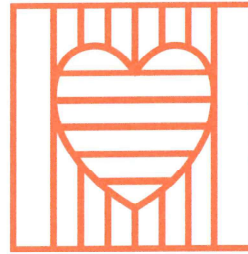


Question 15

Since no one can keep the law, what is its purpose?



Answer

That we may know the holy nature of God, and the sinful nature of our hearts; and thus our need of a Savior.

Big Idea

The law serves to reveal sin, to guide, and to communicate the character of God.

Aim

To help the children understand that the law is valuable in the life of the Christian.

Bible Passage

Romans 3:19–20

Memory Verse

“For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.” (Rom. 3:20)

Virtue

Awe





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Leader's Notes

The question of the usefulness of the law in the life of the Christian is a valid one. Why is the law necessary, when it has already been established that no human can live perfectly according to God's law? Children are very astute and will quickly spot this apparent discrepancy. This will be a useful lesson to encourage them and excite them about the goodness of the law in the life of the Christian. This lesson should encourage the children to anticipate the importance of the law throughout their lives. This lesson aims to show the children that God's law is incredibly valuable to both the non-Christian and the Christian. To non-Christians it reveals their inability to live according to God's standards and exposes their need of a Savior, and to

Christians it helps them live in a way that is glorifying to God. The law also reveals the character of God, and that is beneficial for all people.

Things to remember when planning and teaching:

- The children will be inclined to think that the law is superfluous in the life of the Christian; care must be taken to help the children see the usefulness of the law.
- Be aware of the danger of nurturing legalism in children; continue to explain that obedience to the law is a right response to God's saving grace.
- Help the children to remember that living obedient lives is glorifying to God.

Leader's Prayer

Awesome God, thank for your law. Thank you that by examining your law, I can see my own sinfulness and can reorient my heart and life toward you. Thank you that you kindly allow me to look into the law to see a reflection of myself. Thank you that you also reveal yourself through your law.

I praise you that you are holy, sovereign, loving, and just. Grant understanding to the children who will hear this lesson. Help them to understand the purpose of the law in your saving plan and reveal more of yourself to them as they peer into your word. In Jesus's name. Amen.

Leader's Tool Kit

- Q15 Catechism Recap (DL)
- Large pieces of paper or a roll of butcher paper
- Markers
- A large mirror
- Chalk pen or dry erase marker
- UV pen set with light included
- Index cards



10 Catechism Recap

Print out and cut up each of the words that make up the Q15 Catechism Recap (DL), and lay them upside down on the floor in the middle of the classroom.

Begin the catechism recap by reading out Questions 12, 13, and 14 (don't read out the answers!). Tell the children that on the floor

are the words that make up the answers to each question. Have the children turn over the words and see if they can work together to correctly assemble the right words in the right order to answer each question. Practice saying each question and answer together to finish the recap.

5 Introduction to Question 15

You will need a large mirror for this introduction.

Hold up the mirror and ask the children what they see in the mirror. Invite some of the children to come closer and investigate their reflections in the mirror. Ask the children to explain what a mirror is used for. Tell them to imagine that they're explaining the concept of a mirror to someone who has never seen one before.

Put the mirror down for a minute and write "THE LAW" across it in chalk pen or dry erase marker. Explain to the children that the law of God functions like a mirror for the

Christian. Tell them that as Christians look into the law, they see what they are really like. Explain that the law does not show us our outward appearance as a mirror does. It shows us what our hearts look like.

Introduce the children to Question 15: "Since no one can keep the law, what is its purpose?" Explain to the children that this question will allow them to understand the purpose of the law. They've already seen that it can act as a mirror and that it reveals God's character. Encourage the children to consider how the law might be revealing something about their own hearts to them.

10 Silent Interviews

This get-to-know-you exercise is designed to frustrate the children and help them realize that the best way to get to know someone is to hear him or her speak.

1. Give each child a partner.
2. Ask the partners to introduce themselves.

3. Tell the children that starting now, they must be absolutely silent. They can't even whisper or try to mouth words silently. They must communicate without words.
4. Have each child "tell" his partner three things about himself using gestures, as if they were playing charades.



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5. After both partners have had a turn, bring everyone back together.
6. Invite each child to explain what he learned about his partner—speaking is now allowed! It is quite likely that not every child will have gotten his message across, and communicate that that's okay.

Tell the children that it's hard to find out about someone in silence. The best way to get to know someone is when they speak to make themselves known.

