy, "*Train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things.*" (I Timothy 4:7b-8a)

Have you thought about what you should do the next time you hear words in music that you know are wrong? Have you ever thought of walking out of a room when your friends insist on watching something on TV or the computer that you sense is not honoring to God? I realize doing that could be embarrassing.

If your friends aren't Christians, they may not understand what *your* problem is. Remember in the last lesson I shared that if people are not born again by faith in Jesus Christ, they can't understand many of the things Jesus taught.

The Bible says this: "*Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.*" (Romans 8:5)

A pre-decision is very important, but it doesn't automatically make the bad voices go away. The bad voices don't give up that easily. You're still going to be tempted, but because you've decided ahead of time what is wrong, you will find it's easier to resist the temptation to steal, or lie, or to watch a TV program that you know you shouldn't, or whatever tempts you.

God in Deuteronomy says this: "*So be careful to do what the Lord your God has commanded you; do not turn aside to the right or to the left. Walk in obedience to all that the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live and prosper and prolong your days in the land that you will possess.*" (Deuteronomy 5:32-33)

Do you have any questions about what I've just read?



Obeying

(Depending on the ages of your children, I'd suggest this idea:)

I have made a list of things I've decided, I will never do again. I call my list my "never list". I know I don't have the power to keep my "never list" perfectly, but the Holy Spirit will help me do it when I'm weak. The thing about the 10-Second Rule is that it reminds us to take baby steps of obedience. So here's an idea for you to start with.

I'd like you to make your own "never list" to use for the rest of the time we're doing the Rule as a family, and maybe for the rest of your life. Take this paper and pencil and go off by yourself for 15 minutes. I'll set the timer.

- Begin by praying for wisdom and for the Holy Spirit to speak to you specifically.
- Start by writing down some things you've gotten in the habit of doing that you're sure Jesus doesn't want you to do again for at least the next month. You don't have to share the list with me/us. This is just between you and God. But you may want to put this list in your Bible or someplace where you can look at it occasionally to remind yourself.
- Do you understand what I'm asking you to do? (Depending on their age, they may need some suggestions from you of things you've observed them doing. In order not to shame them in front of the family, you may want to speak privately to them when the others are off making their "never lists".)



Praying

I'm going to pray for all of us right now that the Holy Spirit would tell each of us exactly what he wants on our "never list" and that He would give us the courage to obey him.

(Then send your children off to make their lists and be sure to pray for them during this time.)

Downloading Truth



Sharing

- Q Did you make your “never list”?
- Q Was it easy to do, or hard to think of things?
- Q Does anyone have a 10-Second Rule story they want to share?

(Award stickers as appropriate.)



Teaching: *Downloading Truth!*

When you’re using the computer and there is something you want to save, or a game you want to play, you have to download it so the computer has it in its memory. Our computers have only a certain amount of memory, so don’t want to use it all up by storing junk. We should only save important things.

Your mind is kind of like that. God has created each person with the ability to remember things. But we have a choice as to what stuff we’re going to store in our brains. Will we store good things or bad things in our minds or, as the Bible says, “in our hearts”?

The Bible is true because God caused people to write it.

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

(II Timothy 3:16-17)

When we read the Bible we are downloading truth from God into our brains and storing it there.

The Bible speaks directly to children and teenagers:

“How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word, I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.” (Psalm 119:9-11)

I/we read the Bible almost every day. Why do you think we do that?

(Give your children a moment to think.)

We read the Bible often because we want to fill our minds with God’s truth, so that when God’s speaks to us and asks us to do something, we recognize that what we’re hearing is actually from God. I’ll give you an example.

If one of your friends came to you and said, “Your mother wants you to hit that kid.” Would you believe him? (Let them answer this question.) Of course you wouldn’t believe him. But, why not?

Because you’ve heard me tell you for years to always to be kind to others. You would immediately think, “I don’t think he’s telling the truth. My mother or father would never tell me to do that.” That’s because you’ve hidden our instructions and our teachings in your heart, and you immediately recognize what your friend told you as a lie. That’s exactly why we read and memorize the Bible—so we can recognize the voice of God.

Jesus said that the sheep of a good shepherd, “*follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger.*” Then Jesus said, “*I am the good shepherd. I know my sheep and my sheep know me.*” (John 10:4, 14)

Here’s another illustration: Can you ever remember us being in a crowded place like at the movies and you got separated from me and I called out your name loudly. How did you know it was me?

(Let them answer.)

