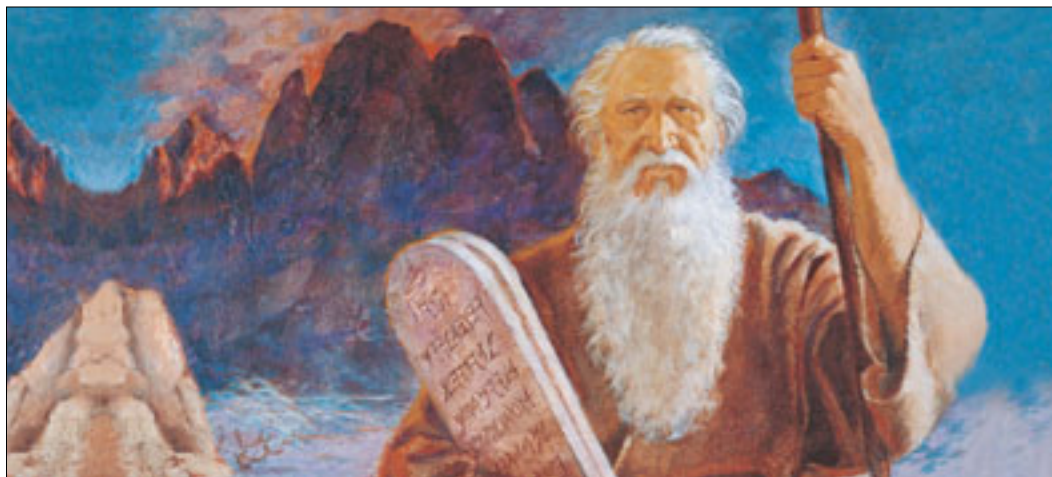


The Commandments

Preparing for Baptism and Confirmation

Notes



Teaching This Lesson

There are many ways to teach the commandments found in this lesson. For example, you might teach a few of the commandments from this lesson as part of the first three lessons, or you might teach several commandments as a single lesson. What you do should be determined by the needs of the investigators and direction from the Spirit.

Prepare to Teach

Your purpose in teaching the commandments is to help people live the gospel by exercising faith in Jesus Christ and repenting as they prepare for baptism and confirmation. By obeying the commandments, people will grow in their testimony of the gospel, show that they have “broken hearts and contrite spirits,” and begin to repent of all their sins (see Moroni 6:1–4; D&C 20:37).

This lesson is organized differently from the first three. The first three lessons explain the doctrinal foundation for the gospel of Jesus Christ. This lesson explains specific commandments God has given that help us apply gospel principles in our lives.

There are many ways to teach this lesson. The approach you take should be determined by the needs of the investigators and direction from the Spirit. Constantly think and pray about how to help investigators live the gospel. Ideas include:

- Teaching one or more commandments as part of the first three lessons. When doing so, consider the principle taught in Alma 12:32: “God gave unto them commandments, *after* having made known unto them the plan of redemption” (italics added). Certain commandments, such as prayer and scripture study, might be taught best as part of the first three lessons. Other commandments might be best taught after you have laid the doctrinal foundation of the gospel found in the first three lessons.
- Teaching two or three of the commandments as a single lesson.
- Teaching a single commandment as a lesson.

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- Teaching the commandments in the context of the gospel. Briefly review the lesson on the gospel of Jesus Christ before teaching one or more of the commandments. As you do so, you can help investigators see how the commandments fit into the larger picture of exercising faith in the Savior and repenting in preparation for baptism and confirmation. Their lives can be blessed as they see the gospel of Jesus Christ as a pattern for living.

You may be able to teach some investigators in a few visits; others may require more visits. You have the flexibility to teach the lessons in whatever way best helps people fully prepare for their baptism and confirmation. Your purpose is not only to cover the material; it is to help others come unto Christ through faith in Jesus Christ, repentance, baptism, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end.

Rarely should a lesson go over 45 minutes. You may find that time may only allow shorter teaching visits. In this case, you may need frequent, short teaching visits covering smaller portions of material.

There are many ways you may approach teaching this lesson. Which commandment you teach, when you teach it, and how much time you give to it is best determined by the needs of the investigators and the direction of the Spirit.

Learn about the Commandments and Commitments

As you study this lesson, follow the pattern below:

- Study the section that describes the commandment and write a simple lesson plan with three to five main points.
- Teach a two- or three-minute version to your companion. Practice how you will extend each commitment invitation and how you will resolve concerns.
- Discuss ways to follow through on each commitment that investigators have accepted.

