



# the visual **faith** project

## A Visual Faith Experience **Family Rules & Boundaries**

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**Theme: Family Rules & Boundaries** (Luke 2:41-51)

### **Intended Audience**

Small groups of participants of at least three different generations would enhance this experience on Family Rules & Boundaries. It would also be interesting leading this experience with two or three families in a small group.

### **Outcome of Experience**

The participants will learn the purpose of parents and grandparents setting the rules of how a given family will live in a healthy relationship with one another. They will explore what might be an acceptable action outside the family rules and what process to follow when a rule or boundary is broken.

### **Introduce Experience**

Families set rules and boundaries for the safety of all the members of the family and also to guide how the family will share life together in a healthy manner. Families will set boundaries differently. Sometimes one does not know a given rule of the family until that rule is broken. Far too often families do not talk clearly about the boundaries and the consequences when a rule or boundary is broken. Let's take a look this story of Jesus in his younger years and the action within Joseph and Mary. Is there a connection with our families?

**Scripture** (Included on Page 3)

### **Image Selection**

Choose two or three images that show some emotions Mary, Joseph, or Jesus might have experienced that influenced their decisions in this story.

### **Facilitators Questions To Guide Group Discussion**

1. What images respond to the feelings of Mary? What were some of those feelings? How did those feelings change?
2. What images visualize the emotions that Joseph might have had? What were those emotions? Did those emotions change in Joseph?
3. There seems to be an understanding with Joseph and Mary that a family rule is that when we travel together for safety we stick together. How do you think that family rule was set?
4. What images exhibit some emotions Jesus might have felt? What are those emotions?
5. Why would Jesus break a family rule?
6. How did the family handle a broken rule/relationship?

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## Family Rules & Boundaries Experience continued...

Now choose one or two images that depict emotions you have had in regard to the rules and boundaries your family has set or upholds.

### Facilitator Questions to Guide the Discussion

- What is the story that triggered your emotion(s)?
- What made the experience positive or negative?
- What questions do the others in the group have for the person who shared her/his story and image(s)?
- Where was God for you?
- If you expressed your feelings to your parent(s), how did they respond? If you did not express your feelings, what might be the reason for your choice?

### Application

- As a parent, if your child or a child in your care was lost, describe the emotions you experienced. If the child was found, how did those emotions change? If the child was not found, what were the emotions you felt and did those emotions change?
- As a child, did you ever experience being lost? What feelings were stirring in your heart and mind? During that time of being lost, who or what gave you hope?
- Does the word “obey” trigger positive or negative emotions? How might there be tension between obeying God and obeying family?
- Does your family communicate the rules and boundaries, the purpose of those rules, and clearly communicate the consequences of breaking a family rule?
- What might be some healthy and helpful ways for a family to work through a broken rule or boundary? How might God be involved?

### Prayer

As the facilitator, create an environment to connect with God in prayer. Invite the participants to gather and be seated in a circle. Perhaps have a candle burning in the center of the prayer circle. Instruct the participants that each will read one of the Ten Commandments from Scripture (Exodus 20: 4-18) or a catechism of your denomination.

At the end of each commandment they will observe 2 minutes of silence for personal prayer. At the end of the silence following the tenth commandment they will all join hands and pray the Lord’s Prayer out loud together.



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## Family Rules & Boundaries Experience continued...

### Scripture (Luke 2: 41-51)

*41 Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. 42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival.*

*43 When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. 44 Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends.*

*45 When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. 46 After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. 47 And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. 48 When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety."*

*49 He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" 50 But they did not understand what he said to them.*

*51 Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart.*

### Image Packs

We recommend Assorted Set A (set of 100 printed images) for use with this experience or other images that you may already have. You can find Assorted Set A at: <https://vibrantfaith.org/shop/visualfaithcards>