Yes, you recognized my voice because you’ve been listening to it for years. In the same way, we need to be so familiar with Jesus’ teachings that when God gives us directions, we listen because we recognize that’s the good voice—the voice of God speaking. In the same way, when Satan or the world tempts us to do something, we also recognize that it’s the voice of a stranger and immediately distrust it.

The Bible says that the Holy Spirit will help us remember the things of God. But when he does, we still have a decision to make. And what is that?

To obey! Just knowing what you ought to do isn’t always enough. We have to trust **and** obey God.

The Book of Proverbs says this: “*Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.*” (Proverbs 3:5)

(Illustrate this by leaning on something that will not support your weight but throws you off balance. Then lean against something strong.)

Jesus told a story about a wise man and foolish man. He said, “*Therefore everyone who **hears these words of mine and puts them into practice** is like a **wise** man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who **hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice** is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.*” (Matthew 7:24-27)

(When you read this story, emphasize the underlined phrases.)



Obeying

If your children haven't yet gotten in the habit of reading the Bible daily, now is a great time to begin. Here are some ideas, depending on age:

- Make sure each child has their own Bible with their name in it.
- If your children are young, read Scripture with them for 10 minutes each night before bed.
- One of the best ways to reinforce the importance of the Bible is to read Scripture or a good Bible storybook as a family after meals, then discuss what you've read, engaging your older children in the discussion. My daughter, Jennifer with five active children recommends: *The Jesus Storybook Bible* by Sally Lloyd-Jones.
- If they're going to read Scripture on their own, begin with the Book of Luke as suggested in *The 10 Second Rule* book. That way they will be encouraged to do something you have done or are doing. For younger children, chapter a day may be too aggressive. Instead, suggest they read for 10 minutes each day.
- Before they go to sleep, engage them in conversation about what they've read, making sure you have read the passage yourself first.

What did you find interesting?

How can you obey what Jesus is saying?

Tell a story of how to apply what Jesus taught in your own life.



Praying

Pray with your family for faithfulness. Remind them that the “other voice” will try to discourage them from reading Scripture regularly. Prepare them for this battle. Tell them what you do when that happens. Encourage them to use the 10-Second Rule whenever that does happen.

This was Paul's prayer for the Christians in Philippi. *“And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.”* (Philippians 1:9-11)

Extreme Makeovers!



Sharing

- Q Do you have any new impressions from God to report?
- Q What's the hardest thing about reading the Bible or praying regularly?
- Q Has God taught you anything new?

(If they've only been reading or praying for a day or two, you may want to save these questions for a week out.)

Your children will be encouraged if you share your own struggles with reading the Bible and praying regularly. Also share with them the benefits you've experienced.



Teaching: *Extreme Makeovers!*

Remember the TV program, "Extreme Makeover"? What did they do? (Give them a chance to explain.)

That's right! They found people who were poor, discouraged, or physically impaired, who had a need for a new, or larger house they could never afford themselves. Most of these families had given up hope. They never dreamed they could ever have anything better, except perhaps to remodel a room or two.

Then the producers of the TV show came to them with this incredible offer: We will destroy your old house and build you a new one —for free! Can you imagine what these families felt when they heard that offer? At first they were probably a little skeptical. "Why would anyone do that for us?" "We don't deserve it." But eventually they believed the offer and accepted the gift, and a few weeks later they got everything the TV producers promised: the old house was gone and the new house became theirs!

The Bible has a word for an amazing gift that we don't deserve it. It's called grace. There's even a song we sing in church called "Amazing Grace".

(At the end of this lesson you may want to sing this song or play a CD of it.)

Here's the point of this lesson: Jesus came into our world to do extreme makeovers, not of houses, but of people. The Bible says that all of us are sinful, selfish people.

In the book of Romans it says this, "*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*" (Romans 3:23) In spite of the fact that you and I are sinners, the Bible also says, "*If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.*" (Romans 10:9) To be saved is to be forgiven of all your sins.

But that's not all that happens. The Bible also says that when we truly ask Jesus to save us, our old, sinful spirit is destroyed and the Holy Spirit comes to live in us.

The Bible puts it this way, *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"* (II Corinthians 5:17)

Our old, sinful spirit is gone because God built or created a new spirit within us. Jesus didn't die on the cross just to remodel us or fix us up a little. He came to give us an extreme makeover. But, that's not all! Not only do we get a new spirit, we actually become God's children.

It says in the book of John, *"Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God —children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God."* (John 1:12-13)

Isn't that amazing!

Parents, there are two approaches you can take from here depending on where your children are spiritually. Please choose the most appropriate reading for your children based on what you know about them spiritually. You may want to do Lesson 6 with each child separately so that one child doesn't feel pressured by his siblings to "accept Christ". This should be a decision each child makes because they love God, are truly sorry for their sins, and want to become God's child.