Obedience

God gives us commandments for our benefit. They are instructions from a loving Father in Heaven to help us have happy lives. He also gives us agency, or the ability and opportunity to choose between good and evil. When we obey God, we follow the influence of the Spirit and choose to conform to His will. Obedience to the commandments brings us peace in this life and eternal life in the world to come. Obedience shows our love for God. Disobedience brings us sorrow.

Heavenly Father knows our weaknesses and is patient with us. He blesses us as we strive to obey His commandments. He expects us to obey Him so He can bless us.

Scripture Study

Agency

2 Nephi 2:26–29

Alma 12:31

D&C 58:26–29

D&C 82:8–10

Topical Guide, “Agency”

Obedience

D&C 130:20–21

John 14:15, 21

Ecclesiastes 12:13

Commitment

- Will you obey the laws of God?

Pray Often

God commands us to pray to Him. You can pray at any time and in any setting. The Lord has taught us to kneel and pray in the morning and in the evening, as individuals and with our families. Our Heavenly Father hears and answers our prayers. Through daily prayer we receive divine guidance and blessings. We should always pray sincerely. We should also pray with “real intent,” which means we are committed to act on the answer that we receive.

We pray with faith to our Father in Heaven in the name of Jesus Christ (see Moses 5:8). Because He is our Father and we are His children, He will answer our prayers. We begin our prayers by addressing our Father in Heaven. We end our prayers by saying, “In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.”

In prayer we speak openly and honestly with our loving Father in Heaven. We express gratitude and thanksgiving for our blessings. We may acknowledge our love for Him. We also ask for help, protection, and direction according to our needs.

As we pray with faith, sincerity, and real intent, we will see God’s influence in our lives. He will guide us in our daily lives and help us make good decisions. He will bless us with feelings of comfort and peace. He will warn us of danger and strengthen us to resist temptation. He will forgive our sins. We will feel closer to Him. We must learn to recognize His influence in our lives. We must learn to listen to the still, small voice of the Spirit.

We can recognize when the Holy Ghost is teaching us the truth. Our minds will be filled with inspiring and uplifting thoughts. We will be enlightened, or given new knowledge. Our hearts will have feelings of peace, joy, and love. We will want to do good and be helpful to others. These feelings are hard to describe but can be recognized as we experience them.

Scripture Study

2 Nephi 32:8–9	D&C 6:22–23	D&C 19:28
Enos 1:1–12	D&C 8:2–3	1 Kings 19:11–12
Alma 34:17–28	D&C 9:7–9	Bible Dictionary, “Prayer”
Moroni 10:3–5		

Commitment

- Will you kneel and pray daily as individuals and as a family?

Study the Scriptures

The scriptures are written records of God’s dealings with His children as recorded by prophets under the influence of the Holy Ghost. We show our faith by studying, believing, and obeying God’s revealed word. We diligently search the scriptures to understand the truth. We feast upon them because they open the door to revelation and show us what we need to do and become. We search the scriptures to learn about Jesus Christ and His gospel. Faith in Jesus Christ is a gift from God and comes through studying and living His word and His gospel. The approved scriptures of the Church, also called the standard works, are the Holy Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price. We should study these sacred books daily.

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Scripture Study

1 Nephi 19:22–23	2 Nephi 31:19–20	John 20:31
2 Nephi 9:50–51	2 Nephi 32:3–5	2 Timothy 3:14–17
2 Nephi 25:26	Alma 32:28–30	2 Peter 1:20–21
2 Nephi 29:1–13	John 5:39	

Commitment

- Will you read the scriptures daily as individuals and as a family?

Keep the Sabbath Day Holy

Our Sabbath-day behavior is a reflection of our commitment to honor and worship God. By keeping the Sabbath day holy, we show God our willingness to keep our covenants. Each Sabbath day we go to the Lord’s house to worship Him. While there we partake of the sacrament to remember Jesus Christ and His Atonement. We renew our covenants and show that we are willing to repent of our sins and mistakes.

On this day, we enjoy a rest from our labors. As we attend Church services and worship together, we strengthen each other. We are renewed by our association with friends and family. Our faith is strengthened as we study the scriptures and learn more about the restored gospel.

When a community or nation grows careless in its Sabbath activities, its religious life decays and all aspects of life are negatively affected. The blessings associated with keeping the Sabbath day holy are lost. We should refrain from shopping on the Sabbath and participating in other commercial and sporting activities that now commonly desecrate the Sabbath.

Latter-day Saints should set this holy day apart from activities of the world by entering into a spirit of worship, thanksgiving, service, and family-centered activities appropriate to the Sabbath. As Church members endeavor to make their Sabbath activities compatible with the intent and Spirit of the Lord, their lives will be filled with joy and peace.