Explain to the children that one of the functions of the law is to help people understand more of who God is and what he's like. The law reveals God's character.

 Teaching Outline

You will need a UV pen and light for this section.

Begin the teaching time by asking for God's help. Ask that the lesson would be taught faithfully and that the children might listen well.

Write *SIN* multiple times in UV pen on a piece of paper. Show the children the paper and ask them what they can see. They won't be able to see anything because the UV pen is invisible until the UV light is shone on it. Shine the UV light on the pen and reveal the word *SIN*.

Explain to the children that God's law reveals personal sin.

Read Romans 3:19–20. Provide Bibles for the children to read along with you.

Remind the children that they've engaged with this passage recently. Ask them to look at verse 20 and discover what Paul is teaching the Romans about the law. He is telling the Romans that through the

law comes the knowledge of sin. When Christians read and reflect on the law, the Holy Spirit helps them identify areas of their lives that are not in step with God's law. Explain to the children that reading the law can help Christians to understand their own hearts and see where they are not meeting God's standards. The law reveals sin, just like the UV light revealed the word sin. So one of the purposes of the law is to remind sinners that they will never be able to live up to God's standards, and because of that they deserve to be punished for breaking the law. The law essentially shines a light on the need for a Savior.

For Christians, the law can also act as a guide to show us how to live. Remind the children that one of the ways Christians can glorify God is by obeying his commands. It's like the family rules for those who are members of God's family. Living by God's good commands helps his children glorify him and also shows the watching world what he is like.



Explain to the children that one of the most significant things about the law is that it communicates what God is like; it reveals his character to the world.

Explain to the children that each of the Ten Commandments reveals something about God. Unlike the game at the beginning of the lesson, God's children can hear his voice through his Word to understand what he is like. No one needs to guess.

Tell the children that the law is important because it reveals the sinful nature of man,

it guides God's children in life, and it shows God's character to the world.

Conclude the teaching time by helping the children commit Question 15 and the answer to memory.

(These notes are just for guidance. Please expand or amend to suit your own children and context. Write out your talk in your own words and include illustrations and applications that you know will connect with your children.)

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Activity



Cover a portion of a wall with butcher paper or large pieces of paper side by side. Write AWE in big letters across the top of the paper.

Invite the children to read the Ten Commandments and consider what the commandments teach about God's character.

Encourage the children to write the attributes on a Wall of Awe. If time allows, let children take turns writing words of praise on the Wall of Awe with the UV pen and then reveal them with the UV light.



Discussion and Question Time

Some of the questions that might arise include:

? How do I know if the law is helping me to understand my heart?

Reassure the children that if they are conscious of their sin and have a desire to change, then the Holy Spirit is using the law to guide and make them more like Jesus.

? Why do non-Christians describe the Bible as all rules and regulations and God as a grinch?

Explain to the children that the world does not see the usefulness of the law in the way that Christians do, and they also do not know God in the way that Christians do. Clarify for the children that the people who live away from God are fooled into thinking that they are

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free, when in actual fact they are slaves to sin. It is in and through Jesus that perfect freedom is found.

Also use this opportunity to help the children think about their own lives and how this question and answer affects them personally.

- Do you think the law can help you glorify God?
- How might you try to explain the usefulness of the law to a non-Christian?
- How does the law expand your view of God?

**Virtue Vision****Awe**

God's law shows us his holiness. It also shows us how short of that holiness we fall.

Direct the children to the Wall of Awe and encourage them to consider the different attributes of God that are detailed on the wall. Ask the children how studying the

character of God helps them to love him more. Ask them if it inclines them to live more for his glory.

Ask the children if anyone can think of a song that is appropriate to sing when we stand in awe of God. Sing as many songs together as your time allows.

**Memory Activity**

Print each word of the memory verse or catechism answer onto a card; you will need one full set of cards for each team.

- Divide the children into teams.
- Read the memory verse or catechism answer aloud to the children.
- Read the memory verse or catechism answer aloud again, inviting the children to repeat each phrase after you.
- Read the memory verse or catechism answer again, and invite the children to join in saying it with you.
- Hand out a full set of cards to each team; make sure they're not in order! Ask the children to put the words in the correct order, setting it up as a race against the clock.
- Practice the memory verse or catechism answer one final time.

**Closing Prayer Time**

Encourage the children to praise God for who he is and how he works in light of this question relating to the usefulness of his law.