Obeying

1 For a child who has never given his or her life to Christ.

(The name of your child), have you ever talked to Jesus about becoming one of his children? If you want to become a child of God, (name) here's what you have to believe and what you need to do:

- You have to believe that Jesus is the Son of God —that he died on the cross for your sins and rose from the dead to prove to us that he was more powerful than anything —even death! Do you really believe that? (Please give them time to answer.)
- You have to tell Jesus you love him and want to obey him and live for him forever.
- You have to ask Jesus to forgive your sins and ask him to do an extreme makeover in your heart and in your life.
- You have to invite Jesus and the Holy Spirit to live inside of you and give you the power to live a life that truly pleases God.
- When you've done that, you will need to thank God for forgiving you and adopting you as one of his children.

(Name of your child), when you do that (or did it) something changed, even between us. I'm no longer just your mother (or father), I'm your brother or sister in Christ. We're part of a new family—a spiritual family made up of every person who loves and serves Jesus, everywhere in the world!

Prayer

Ask your child if they would like to think about this important decision, or if they are prepared to do this right now. Please resist putting any pressure on your child. Saying words they don't mean does nothing for them spiritually and may actually hinder their making a true, heartfelt decision to follow Jesus in the future.

2 For a child who has given his or her life to Christ.

(Name of the Child), if a friend came to you and asked how they could become a Christian, do you know what to tell them? (If their answer is “yes”, then ask them, “That’s great, could I hear what you would say to them?”) Praise them if they can articulate the basic message of salvation. If not, go over it with them again. This will help them be ready to share the gospel message with their friends.



Prayer

End your time with your children by praying for the salvation of their friends and for boldness and courage for your child to share the gospel with them.

This is the last lesson until the 30 days end. Finish with Lesson 7.

Ending 10₄30

Hopefully your family has begun developing the habits of obedience during the month. However, life-changing habits are difficult to establish and easy to forget. Here are some ideas to help deepen them.

- 1 At the end of the 30 days have a family gathering to discuss your experiences *Doing the Rule*. Tell stories, encourage one another, and ask “What’s next?” Your question may surprise your children; they may have thought they were done.

You may have to explain what should be obvious—“We’re never done being obedient to Jesus. Here’s what I’d like to recommend. Let’s wear the 10-Second-Rule bracelet for a few months more. It’s your choice, but I’m going to keep wearing mine to remind me to obey Jesus.”
- 2 Reward the family members who appeared serious about doing the Rule.
- 3 Name one obedience example that stands out in your mind for each person in the last month. (But never shame those who have not been as diligent.)
- 4 In the future, when you are with your children and you or others have an opportunity to be generous, or forgiving, or helpful, or kind, ask the 10-Second Rule question to help them make a decision.
- 5 When disciplining your children as part of their “time out”, ask them to think about a pre-decision they should make *now* to prevent them from making the same mistake next time.
- 6 The best way to inspire your children to Do the Rule, is for you to do it openly and often before your family, and to talk about it. Christian character is more caught than taught. If you do, and when you do, you’ll make God look good.
- 7 End by reading the attached story and discussing its implications for your children’s lives.

Some Additional Resources

www.homeword.com

Revolutionary Parenting by George Barna

www.familylife.com

Faith Conversations for Families by Jim Burns

Enjoy the adventure. Bless you.

Clare De Graaf

The Mission

There once was a beautiful country ruled by a good and just king who loved his people deeply. He cared for their every need. Therefore, his faithful subjects simply called him Father.

There was also in that land a terrible Prince they called The Evil One. Many centuries ago, The Evil One deceived the subjects of the Father's kingdom and most became his slaves. As the centuries passed, this population of slaves grew until there was a vast slave camp encircled by a high fence and barbed wire, encompassing millions and millions of people.

Humans had lived in the camp so long they began to think of themselves not as slaves, but simply as people who were destined to lives of frustration, purposeless, and fear. Over the generations, the inhabitants of the camp worked at trying to make a normal life for themselves. They built houses, started businesses, established schools, and life had a certain rhythm. Most had forgotten about the Father King and were unaware of the Evil One's influence on them.

But the Father had not forgotten about his subjects. In fact, he loved them deeply. In every generation he called out men and women to follow only him, to live in his kingdom, and participate in his purposes and plans. Over the years, he also sent messengers into the camp to declare that one day he would send his son to personally rescue them.

One day someone cried out "he's here!", and a young woman hearing the direction of the cries followed the crowd and went to the fence at the edge of the camp. On the other side was a man with the kindest face she had ever seen. As she stood at the fence, her fingers intertwined in the wire, he began to speak.

