

The Ten Best Ways

Exodus 20:1-17; Deuteronomy 5:1-21

We continue to witness God's elusive presence with God's People on three occasions at Mt. Sinai:

- First, in the burning bush when God revealed to Moses the name of God (Exodus 3:1-6).
- Second, when God gave the Ten Commandments to the people through Moses (Exodus 19:18–20:1-17).
- Third, when, after breaking the tablets in anger, Moses climbed up Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments a second time (Exodus 34).

On this last occasion, Moses bargained with God three times to see God's face, but God did not allow this. No one could see God's face and live, so God put Moses in an opening in the rock and covered him until the dazzling light of God's presence had passed by.

How to Use this Parent Page

With your child, begin by looking together at the illustration on the back page and listening as your child recalls—and in a sense *relives*—the experience of today's Godly Play presentation. Invite your child to respond to the drawing. You might say, for example:

- I wonder what you can tell me about this picture?
- I wonder what this picture has to do with today's story?

Just listen. This is *not* a time to quiz children on what they may or may not recall about the lesson, but to be quietly present as they share their own experience. This will be different for each child—one may retell much of the presentation, another recall a single moment that had meaning, and yet another talk about his or her own creative response. Again,

your role is not to correct or supplement what your child tells you, but simply to *listen* in a supportive way. You are supporting the formation of young—sometimes *very young*—theologians.

Then, if you wish, you can read with (or to) your child the condensed version of today's presentation offered below. Whether you read the lesson or simply listen as your child shares what was received in today's lesson, ask the Wondering questions printed in the left column. Remember, there are many right answers! Be open to what the presentation can mean to you and your child. God will teach you new meanings every day. Conclude by sitting quietly for a moment and then saying "Amen."

The Presentation

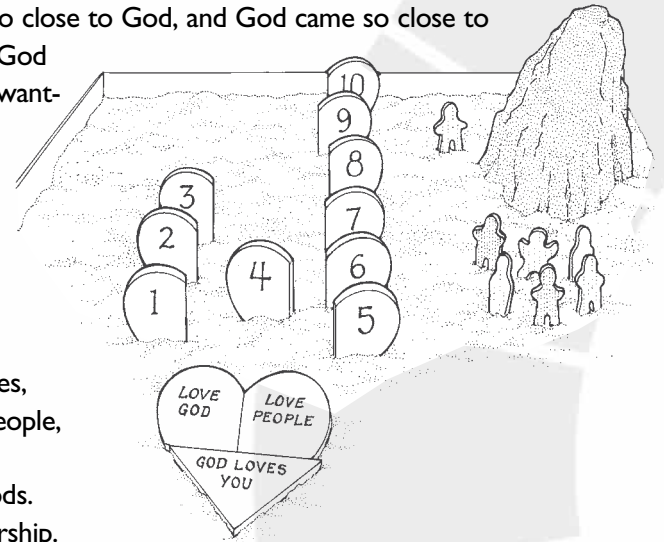
God loved the People so much that God showed them the Ten Best Ways to Live. Sometimes these ways are called the Ten Commandments.

As the People of God traveled across the desert, they began to complain: "There's not enough food! There's not enough water!" God helped them find food and water.

Wondering

- **I wonder** which one of the Ten Best Ways you like the best?
- **I wonder** which one is most important?
- **I wonder** which one is especially for you?

Then the People came to a great mountain, covered with fire and smoke. Moses climbed up into the fire and smoke to meet God. There on the mountain, Moses came so close to God, and God came so close to him, that he knew what God wanted him to do. God wanted him to write the Ten Best Ways to Live on stones and bring them down the mountain to the People.



God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses, who gave them to the people, who gave them to us:

1. Don't serve other gods.
2. Make no idols to worship.
3. Be serious when you say my name
4. Keep the Sabbath holy.
5. Honor your mother and father.
6. Don't kill.
7. Don't break your marriage.
8. Don't steal.
9. Don't lie.
10. Don't even want what others have.

When you add up all the Ten Best Ways you get only two: *Love God. Love people.* God love us to show us how and to make this possible.

Godly Play Story

At the heart of most Godly Play sessions is the telling of the story. Story is one of the most ancient and elemental forms of knowing. In the West, beginning in the 17th century, story as a way of knowing was eclipsed by the technique of knowing that we call science. But story is not a diversion or simply entertainment, but a unique way of knowing, as valid as science though different in its usefulness.

There are two primary ways of using scripture stories: *monastic* and *scholastic*. The monastic approach, known as *lectio divina* (holy reading), emphasizes reading as meditation and prayer. The reader seeks an intuitive understanding,

to savor the aesthetic value of the words and, ultimately, to encounter God. This monastic approach to stories is similar to the way we begin in Godly Play.

The scholastic approach emphasizes reading as an act of questioning and testing. The reader comes to the text to seek logical understanding, grow in knowledge and analyze for ideas and theories.

As children approach their teens, this more analytical approach develops in Godly Play, too. In Godly Play, you will notice the integration and appropriate use of these two ways of knowing in each presentation.