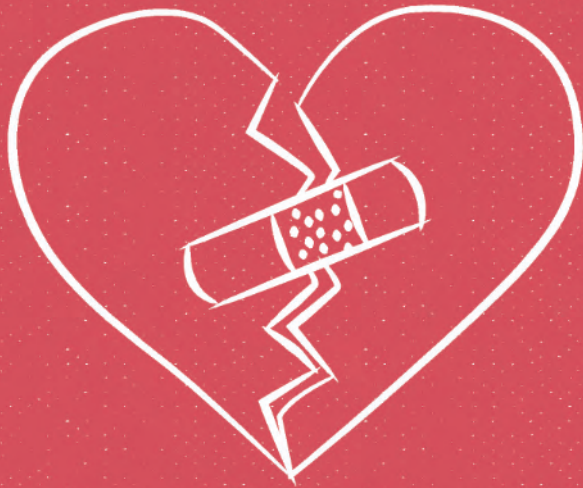




THE 'FESS-UP:

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DAY 13

THE 'FESS-UP: CONFESSION

WHO SAYS WHAT'S BAD OR GOOD?

THE HOT TUB DILEMMA

Emmett and Charlie were excited to get into the hot tub at their hotel. So they raced each other down the hallway, anxious for the warm bubbles and relaxing jets. A safety sign was posted next to the hot tub, and Charlie paused to skim the rules. The third rule made him freeze.

HOT TUB RULES

NO JUMPING OR DIVING

LIMIT YOUR SOAK TIME TO 15 MINUTES

NO CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 12
ALLOWED IN HOT TUB

"Hey Dad, I don't think we can go in," Charlie said. "The sign says no one under 12, and I'm only 11 and Emmett's 9."

"That stinks! The hot tub at our last hotel said 'Under 16 Needs Adult Supervision,'" Emmett said, reading over Charlie's shoulder.

"We've always been allowed to go in the hot tubs!"

Dad came over and studied the sign carefully.

"It looks like this hotel doesn't want kids to use their hot tub." he agreed.

"What a joke." Charlie said, glancing around the room for any sign of cameras or another person. There were none in sight.

"Should we just get in anyway?" he said. "After all, we've been in tons of hot tubs in the past. And I'm almost 12."

"Why doesn't every hotel have the same rules?" Emmett asked. "Who says what's right and what's wrong?"

What do you think they should do?

- ☐ Pretend they didn't see the sign and go in.
- ☐ Follow the rules and use the pool instead.

RULES OF LIFE

As Emmett and Charlie discovered, rules are not always fair. Sometimes, the rules are different, depending on where you live, how old you are, or who is in charge. Although the hot tub rules were different at different hotels, at least a sign was there to spell out the rules clearly. But what do we do when there isn't a sign to tell us the rules? It's not always easy to know what's right or wrong in life.

Some people think they set all of the rules for their own life. Maybe you've seen some of these sayings:



These might seem like fun little phrases on a journal or poster, but they really don't make sense. If we actually live our life by these signs, then forgiveness will be even harder because no one would ever be wrong.

- If you make your own rules, then you don't need to confess or apologize to anyone, because according to YOUR rules, you are innocent.
- If you are the boss of your own life, no one can tell you that you're not following the rules or you're not on the right path. Who are they to say?

These popular sayings really don't line up with what we believe as Jesus followers.

THY WORD IS A LAMP

God doesn't make rules to keep us from having fun or selfishly wanting to control us. He is the Creator, and He knows best how things should work.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”

Proverbs 3:5-6

It's for our own good that God tells us what is right and wrong. His rules make us feel safe and loved, and they open us up to being even more creative. God's rules are not complicated. He tells us in the Bible how we should live through the Ten Commandments. (You can read about those in Exodus 20:1-17.)

But God didn't stop there. His plan wasn't to just give us rules to follow perfectly, because we can't. No one, except Jesus, is perfect. He offered Himself up as a sacrifice for us so that we are forgiven even when we don't get the rules right.

At the same time, Jesus's forgiveness doesn't mean we can throw out the rules. If we say, "I'm going to sin because I'm going to be forgiven anyway," then are we truly following Jesus? We must still try our best to follow God, knowing we are forgiven when we mess up. It's not up to us to decide who's right or who's wrong. God has done that for us. He announced to the world that we are His good children.

