

The Greatest Commandment

Lesson Scripture: Matthew 22:34-40

Bible Truth: I will love God with ALL my heart.

Bible Story: Matthew 22:37-40

Bible Verse: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.” (Deuteronomy 6:5, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: “God Doesn’t Like Fractions”

Preparation

Write several fractions on a piece of poster board. Prepare the following objects or visual aids: half of a cookie, a whole cookie, half of an umbrella (or any other useful object), and half of a catcher’s glove, a ball or any other sport object that children are familiar with. Make a giant heart out of a red poster board. Cut it in half. Draw a happy face on one half of the heart and a sad face on the other half.

Materials
white poster board
red poster board
markers
cookies
umbrella
sports ball or catcher’s glove

Presentation

As you show the fractions say: **Can anyone tell me what these numbers are called? Yes, they are fractions. Fractions are numbers that represent a part or parts of a whole.**

How many of you have begun to learn about fractions in school? Do you enjoy learning about fractions? Many children do not enjoy learning about fractions because it is a bit harder to add and subtract fractions than whole numbers. Give an example of adding two whole numbers and another example of adding two fractions.

Show children the whole cookie and half of a cookie. Say: **If someone offered you half of a cookie or a whole cookie, which one would you choose? I’m sure you would choose the whole cookie. Half (or a fraction) of a cookie is never as good as a whole cookie, isn’t that right?**

Fractions (or parts of a whole) are often much harder to use. How could I use only half of an umbrella on a rainy day? What could you do with half of a catcher’s glove when your team is

playing? Mention the objects or visuals you have prepared if you did not use the suggested ones. Say: **Do you know that God doesn't like fractions either? He says in Deuteronomy 6:5, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength."** (Show the half of the heart with a happy face.) **It's very hard for God to only use half of a child. He can't send you where He wants you to go because your other half doesn't want to go.** (Show the half of the heart with a sad face.) **He cannot teach you His Word because only part of you wants to learn. God doesn't want us to give Him only part of our lives. He doesn't like fractions! He wants us to surrender completely to Him.**

Our Bible truth today reminds us of this. **"I will love God with ALL my heart."**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Deuteronomy 6:5

Preparation

Write the words WHOLE=ALL on a poster board or on the whiteboard.

Cut an apple into pieces or peel an orange and divide it into pieces. (Candy will also work, as long as it can be divided into many pieces.)

Write Deuteronomy 6:5 on the back of the poster board and underline the word ALL every time it appears in this verse.

Prepare a red heart for every two children in your class. Write Deuteronomy 6:5 on each heart. Cut each heart into two pieces like a puzzle. Be sure that each heart is cut differently, so each half only has one match.

Explanation

Ask: **Do you like _____** (mention the fruit or candy that you have prepared)? Pick a child that raised his/her hand. Say: **Would you like a small piece of _____** (fruit or candy) **or would you prefer the whole thing.** (Most children will choose the whole thing.) Say: **Just like you wanted the whole thing, God also wants all of us instead of just a part.**

Read Deuteronomy 6:5 with the children. Explain that this verse tells us how we need to love God. Ask a child to circle what part of us should love God—heart, soul, and strength.

Memorization Activity

Give each child half of a prepared heart. Instruct the children to wait for the signal and then look for the person that has the other half of their heart. When they have found their partner, they



should study the verse together. When both children can quote Deuteronomy 6:5, they should raise their hands. The first pair who can quote Deuteronomy 6:5 will receive a small reward.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "The Greatest Commandment," Matthew 22:37-40

Preparation

Read and study Matthew 22:37-40.

Draw two large tablets that look similar to the Ten Commandments on a piece of poster board. Write Matthew 22:37 on the left side of the tablet. Write Matthew 22:39 on the right side of the tablet. Write the Ten Commandments on the back. **Save this visual for use in Lesson 4.*



Presentation

Say: **Jesus was in the bustling city of Jerusalem. Many people crowded around Him to listen to what He was saying about His Father in heaven. Some people believed He was the Son of God. But there were some people that hated Jesus. They were the religious leaders, ministers, and rulers of the temple.**

Every time religious leaders were among the crowd, they would ask difficult questions. They thought Jesus wouldn't be able to answer their questions. They hoped Jesus would say something that would make people doubt that He was really the Son of God.

