

Aim: To think of God's rules in a positive way and to understand that the Ten Commandments still apply today.

Do you ever feel like the Ten Commandments are all about stopping you from doing things? "Do not murder... Do not steal... Do not covet..."

Most of the Ten Commandments are written from a negative point of view; they tell you what *not* to do rather than what to do.

One way to think of the Commandments is like a fence. A child might be told "Do not climb over the fence", "Do not go through the fence or even break it." The child might think you are trying to stop them from having fun, but you know that there is a dangerous cliff on one side, a busy road on another and maybe wild animals or something else dangerous on the other sides. As long as the child stays inside the fence and doesn't break it, they will be safe.

How could you rewrite the Ten Commandments in a positive way? Here are some suggestions if you get stuck.

As written in the Bible

1. You must not have any other god but me.
2. You must not make for yourself an idol... You must not bow down to them or worship them...
3. You must not misuse the name of the LORD...
4. Remember to observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy...
5. Honor your father and mother...
6. You must not murder.
7. You must not commit adultery.
8. You must not steal.
9. You must not testify falsely...
10. You must not covet...

A Positive way of saying it... What it really means

1. *I am your one and only God*
2. *I am the only one you will worship*
3. *Respect my name*
4. *Sabbath is a special day to spend with God and your Christian friends and family. It is a break from your normal activities; no school work!*
5. *Be respectful and obedient to your parents*
6. *Respect life / preserve life*
7. *Respect marriage*
8. *Respect other people's property*
9. *Tell the truth*
10. *Be thankful with what you have*

Some people say that we don't have to obey the Ten Commandments anymore; they say that they ended when Jesus died, that they were "nailed to the cross." They quote verses like Ephesians 2:14-15 which talks about Jesus on the cross, saying He ended "the system of law with its commandments and regulations." NLT

Something ended when Jesus died, but it wasn't the Ten Commandments. But before we look at what it was, **do you really think that God would say, "It's ok for you to murder now; it's ok to steal now...?"**

Of course not! No one likes to have their things stolen, and someone is always hurt when a murder happens.

The Ten Commandments were written on stone and kept inside the Ark of the Covenant, inside the Sanctuary (Exodus 31:18; 40:20); but God also gave Moses more details, laws and guidelines for the Israelites to follow; Moses wrote them all down in a book and we have them in the Bible in the book of Deuteronomy. **Have a quick look at Deuteronomy 24 for some examples.**

What did Moses do with the book he wrote? Read Deuteronomy 31:24-26

These were the laws and regulations which ended when Jesus died, along with the system sacrifices that were done in the Sanctuary. I guess you could say they were the "Israelite Laws" or "Jewish Laws," like we have our "Australian Laws" today.

Many people, and many Churches who say the Ten Commandments are not important anymore, actually mean that they don't see the point of keeping the fourth commandment. As Seventh-day Adventists we believe that the fourth commandment is very important. When we keep the Sabbath, we show that we are willing to obey God, even if we don't really understand the reason. Next term we will learn more about the Sabbath and why it is important.