

NEW COMMANDS AND A NEW COVENANT

TEACHER INSIGHT

Personal Preparation for the Study:

The most effective way to prepare is to experience the study first as a participant. Each of the studies centers on Bible stories that have rich meaning and can impact your life in deep ways.

Take at least an hour to go through the exercises as a participant. Make sure you spend time watching the videos, doing the reading, and engaging in the response activities. Write down your answers to the discussion questions. Try hard not to let your mind wander to how you will teach this lesson! This will be an important time for you to discover your own insights, and it will also help you anticipate your group's responses.

Leading This Study:

After you go through the study for your own growth, go through it from a teacher's perspective. Note activities and options that you feel will work well with your group and ones that you want to change or omit.

This story has a lot of detail as Moses is traveling up and down the mountain several times. It may be hard for teens to keep track of the action, so it's important that you encourage them to really pay attention. The purpose of this study is to help teens engage in this story and discuss the events within the boundaries of that narrative. Gently encourage them that discussion outside of these parameters is for another time. Encourage teens that if they engage the story like a movie, allowing themselves to enter it, they will gain further insight.

Chapter 5: "New Commands and a New Covenant" can be found in Exodus 19–20; 24–25; 32–34; and 40.

DON'T KILL THE CONVERSATION!

Youth ministry expert Grahame Knox suggests five surefire ways to avoid an embarrassing silence:

1. Don't ask questions that can be answered with one word (e.g., *Do you agree that God loves you?*)
2. Don't ask loaded questions that suggest the answer (e.g., *Our bodies are God's temple, so should we smoke?*)
3. Don't ask intimidating questions (e.g., *If you really loved God, what would you do?*)
4. Don't ask embarrassing questions (e.g., *What's your most frequent temptation?*)
5. Don't try to make people guess the answers you want (e.g., *What are the three great truths from this passage?*)

I'll add one more:

6. Don't use "Why?" or "Why not?" in your follow-up questions (because they make people feel as though they're defending their answers).

[From *Creative Bible Study Methods for Youth Leaders*, an ebook by Grahame Knox, 2007, pp. 10–11.]

TEACHER PLANNING

SUPPLIES:

- Copies for every participant of the **Chapter 5 Handout: New Commands and a New Covenant** (on curriculum DVD)
- Provide 4 copies of the **StoryReader** for your storytellers (on curriculum DVD). See the StoryReader Assignment section below for details. Make extra copies for teens who'd like to read along.
- Copies of the JOIN the Story sections of this guide for **Small Group Leaders**
- Show the **Deliverance Recap** and the **New Commands and a New Covenant videos** from the curriculum DVD.
- **JOIN the Story Activity:** Extra paper, pens, markers, paints, and clay for participants to create an imaginative response
- **Creative Option:** Big sheets of paper (one for every 3 or 4 people), an assortment of colored markers
- **Optional:** *The Story: Teen Edition*—a Bible that corresponds with this study (published by Zondervan)

STORYREADER ASSIGNMENT:

Give out StoryReader scripts (from curriculum DVD) to teen and adult volunteers as far in advance as you can. Ask for volunteers who are comfortable with and skilled at reading aloud. **Never force a teen to read!** Mix this up and use different people each week. Often the best storytellers are those who have some dramatic training.

The StoryReader scripts are segments of Scripture taken directly from Zondervan's *The Story: Teen Edition* (NIV). Each script takes about 10 minutes to be read aloud. These segments have been formatted into a *Readers' Theater*. A Readers' Theater is an activity in which a few participants are asked to read directly from a script, with the intent of telling a story in a lively manner. Readers are **not expected to memorize or improvise** from the script, but use voice inflection and some gestures appropriate to their characters' actions and words in order to bring the story to life.

(The major parts in this week's story are read by the Narrator. Make sure to pick a teen or leader who won't mind reading large portions of the story.)

LESSON OUTLINE

Outline for a session that is approximately 75 minutes long:

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY *(large or small group)***5 minutes**

Introduction and Prayer

1 minute

Deliverance Recap Video

2 minutes

Brief Responses to Video

2 minutes

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY *(large or small group)***10 minutes**

Explanation and Handouts

1 minute

Chapter 5: New Commands and a New Covenant Video

3 minutes

Create Symbols for the Story

2 minutes

Share about Our Symbols

4 minutes

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY *(large or small group)***25 minutes**

Explanation

1 minute

StoryReader Scripture Telling

10 minutes

Response to Scripture

9 minutes

BREAK: Teens move to small groups

5 minutes

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY *(small group)***35 minutes**

Discussion

15 minutes

Create Responses to the Story

12 minutes

Share Responses to the Story

7 minutes

Closing Prayer

1 minute

TEACHER LESSON SCRIPT

PART ONE: REWIND THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

5 MINUTES

Teacher Script: (please personalize this)

Welcome back! I am so excited to be back together and continue our discovery in God's Story. Let's take a moment and pray before we begin:

God, we are challenged and encouraged by the things you are showing us in your Story. I've been blown away by the things these teens are seeing. May you continue to make your Story alive to us and help us to know you more. Amen.

I hope this adventure through God's Story is really connecting with you. So much has happened in just four chapters! I thought it would be good for us to take a look back at the Story so far. In just 31 seconds, this video will give us a quick summary of all the stories we've seen. It will go by fast, so watch and listen carefully.

[CUE: Play *Deliverance Recap* video from the curriculum DVD (2 minutes).]