Scripture Study

3 Nephi 18:1–25	Exodus 20:8–11	Isaiah 58:13–14
D&C 59:9–15	Exodus 31:12–17	

Sit with Investigators or Members at Church

When attending sacrament meetings or stake conferences, missionary companions should sit with investigators, recent converts, or members. They should not sit with other missionaries.

Commitments

- Will you keep the Sabbath day holy?
- Will you prepare yourself to partake of the sacrament worthily?

Baptismal Interview Questions That Apply

- What do you understand of the Sabbath day, including partaking of the sacrament weekly and rendering service to others? Are you willing to obey this law [before your baptism]?

Baptism and Confirmation

The way we show our desire to follow in God's way is through baptism and confirmation. When we are baptized and confirmed, we enter into a covenant that we will take upon ourselves the name of Jesus Christ and that we will always remember Him and keep His commandments. We also promise to stand as witnesses of God at all times and to assist those in need (see Mosiah 18:8–9). In return, God promises the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost, a remission of our sins, and being born again.

Commitments

- Will you be baptized and confirmed?
- Will you invite your friends and family to attend a baptismal service?

If possible, invite investigators to attend a baptismal service and a sacrament meeting during which someone is confirmed.

Baptismal Interview Questions That Apply

- All baptismal interview questions.

Invitation to Be Baptized

The invitation to be baptized and confirmed should be specific and direct: "Will you follow the example of Jesus Christ by being baptized by someone holding the priesthood authority of God? We will be holding a baptismal service on [date]. Will you prepare yourself to be baptized on that date?"

Follow the Prophet

Truth is a knowledge of things as they really are, were, and will be. It does not change with conditions or time. Truth is the same in every age and culture. God is the source of all truth. We can have faith in Him because we know He will teach us only truth. God wants all His children to know the truth. Therefore, He reveals the truths necessary for salvation through prophets and apostles. He reveals truth to us personally through the scriptures and personal revelation.

A prophet is called and chosen by God and is a righteous man with great faith. The Lord reveals truth to him through the Holy Ghost. He commands His prophet to teach truth to all people. Those who believe God's words as revealed through His prophet are blessed.

Christ's Church is built on the foundation of apostles and prophets, who direct the Church by revelation. The Lord called Joseph Smith as the first prophet and head of this last dispensation. His successors who lead The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints today are also prophets and apostles. The President of the Church today is a living prophet. We are to have faith in God's chosen prophet, gain conviction of his divine calling, and follow his teachings.

We have frequent opportunities to sustain Church leaders publicly. *Sustain* means to support. We are to prepare ourselves so that when the prophets and apostles speak, the Holy Ghost can confirm the truths they teach, and we can then determine to follow the counsel they give us.

Those who listen to and follow the counsel of living prophets and apostles will not go astray. The teachings of living prophets provide an anchor of eternal truth in a world of shifting values and help us avoid misery and sorrow. The confusion and strife of the world will not overwhelm us, and we can enjoy the assurance of being in harmony with God's will.

Notes

Scripture Study

Mosiah 15:11–12	D&C 21:1–7	Ephesians 2:19–20
Alma 13:1–16	D&C 136:37–38	Ephesians 4:11–14
3 Nephi 12:1–2	John 15:16	Hebrews 5:4
D&C 1:37–38	Acts 10:34–44	Amos 3:7

Commitments

- Will you meet the bishop?
- Will you sustain and follow the counsel of Church leaders?

Baptismal Interview Questions That Apply

- Do you believe that [current Church President] is a prophet of God? What does that mean to you?

Keep the Ten Commandments

Heavenly Father gives us commandments so that we will know what to do and what to avoid in order to receive the blessings He wants to give us (joy, peace of conscience, lasting happiness). God revealed to Moses the Ten Commandments to guide His people:

- “Thou shalt have no other gods before me” (Exodus 20:3). Other “gods” can include possessions, power, or prominence.
- “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image” (Exodus 20:4).
- “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain” (Exodus 20:7).
- “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy” (Exodus 20:8).
- “Honour thy father and thy mother” (Exodus 20:12).
- “Thou shalt not kill” (Exodus 20:13).
- “Thou shalt not commit adultery” (Exodus 20:14).
- “Thou shalt not steal” (Exodus 20:15).
- “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour” (Exodus 20:16).
- “Thou shalt not covet” (Exodus 20:17).

The Ten Commandments are still valid today. They teach us to worship and show reverence for God. They also teach us how to treat one another.