One day, one of these leaders asked Jesus, "What is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?"

The religious leaders knew that Moses had been given these ten laws known as the Ten Commandments. Each one of these was important and needed to be obeyed. What would Jesus say?

(Show the side of the tablets where the Matthew verses are written.) ***"Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"***

Jesus was right! If we love God and our neighbors (the people around us), can we disobey the rest of the commandments? **NO!** If we love Jesus with **ALL** our heart, we will treat those around us the same way Jesus would treat them. (Show the Ten Commandments side of the poster board. Discuss with children how each of the Ten Commandments can be followed by loving God and our neighbors.)

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Creative Writing, "Showing My Love"

Preparation

Cut enough hearts out of paper for each child to have one. Fold each heart in half.

Presentation

Give every child a heart-shaped piece of paper and a pencil. Ask the children to write or draw in one half of the heart ways they can show love to Jesus. On the other half of the heart ask them to write or draw ways they can show love to their neighbors (those around us).

Materials
paper
scissors
pencils, markers, or
crayons

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Presentation

Form a circle. (If the group is large, form several small groups with a leader for each group.) Ask every child to share one way he wants to show his love to Jesus. Then ask everyone in the group to pray for each other that they will love God with all their hearts.

Materials
none

Jesus Loved Me First

Lesson Scripture: Matthew 27

Bible Truth: I love Jesus because He loved me first.

Bible Story Matthew 26-27

Bible Verse: “We love because He first loved us.” (1 John 4:19, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: “Love Is a Reaction”

Preparation

Write the word “REACTION” on a poster board.

Materials
poster board
markers

Presentation

Start this activity by smiling at the children. Do it in a very obvious way! Most of the children will respond with a smile. Begin asking the children why they are smiling at you until someone replies, “I am smiling because you smiled first.” Say: **I smiled at you and then you smiled back at me. That’s called a reaction.** (Show the word REACTION written on the poster board.)

When it is time for a child to go to school, his mother usually says, “I’ll miss you” or “I love you.” How does the child respond? Allow children to answer. **Right, he usually says, “I’ll miss you too,” or “I love you too.” The child is giving a reaction to his mother’s words.** (Show the word REACTION again.) **The word reaction means to respond to something. You smiled because I smiled at you first. The child told his mom he would miss her because she told him she’d miss him first.**

In the Bible, Jesus showed His love for us in a special way. Let’s see what our reaction should be to His love by learning today’s scripture.

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: 1 John 4:19

Preparation

Write 1 John 4:19 on a piece of poster board.

Explanation

Read the verse and say: **To whom is the word "He" referring?**

(Jesus) **Does anyone know how Jesus showed us His love?**

(He died on the cross for us.) **If you have never heard the story**

about Jesus dying on the cross for us, I am going to tell it to you today. What does the Bible verse say our reaction should be to Jesus' love? (We love Him in return.)

Materials
markers
poster board
one small ball for each group of
six children

Memorization Activity

Show 1 John 4:19. Read the verse together. Divide the students into small groups, no more than six in a group. Have children sit on the floor in a circle. The first child says the first word of the verse and rolls a ball to anyone in the circle. The child receiving the ball says the second word of the verse and so on. Allow the children to look at the verse the first few times they play. Then, remove the verse and see if they can do it on their own. Continue playing until each group can say the verse quickly.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Jesus Died for Me," Matthew 26-27

Preparation

Read and study Matthew 26-27.

Write Romans 5:8 on a piece of poster board.

Materials
Bible
poster board
markers
30 silver coins (or a picture of
30 coins)
bowl filled with water
towel
crown of thorns (made out of
a plant or paper)
hammer
nails
wooden cross

Presentation

Tell the following story showing the items from the materials list when directed.

Say: Judas, one of Jesus' disciples, was a very greedy man. For a long time, he had been robbing the money that Jesus and His disciples used for food and lodging. Now he needed more money. He knew there was a way to obtain it. He had to turn Jesus in to His enemies.

Judas went to the high priest and asked him, "How much would you pay me to put Jesus in your hands?" The high priest agreed to give him thirty silver coins after Jesus was arrested. (Show 30 silver coins) From that moment on, Judas started to look for a way to turn Jesus over to His enemies.

