

“Following the Rules!”  
[Exodus 20:1-17](#); [Psalm 19](#); [John 2:13-22](#)

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The Ten Commandments, you may have heard of them? Look here in the bulletin on page 5 where they are all listed. God has given us 10 commandments. We even have rules at our school and our parents have rules for us at home. What happens when we break those rules?

Today’s lessons talk about a time when the people at the House of God, that would be the Temple in Jerusalem, were breaking the rules, the laws. They were showing an appalling lack of respect for God by the manner in which they were conducting their business at the Temple, an appalling lack of respect.

Sunday morning after church Elizabeth and Barabas were playing tag in the Gathering Space, which of course, is a bad idea. Then Elizabeth ran up to her father and interrupted him as he was speaking with Pastor Ed, another bad idea!

“Daddy, Daddy!” begged Elizabeth. “Can Barabas come over to our house for lunch? Please?”  
“No.” hissed Mr. Mawakasunga and he turned back to his conversation with the other grown ups.  
“Please! Please!” said Elizabeth jumping up to try to be taller to be sure she had his attention.



“No!” said Mr. Mawakasunga. “Barabas may NOT come to our house today!”  
“Oh! But why not? Please?” Elizabeth continued to beg.

The father turned to the daughter and said in a tone of voice that could not possibly be misunderstood  
“Elizabeth Mawakasunga! Go to the . . . car . . . right . . . now . . . NOW!”

“Eeeessss!” Elizabeth grimaced and sucked the air in between her teeth and immediately obeyed her father!

As she sat in the car, she knew she had gone too far! She had shown an appalling lack of respect to her father and the other grown-ups in the Gathering Space! Elizabeth's father was very angry with her.

When Jesus saw that the merchants at the Temple in Jerusalem were being so disrespectful, HE grew very angry with THEM!

We can usually tell when someone is very angry with us, can't we? Sometimes they shout, sometimes worse things happen. I don't know about you, but when that happens to me, I always feel so terrible about what I've just done!

Elizabeth sat in the car, silent and still as her father hopped in and started the engine. "I'm sorry Daddy." said Elizabeth. "I'm sorry I was so disrespectful."

"Elizabeth." he said. "You not only showed an appalling lack of respect today, but you were very disrespectful to your poor sick Aunt Gertrude when you and Running Chairs were so loud and rambunctious that the dresser was kicked over in your new room. Remember? Stop that behavior!"

"Take these things out of here." shouted Jesus in an angry voice to the merchants at the Temple. "Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!"

The Psalm this morning says "How can I know all the sins lurking in my heart? Cleanse me from these hidden faults. Keep me from deliberate sins! Don't let them control me!"

In the end, God loves and forgives us. In the meantime, we need to work harder to show more respect to God and everyone around us! THE END