

SELF-EVIDENT

The Truths That Built a Nation

Young Explorers Edition • Grades Three through Six

LESSON TEN

“The Fruit of Your Work”

The Words We Are Studying

The right of property, which grows from our God-given rights

A right that flows from the Declaration

The Big Idea

When you work hard for something, it is fair for you to keep it. And what you own, you should take care of and use to help others.

Words to Know

Property. The things that belong to you, especially what you earn or make with your own work.

Earn. To get something by working for it. When you earn something, it is fairly yours.

Stewardship. Taking good care of what you own and using it wisely, as a helper for God.

What It Means

Another right that grows from the Declaration is the right of property. Property means the things that belong to you, especially what you earn by working.

Here is why it is fair: when you work, you are using your time and effort, which are part of your life. So what your work produces is rightly yours. If you rake leaves all day to earn money, that money belongs to you. It would be wrong for someone to just take it.

But the Bible teaches something else too. What we own, we should take care of and use to help others. This is called stewardship. We have a right to what we earn, and we also have a job to use it well.

A Picture to Help You Remember

Imagine you spend all Saturday building a birdhouse. You sawed the wood, hammered the nails, and painted it. That birdhouse is yours because you made it. It would not be fair for someone to grab it and say it is theirs.

Your work went into it, and your work is part of your life. That is why what you earn and make belongs to you. And you might even choose to give that birdhouse to someone as a gift, which is a wonderful way to use what is yours.

What a Founder Said

“As a man is said to have a right to his property, he may be equally said to have a property in his rights.”

— James Madison, 1792

In plain words: Just like the things you earn belong to you, your rights belong to you too, and both should be protected.

Why It Matters for You

You can work hard and feel good about what you earn, knowing it is fairly yours.

You can also practice stewardship by taking care of your things and sharing with others. What you own is a chance to bless people.

Let’s Talk About It

1. Why is it fair for you to keep what you earn by working?
2. How is making a birdhouse a good picture of the right of property?
3. What is stewardship, and how can you practice it?
4. What is something you own that you could use to help someone else?

Try This

Do a small job to earn something (with a grown-up’s help), like a chore for a reward. Then decide: how will you take care of what you earned, and is there a way to use some of it to help someone?

A Verse to Remember

“You shall not steal.” (Exodus 20:15)