Finally, the time came when Judas knew that Jesus would be alone with His disciples in the Gethsemane garden. "Arrest the man whom I kiss," said Judas to the soldiers. As they were approaching Jesus and His disciples, Judas ran to Jesus and kissed Him. "Hello, Master!" Immediately the soldiers seized Jesus and took Him to be judged.

Jesus was taken before Pilate, the Roman governor. The religious leaders were presenting many accusations against Him, but Jesus didn't even say a word.

Pilate asked the angry crowd what to do with Jesus.

"Crucify Him!" they shouted.

Pilate didn't believe Jesus was guilty. He didn't want to kill an innocent person, but the multitude kept shouting, "Crucify Him!"

Finally, Pilate asked for a bowl filled with water, and washed his hands before the multitude. (Wash your hands in the bowl of water) "I'm innocent of the death of this good man. You are all guilty." (dry your hands with the towel)

The Roman soldiers lashed Jesus. They tore His clothes and put a purple robe on Him. After this, they made a crown of thorns and set it on His head (show the crown of thorns), and mocked Him by yelling, "Hail, king of the Jews."

At the end, in the early hours of the morning, they took Jesus to a hill called Golgotha. There they nailed His hands and feet to a cross. (Hammer the nails into the wooden cross.) Jesus died after many hours of suffering. But before He died, He prayed to God, "Father, forgive them because they don't know that they have crucified Your only Son."

We learned in our Bible verse today that Jesus loved us first. There is another verse that reminds us of how Jesus showed us His love. (Show Romans 5:8). How did Jesus show His love for us? Yes, He died on the cross. Why did He do that? Our Bible verse helps us understand. It says that we are sinners. Sin is when we disobey God, and sin must be punished. The Bible tells us in Romans 3:23 that everyone has sinned. God can't let sin into heaven, so if we have sin in our life we can't get into heaven. The big problem is that we can't take away our own sin.

When Jesus died on the cross, he took the punishment for the sin of the entire world, even your sin. Even though Jesus took your punishment, in order to have him take away your sin, you must ask Him to forgive you of your sins. When you do this, Jesus takes away your sin and gives you eternal life! Eternal life means that when your life on earth is finished, you will go to heaven and live with God forever! The most awesome news is that Jesus did not stay dead. Three days after dying, he came out of the tomb where they had buried him. He is alive! You can meet Him in heaven one day.

What will your reaction be to the love of Jesus? He loved you first. Now will you ask for His forgiveness from sin and love Him? (Invite children who have not accepted Jesus as their Savior from sin to do so at this time. You can share with them I John 1:9 or Romans 6:23 to help them understand God's forgiveness and eternal life.)

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Creative Writing, "Thank-You Notes"

Preparation

Give a pencil and a piece of paper to each child.

Presentation

Ask each child to write a thank you note to Jesus. The note can include words or drawings that express the gratitude of the child. For example:

Dear Jesus,
Thank you so much for loving me enough to die for me and for loving me even before I loved you.
Love,
(Name)

Materials

paper
pencils
crayons

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Presentation

Ask the children to place their thank you notes at the foot of the wooden cross used during the Bible lesson and say a prayer to Jesus. Keep the cross in the classroom until this unit is complete as a reminder of the love Jesus has for every child.

Materials

wooden cross used during the Bible lesson
thank you notes from the learning activity

Love and Obedience

Lesson Scripture: Matthew 19:16-22

Bible Truth: Because I love Jesus, I will obey His commands.

Bible Story: Matthew 19:16-22

Bible Verse: "Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him." (John 14:21, NIV 1984)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "Obedience," a puppet play or skit

Preparation

Write the word "OBEDIENCE" in big, red letters on a poster board. Display it where it can be easily seen in the room. Practice the skit with a volunteer using a puppet or ask the volunteer to dress up in a funny costume.