"My name is Jesus and I've been sent by your true king, my Father, to set you free. This is not the life my father and I intended for you. He has a kingdom and all who live in that kingdom love one another and love my Father and me. You no longer have to live as slaves. In fact, the Father loves you so much he sent me years ago to give my very life for you."

Several in the crowd asked aloud, "What do we have to do to be free and live in your father's kingdom?" Jesus said, "Simply believe that I am the Son of the King and that I've already paid the price for your sin which now holds you captive, and come follow me."

But others in the crowd laughed. Many of them had heard Jesus' offer before. The woman's friends said, "Come on, let's go, we've heard enough of this fool. Nobody is going to set us free. Don't get your hopes up. It's a trick." The crowd melted away until only the young woman remained, staring into the eyes of Jesus.

After what seemed an eternity, something in the woman moved her to believe in Jesus. Quietly and almost tentatively she said, "Yes, I believe you. What do you want me to do next?"

Jesus replied in a soft voice, "Trust me. Follow my instructions. First, you must renounce your life of slavery and admit that the bad habits you've developed as a slave are wrong and make a decision to leave that life behind. Walk over to the gate, push on it, believe that I can open it, then step through and follow me."

Immediately doubt began to flood her mind. "It can't be that easy," she thought to herself. "If it were, everyone would do it." Even then the power of the Evil One was tempting her to not believe. He whispered, almost in a hiss, "If you leave, you leave your fun, your family, and your friends behind." That thought unsettled her and for a moment she hesitated, uncertain.

But another voice, an inner voice, a voice of hope, kept calling to her and encouraging her. She moved slowly toward the gate, put her hand on the bars, and looking directly into the face of Jesus, gently pushed as the gate swung open. The ease of its opening startled her, so much so that she stood for a moment unsure what to do next.

"Now, swear your allegiance to me and my teachings, and come follow me," Jesus said. And she did.

Jesus led her to meet his Father. "This one is mine Father. For my sake, accept her into our family." As she came into his presence, the voices of the millions who had chosen as she did, drowned out all other sound and they cheered her on and sung praises to the Father. She was indeed free and happier than she had ever been in her entire life.

She was introduced to new friends who also loved Jesus, and was taught from the Bible what it meant to live in the Kingdom of God. She loved learning and living this new life.

One day Jesus called her and again said, "Come follow me." After hours of walking and talking, they climbed a high hill. As they came over the crest, the woman saw spread out below her the camp from which she had been set free. It startled her and frightened her to see the camp again and she grabbed Jesus' arm.

Jesus turned to her and broke her thoughts by saying, "I need you to go back." "No!", the woman almost cried out, but she caught herself and listened. She had learned to trust Jesus even when it made no rational sense to her. "There are many like you who are still slaves, who need to know that the Father and I love them."

Slowly she began to remember that there had been groups of people in the camp who went to places called churches. Occasionally they would talk about Jesus to their neighbors, but for the most part they just stuck to themselves. Surely Jesus wanted her to go to them and join with them. Jesus, reading her thoughts, said, “While I do want you to find your spiritual brothers and sisters and gather together regularly to encourage each other and worship my Father and me, that’s not the primary reason you are returning. The reason I’m sending you back is to rescue those still in slavery. To do that, you’re going to have to hang out in places and with people many religious people will not. I want you to tell them about me.

“But there is one thing that will give your message the most credibility and will truly bring glory to the Father and to me: impersonate me in character and behavior. Everything you’ve learned about me and from me put into practice every day. I want you to love your enemies, even my enemies. I want you to care for the poor and forgive everyone generously and graciously. You are to be my living billboard. I want people to be so enamored by your good character, behavior, and attitude toward people and life that they are drawn to come to the fence like you did and follow me out of slavery also. That is your mission for the balance of your life in the camp.”

The woman finally understood. She had been rescued to be a rescuer herself. She slowly began walking down the mountain toward the camp, unsure of herself, but obedient to Jesus. Each step brought her more confidence and peace. She was not alone. Jesus had sent with her the Holy Spirit to teach and guide her and keep her true to him. Together they would do it. Her mission was to bring the good news and *be* the good news of the Kingdom of God to everyone she met.

Because she was faithful, she, and many she led to the fence to meet and follow Jesus, lived happily ever after.

Discussion Questions

- Q Have you asked Jesus to forgive your sins and invited Jesus to be your Savior and your Lord?
- Q What can we learn from this story about why we were saved? What does Jesus want us to do with our lives?