No Other Gods

People in many cultures own or pay respect to objects that remind them of Deity or ancestors. Sometimes those objects, such as statues, religious emblems, or small shrines, might also be the focus of their worship. Help them understand that the Lord has commanded us not to worship idols. Encourage them to remove from their home any object they worship or to which they pray. Help them focus their faith and worship on their Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. Teach them that the restored gospel of Jesus Christ focuses on the living Christ.

In the restored gospel the Lord has taught us how to remember Him. We remember Him through prayer, the sacrament, and temple worship. Your mission president will provide guidance in specific areas.

Scripture StudyMosiah 13
D&C 59:5–6Matthew 22:36–40
Exodus 20:1–17

Deuteronomy 5:6–21

Commitment

- Will you keep the Ten Commandments?

Notes

Live the Law of Chastity

God delights in chastity and hates sexual sin. Chastity includes strict abstinence from sexual relations before marriage and complete fidelity and loyalty to one's spouse after marriage. Those who live the law of chastity enjoy the strength that comes from self-control. They enjoy confidence and trust in their family relationships. They can enjoy more fully the influence of the Holy Ghost in their lives. Those who break this law are subject to a lasting sense of shame and guilt that burdens their lives.

Chastity requires faithfulness in thought and action. We must keep our thoughts clean and be modest in our dress, speech, and actions. We must avoid pornography in any form. We should treat the God-given procreative power and our bodies as sacred. Baptismal candidates are to live the law of chastity, which prohibits any sexual relations outside of a legal marriage between a man and a woman. They are not to participate in abortions or homosexual or lesbian relations. Those who have committed sexual sin can repent and be forgiven.

Couples Living Together

Men and women who are living together but are not married may not be baptized without first getting married or separated. Those who are married to more than one person at a time may not be baptized. Seek counsel from your mission president, who will give you specific direction in each case.

Scripture Study

Jacob 2:28

3 Nephi 12:27–30

Matthew 5:27–28

Mosiah 13:22

D&C 42:22–24

Romans 1:26–32

Alma 39:3–5

D&C 63:16

Ephesians 5:3–5

Commitment

- Will you live the law of chastity?

Baptismal Interview Questions That Apply

- What do you understand of the law of chastity, which prohibits any sexual relationship outside the bonds of a legal marriage between a man and a woman? Are you willing to obey this law [before your baptism]?
- Have you ever participated in an abortion? A homosexual relationship? [Note: A person who answers yes to either of these questions must be interviewed by the mission president before being baptized.]

Notes

Obey the Word of Wisdom

The Lord revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith a law of health called the Word of Wisdom. This law teaches us what foods and substances we should and should not use to maintain the health of our bodies and to keep us free from evil influences. The Lord promises blessings of health, strength, protection against evil, and greater receptiveness to spiritual truths.

Remember that our bodies are sacred. We should treat them with respect and reverence. The Word of Wisdom teaches that we are to eat healthy foods. It teaches very specifically that we are to avoid harmful substances, including alcohol, tobacco, tea, and coffee. We must also avoid harmful drugs in any form. To be baptized and confirmed, those you teach must give up these substances. People who obey the Word of Wisdom are more receptive to spiritual truths.

Your mission president will answer questions about whether other specific substances in your culture are included in the Word of Wisdom.

Overcoming Addictions

You can best help those who are struggling to overcome smoking, alcohol, and other habits by following these principles. The suggestions below are applied particularly to the Word of Wisdom but can be adapted for other addictions as well.

1. Help the people set goals as to when and how they will live the Word of Wisdom.
2. Pray for them in your personal prayers and when you are with them.
3. Be positive and supportive—even if they relapse.
4. Continue teaching them the gospel. Teach them how to use prayer and faith as sources of strength.
5. Help them attend church regularly and develop friendships with people who live the Word of Wisdom and have overcome the same addiction.
6. As appropriate, offer to give them priesthood blessings.
7. Encourage them to remove harmful substances from their home.

See chapter 10 for more instruction on helping people overcome addictions.

Scripture Study

D&C 89

1 Corinthians 3:16–17

1 Corinthians 6:19–20

Commitment

- Will you live the Word of Wisdom?

Baptismal Interview Questions That Apply

- What do you understand of the Word of Wisdom? Are you willing to obey this law [before your baptism]?

Keep the Law of Tithing

One of the great blessings of membership in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the privilege of contributing to the growth of the kingdom of God through paying tithing. Tithing is an ancient, divine law. For example, the Old Testament prophet Abraham paid tithes of all he possessed (see Alma 13:15).

