

## **Teaching Children and Youth about the Sixth Commandment**

Jesus tells us in his Sermon on the Mount: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” This Beatitude means that our understanding of God requires a purity of thought and motive.

Many of us may choose to avoid teaching the Sixth Commandment, but there are ways to teach even young children that is age appropriate. It is not just about sex! It is not too early to teach children the motives and discipline necessary to avoid adultery as adults and to make sense of things if their lives are touched by this issue. Here are a few ideas to talk about at home:

### **For Young Children:**

When children are old enough to understand what it means to “keep a promise” – that when we agree with someone to do something, we must do it – they can be taught that this is part of what the Sixth Commandment means. That would be a good start. They can practice this commandment by being loyal and obedient to their parents and family members, as well as learning how to be loyal and obedient to God. Little children can also learn how to keep out the impure thoughts that would make them rebel against their parents. They can be told that it is natural for them to love to do good and be good.

### **Illustration for Children:**

To help children grasp some of the concepts involved, you can try to illustrate the problems that occur when things that need to remain pure are made impure. For instance, show how adding something such as dirt to a pure glass of water will cause the liquid to look or taste different. The impurity can spoil the drink. The drink of water becomes useless to humans who need pure water for nourishment or cleansing. Some children may understand a discussion on environmental pollution, and how that affects the quality of life on earth.

When the children see this cause and effect of mixing pollutants with pure water, discuss how God’s children, who were created pure and innocent, need to keep their thoughts and their hearts pure, as well, so that they can fulfill their purpose in life. Ask what kinds of thoughts or activities could poison their purity. Relate this to the Sixth Commandment, which tells us not to adulterate our relationships, or to break our promises. Ask your children or students why it is important to keep our relationship with God pure. What would try to interfere with our unity with God? How can we keep our relationship with God pure?

### **For Older Children and Teens:**

In addition to the above, you can discuss the importance of loyalty in our relationships with our friends. Older kids are learning what it means to be a true and loyal friend. They certainly know when others have betrayed them, even if they do not yet see how they could be guilty themselves! Perhaps they have felt let down or abandoned by others, or they have been the victim of gossip, teasing, or being ousted by a new clique. Ask how they feel when this happens. Do they feel sorry when they have broken their own promises to a friend? How can they make it up?

Show how our friendships give us opportunities to practice the qualities that will prevent us from breaking the Sixth Commandment when we are older. We should be true and loyal friends — unselfish, humble, gracious, and self-controlled — so that we can be the same with any future marriage partner, and with God.

**Older children can also benefit from the following areas of discussion:**

- 1. Choosing friends.** We need to make wise choices in friends, so that we are not tempted to spend our time in activities, which would harm our purity, our morals, our intelligence, and integrity.
- 2. Marriage.** Depending upon their maturity, older students can perhaps handle a discussion of the moral demands made on those who marry, so they have a good idea of what is expected of them when they become married. To take it even further, if warranted, sex outside of marriage, even if it is between two single individuals, could be considered adultery. This is a question they will have to consider in their own hearts if they wish to maintain their sense of purity.
- 3. Influence of the media.** While premarital sex and adultery certainly existed before the advent of books, movies, television, and the Internet, the onslaught of sexual images in today's media cannot help but overwhelm young minds with ideas they are not prepared to handle. Since you cannot always be around to monitor what your children watch, it is wise to teach children and teens the reasons why they should want to avoid explicit images of sex and violence on their own. Teach them to value innocence and purity, and to protect these qualities.
- 4. True happiness.** Explain that those who search for sex or love outside of marriage, are not usually bad people, but are often simply victims of ignorance or temptation. They are “looking for love in all the wrong places.” Our happiness is not found in sex, or from the adulation of other people, but in the gifts and blessings of God and acts of good deeds and unselfish love.

This information was found here:

<https://firstlessonsinchristianscience.wordpress.com/2017/04/28/teaching-children-the-seventh-commandment/>