Materials
poster board
red marker
puppet or a person dressed
up in a funny costume

Presentation

Teacher: **Joseph, where are you? I know you are here today!**

Joseph: (Comes out from the back of the stage) **Hello! It's good to be here!**

(Joseph looks at the poster with the word "OBEDIENCE" on it and points at it while talking.) **What does it say there?**

Teacher: (Looks at the word.) **Oh! You mean the word O-B-E-D-I-E-N-C-E.**

Joseph: **Yes! That word! What does it mean?**

Teacher: **OBEDIENCE**

Joseph: **I heard you say it, but what does it mean?**

Teacher: **Well, it means that you obey or do what someone asks you to do.**

Joseph: **Oh! So obedience means to listen. Right?**

Teacher: **Obedience means much more than listening with your ears to what someone else is saying. In order to obey, you need to listen and do.**

Joseph: **What?**

Teacher: **It's like when your parents ask you to make your bed or to brush your teeth. If you don't do it, then you DISOBEY your parents. Do you understand?**

Joseph: **Of course I do! My mom always tells me that when I obey or do what she asks me to do...(Joseph starts to act timidly.)**

Teacher: **Yes...**

Joseph: **Well, she says that when I obey, I show that I love her.** (Joseph covers his face with his hands.)

Teacher: **Joseph, why do you think she feels that way?**

Joseph: **Well, when I do what she asks me to do, she knows that I'm listening to her and that I think what she's saying is very important.**

Teacher: **Joseph, I'm glad that you've said that, because Jesus said the same thing.**

Joseph: **Awesome! Now I talk like Jesus did! You will have to start listening to me!**

Teacher: **Don't take it that far, Joseph! I have a Bible verse and story to share with you. Ok?**

Joseph: (Joseph walks towards the back of the stage. He turns around and says,) **Ok! I'll be right here listening.**

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: John 14:21

Preparation

Write John 14:21 on a piece of poster board.

For the memorization activity, cover white sheets of paper with waxed paper. Trace John 14:21 on the waxed paper, pressing hard with a good sharpened pencil. Prepare a sheet for each child in your class. (Instead of using the wax paper, you can also write the verse on each piece of paper with a white crayon.)

Explanation

Read John 14:21 and explain that this Bible verse tells us two things we must do to love Jesus. Ask: **Who can read the verse carefully and find the two things we must do to**

Materials
poster board
markers
pencil
white paper
wax paper or white crayon
watercolor paints or colored
water
small paint brush

love Jesus. Choose a child to come and circle the two phrases, “has my commands” and “obeys them.” Ask: **Now, who can find in this verse the three things that show what happens to each one of us who loves God?** Choose a child to go to the front and underline the three phrases, “loved by my Father,” “I too will love them,” and “will show myself to them.”

Say: **What are some ways Jesus might show Himself to you when you obey Him?** If the children aren’t able to answer this question, give them some suggestions such as, “He helps me when I ask Him.”

Memorization Activity

Give each child watercolor paints or a cup of colored water, a paint brush, and a sheet of paper on which you wrote John 14:21, according to the instructions under the preparation section. Say:

Today’s verse has been written on the sheet of paper I just gave you, but you will not be able to see it unless you obey my directions.

Give specific instructions for the children to follow:

1. Dip your brush into the watercolor paint or colored water.
2. Brush across the paper several times until words show up.
3. Put your paper in a place where it can dry.

When all of the children have finished, read the verse together.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: “The Young Man Who Didn’t Love Enough,” Matthew 19:16-22

Preparation

Read and study Matthew 19:16-22.

On a poster board, write the commandments that the young man in today’s Bible story obeyed:

- You shall not murder.
- Love your husband or wife.
- You shall not steal.
- You shall not lie.
- Honor your father and mother.
- Love your neighbor as yourself.

Materials
Bible
poster board
markers
2 Bible costumes

A week prior to this session, ask two young people to prepare the following skit. Dress them in Bible costumes. Have one person act as Jesus and the other person as the young man. Using the commandments written on the poster board, the young man should mark off the ones he has obeyed as they are mentioned.