To those who pay tithing, the Lord promises that He will “open . . . the windows of heaven, and pour . . . out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it” (Malachi 3:10). These blessings may be temporal or spiritual, but they will come to those who obey this divine law.

Tithing means one-tenth, and the Lord has commanded us to give a tenth of our increase, which is understood to mean income, that we may be blessed. The law of tithing gives us the opportunity to help build His kingdom. Our tithes are holy to the Lord, and we honor Him by paying tithing. God promises to abundantly bless those who pay an honest tithe. Those who do not pay tithing rob God (see Malachi 3:8). They keep for themselves something that rightfully belongs to Him. We should seek first the kingdom of God, and tithing is an important way of doing that. Paying tithing is an expression of our faith. It is an outward sign of our belief in God and His work.

Tithing funds are used to support the ongoing activities of the Church, such as building and maintaining temples and meetinghouses, carrying the gospel to all the world, conducting temple and family history work, and many other worldwide activities. Tithing does not pay local Church leaders, who serve without receiving payment of any kind.

Local Church leaders send the tithing received each week directly to Church headquarters. A council comprised of the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve, and the Presiding Bishopric determines specific ways to use the sacred tithing funds.

Scripture Study

Tithing

D&C 119

Hebrews 7:1–2

Leviticus 27:30–33

D&C 120

Genesis 14:18–20

Malachi 3:7–12

Faith

3 Nephi 13:33

Ether 12:6

Commitment

- Will you live the law of tithing when you are baptized?

Baptismal Interview Questions That Apply

- What do you understand of the law of tithing? Are you willing to obey this law?

Observe the Law of the Fast

Great blessings are available to those who obey God’s commandment to fast. Fasting means going without food and drink for a period of time. Usually the first Sunday of each month is set aside as a special day to fast for two consecutive meals, pray, and bear testimony. Fasting and prayer go together. When we fast and pray with faith, we are more receptive to receiving answers to our prayers and blessings from the Lord. He promises us that He will guide us continually. We should fast and pray for specific purposes. Fasting is private and spiritual, and we should not draw attention to the fact that we are fasting.

Pure religion includes caring for the poor. We are to help them meet their physical and spiritual needs. When we fast, we donate money to the Church for the care of the poor and the needy. We call this a fast offering. We give at least the amount of money we save

by fasting for two meals. However, we need not limit our contribution to the cost of two meals. We are encouraged to be as generous as our means allow. By caring for the poor, we help fulfill our baptismal covenants and retain a remission of our sins.

Scripture Study

Fasting

Omni 1:26

Alma 17:2–3

D&C 88:76

Alma 5:45–46

Moroni 6:5

Matthew 6:1–4, 16–18

Alma 6:6

D&C 59:12–16

Isaiah 58:6–11

Caring for the Poor

Mosiah 4:16–27

Alma 4:12–13

James 1:27

Mosiah 18:8–10

Matthew 25:34–46

Isaiah 58:3–12

Commitments

- Will you fast and pray on the next fast Sunday for some special need?
- Will you donate a generous fast offering [after you are baptized]?

How to Donate Tithes and Offerings

Tithes and offerings are paid voluntarily and privately. Members may pay tithes and offerings at any time, but it is usually best to pay tithing on income as it is received and fast offerings on the day of the fast. Members make donations by completing a donation slip, which is obtained from the bishopric. The member keeps the yellow copy and seals the white copy and the donation in an envelope that is provided. The envelope is given to a member of the bishopric. These donations are considered sacred and belong to the Lord. A member of the bishopric and a clerk keep a careful, confidential accounting of all donations.

Members attend tithing settlement with the bishop at the end of each year to declare their tithing faithfulness. At this private meeting, members receive a year-end report of all their donations. All financial information is kept strictly confidential.

Teach How to Donate Tithes and Offerings

Show a donation form and explain how to use it. After converts are baptized, you may need to help them fill out the form.

Obey and Honor the Law

Latter-day Saints everywhere believe in obeying the laws of the country in which they live. Members of the Church are counseled to be good citizens, to participate in civil government and the political process, and to render community service. They do so, however, as concerned citizens, not as representatives of the Church.

Scripture Study

D&C 58:21

D&C 130:20–21

Articles of Faith 1:12

D&C 98:5

D&C 134

Commitment

- Will you obey the laws of the country in which you reside?

Baptismal Interview Questions That Apply

- Have you ever committed a serious crime? If so, are you now on probation or parole?
[Note: A person who answers yes to either of these questions must be interviewed by the mission president before being baptized.]

Activity

For each commandment in this lesson, list the scriptural promises the Lord makes to those who keep the commandment. Record in your study journal the promises that have been realized in your life.

Notes