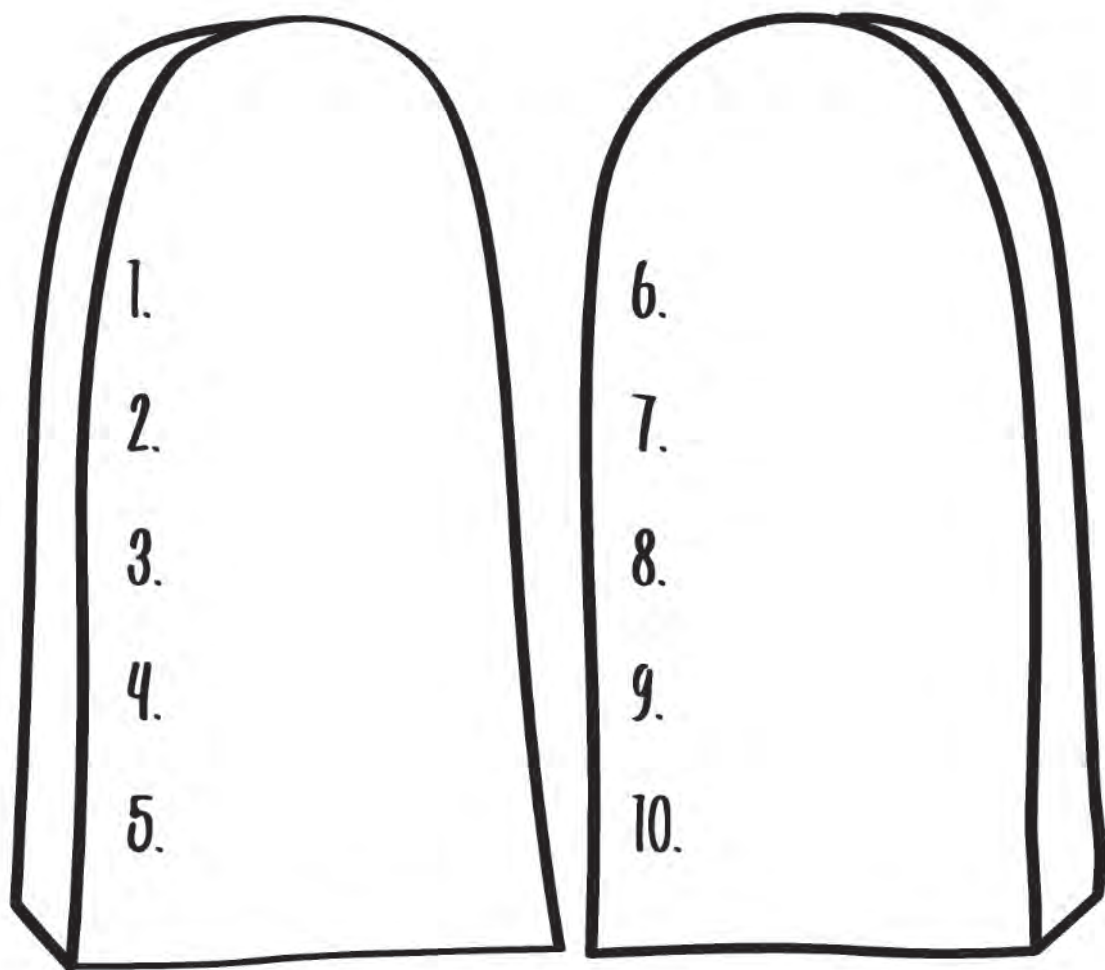
So let's go back to Emmett's question: Who says what's bad and what's good? God does!

Emmett ran past the hot tub and did a cannonball into the pool. Charlie was right behind him, matching splash for splash. A hot soak would have felt good, but it's hard to beat the feel of a perfect cannonball!

While it's not always easy to follow the rules, we can be thankful that God puts those laws into place for our good. It's the best way to make a splash in this world.

CHALLENGE

Write out the Ten Commandments on the stone tablets below. You can find the commandments in Exodus 20:1-17. Remember who is in charge. Remember that the God who makes the rules helps us 'fess up when we mess up.



RED ALERT!

Mountains are often thought of as holy places in the Bible. God spoke to Moses in a burning bush at Mount Horeb (Exodus 3). Then Moses was given the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai (Exodus 20). In the Redvale story, we have the fictional "Mount Goel" because "goel" is a Hebrew word for "redeemer." It also means "avenger."



#FORGIVINGCHALLENGEKIDS