Teacher Script: (please personalize this)

So what did you think of that video? What parts stood out to you?

[CUE: **SHARE**—Get a few quick responses to these questions; don't spend more than a minute or two discussing.]

Just as a reminder, in every Bible story that we go through together, we're looking for TWO story lines: An **Upper Story** and a **Lower Story**. The Upper Story tells the big picture, the grand narrative of God seeking relationship with human beings as it unfolds throughout history. The Lower Story consist of the smaller stories we'll look at each week, which tell the details of particular people and the events that happen in their lives.

[CUE: *It may be helpful to call on teens to briefly define the Upper Story and Lower Story to ensure that teens are starting to remember these from week to week.*]

PART TWO: SEE THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

10 MINUTES

Teacher Script: (please personalize this)

Hopefully, this video has prepared you to dive into another chapter of this amazing Story. I have another video to show you that will give us a quick look at where our new story will take us this week. After the video we'll take a moment to respond using these handouts.

Let's watch this week's video, *New Commands and a New Covenant*. Like the first video we watched, it's packed with action, so you have to pay careful attention so you don't miss anything. Ready?

[CUE: Play *New Commands and a New Covenant* video from the curriculum DVD (2:44).]

[CUE: Give each teen the *Chapter 5: New Commands and a New Covenant* handout found on the curriculum DVD.]

Teacher Script: (please personalize this)

Get with a partner. The SEE the Story area in the upper left corner with the EYE on it is where you and a partner will now create an **image or symbol** for this story. It can be something simple, but put some thought into how it represents the story. In a couple of minutes, we'll share our creations.

[CUE: **DISCUSS**—After 2 minutes, ask a few teens to share briefly about the symbol they created. Ask them to explain the thoughts behind their drawings. After 3 or 4 minutes of sharing, go to the next part.]

PART THREE: HEAR THE STORY

(LARGE OR SMALL GROUP)

25 MINUTES

Teacher Script: (please personalize this)

As you have noticed, this is a really interesting story. We want to spend some time diving deeper into it, and I've asked a few of you to help us as *StoryReaders*.

While the story is being read, draw or write down key events that stand out to you in the HEAR the Story section on your handout.

[CUE: Have preassigned teen and adult volunteers read the StoryReader script all the way through without stopping (10 minutes).]

Teacher Script: (please personalize this)

Take the next minute to answer the questions in the HEAR section on your handout.

[CUE: **DISCUSS**—After 2 minutes, ask a few teens to share their responses with the entire group. Allow 5 to 7 minutes for sharing. Use these questions from the handout as a guide:]

- What were the key events from the story?
- What was most meaningful to you from this story?

Teacher Script: (please personalize this)

Right now we're going to explore the story a bit further in small groups.

[CUE: Send teens into small groups. Make sure the discussion leaders have copies of the JOIN the Story segment of this study.]

PART FOUR: JOIN THE STORY**35 MINUTES**

[CUE: DISCUSS—*Adjust questions as needed and don't feel like your group must answer all of them.***]**

- Not all of you got to share your responses from the HEAR the Story section of the handout. Would anyone like to share what you came up with?
- Why do you think God gave the Israelites commands? Why were they needed?
- Do you think they were difficult to follow?
- Why do you think the people didn't want to live within God's commands?
- Why do you think the Israelites created a "god they could see"?
- Where do we see people put the highest value on material objects?
- Why do you think we tend to do this?
- God said the to Israelites, "You will be a kingdom of priests." What do you think that meant for the Israelites? What could that mean for us?
- What do you think it means to live in God's ways? What are some of the characteristics of someone who is doing this?

Teacher Script:

Pick ONE of the following questions and create a response: *(These questions are also on the handout.)*

- *Which character are you most like in this story? How?*
- *In your own words, what could it mean for you to live as a "modern-day priest"?*
- *How did this story challenge or inspire you to live differently?*

Create a sketch, collage, poem, prayer, journal entry, song, or whatever you can come up with in the next 10 minutes!

This is a very mature and creative group. The words and images in your minds are meaningful, so create or write something that honestly represents your thoughts. We can really learn from each other. In a few minutes, we'll talk about your responses. I'm really excited to see what you come up with!

(While teens are working on their responses, walk around and encourage them. Also ask adult leaders to participate in this activity.)

CREATIVE OPTION:

Have your teens get into groups of 3 or 4. Give each group a large sheet of paper. Say something like, "You are now going to create a current version of the Ten Commandments. You can look them up in Exodus 20. Your version needs to use language that teens relate to and understand. Tell us what you think each of these commands means."

Take the next 10 minutes to create your new commands. Don't forget to write them on a current communication device. God wouldn't give them to us on tablets...what would God use today?"

(If teens are struggling to come up with ideas for this, have them think about what God might put on a billboard or in an email or tweet to communicate these commands.)

[**CUE: SHARE**—Ask a few willing teens to share their responses to the story. After 9 or 10 minutes of sharing, move to the closing prayer.]

Teacher Script: (please personalize this)

I am encouraged and amazed by your creativity and depth. Stories have a way of connecting with us like nothing else does, and I am seeing this Story begin to change all of our lives. Thank you for engaging in this and being so thoughtful in your responses. I wish we had more time to continue our sharing, but we can look forward to the next story!

Let's pray as we end our time:

God, we are so grateful for our time together and for how you're meeting us through your Story. We are learning so much about you, and it's changing our own stories. May we continue to seek you as our source of life and strength this week. Amen.