Presentation

Say: **Many of us claim to love Jesus. But, do we love Him enough to do everything He asks of us? Our Bible story today is about a young man who loved Jesus, but...did he love Him enough?**

Young man: **Jesus, I've tried all day to get close enough to you to ask you a question.**

Jesus: **Yes, what is your question?**

Young man: **What do I need to do to have eternal life, to live with God forever?**

Jesus: **If you want to have eternal life, you need to keep the commandments.**

Young man: **What commandments?**

Jesus: **Don't murder; love your wife; don't steal; don't lie; honor your father and mother; love your neighbor...**

Young man: **Jesus, I have obeyed each one of these commandments. Is there anything else I need to do?**

Jesus: **Yes. If you desire to obey me completely and perfectly, sell all you have and give the money to the poor. By doing this, you will have treasures in heaven. After you do this, come and follow me.**

Young man: **But Jesus...Jesus...(He starts to walk away and speak to the crowd) I really would like to follow Jesus. I would love to have eternal life. But...I have so many things. There's no way that I could sell everything I have. Where would I live? What would I eat? What clothes would I wear? Jesus and His followers don't have a place to call home. I just can't sell everything.**

Say: **The young man thought he loved Jesus, but He didn't love Jesus enough to obey. He loved his money and his possessions more than he loved Jesus. He couldn't trust Jesus to take care of him. He only wanted to obey Jesus when it was easy for him, not when it was hard. When we love Jesus, we will obey what He asks us to do, even if it is hard.**

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Game, "Obedience: Easy or Hard?"

Preparation

Make two signs, one that says "easy" and one that says "hard." Attach the signs to opposite sides of the room.

Materials
paper
markers

Presentation

Explain to the children that we need to obey Jesus even when it is hard. Read aloud the scenarios listed below, asking the children to decide if it would be easy or hard to obey in these situations. They should stand by the sign that indicates their choice.

1. Your mom asks you to turn off the television and go clean your room. Is it easy or hard to obey?
2. Your dad has given you 10 minutes to read before bed. You know you should read your Bible, but you really want to finish your story book. Is your choice easy or hard?
3. Your little brother just wrote all over your math homework with a black marker, and now you have to re-do it. Your parents remind you that God wants you to forgive him. Is this easy or hard to forgive?
4. You are spending the night at a friend's house. Your friend wants you to watch a movie that you know your parents have said you are not allowed to watch. You know you should say no. Is this choice easy or hard?
5. You received \$10 as a birthday present. You know that the Bible teaches you to give \$1 of the money back to God as a tithe. Is it easy or hard to give God some of your money?

Say: **Some of these things were easy for you and others were hard. Each of these situations illustrates a way that you can be obedient to Jesus. He has asked you to obey your parents, love those who treat you badly, spend time reading your Bible, and tithe your money. When you do each of these things, you are showing Jesus that you love Him.**

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

None

Presentation

Ask the children to write or draw one way that they are going to be obedient to Jesus this week. Say a prayer asking God to help the children be obedient to His Word.

Materials

paper
pencils
crayons

Loving my Friends

Lesson Scripture: 1 Samuel 18:1-4; 19:1-20; 20:1-42

Bible Truth: I will show love to my friends.

Bible Story: 1 Samuel 18:1-4; 19:1-20; 20:1-42

Bible Verse: "A friend loves at all times..."(Proverbs 17:17a, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: "A Friend Loves at All Times"

Preparation

Use construction paper or a poster board to cut 9" circles or use circled-shaped disposable plates. On each circle draw a face that illustrates feelings expressed by children, such as happiness, sadness, anger, fear, loneliness, shyness, etc.

Materials
poster board, construction paper, or paper plates
markers

Presentation

Show the children the emotion circles you prepared and say: **Each one of these faces shows some kind of feeling or emotion. Can you mention the emotion shown on each one of these faces?**

Allow different children to choose faces. Discuss the following questions:

Have you ever had this feeling?

Have any of your friends ever had this feeling?

What can you do to help your friend when he feels this way?

Would you rather be with your friend when she is happy or sad?

Do you continue the friendship with your friend when he is feeling bad or is having a bad day?

Even when your friends are having a bad day or feeling sad, they need you to care about them.

Conclude the discussion with a prayer and ask each child to pray silently for a friend who might be sad or having a bad day.

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Proverbs 17:17a

Preparation

Write Proverbs 17:17a on a poster board.

Materials
poster board
markers

Explanation

Say: **This verse tells us that we should love our friends at all times. I am going to read the Bible verse. Listen carefully to see if you hear any mistakes.**

Read the following phrases to the children. At the end of each one, ask them to correct the mistake.

A friend loves only during happy times.

A friend loves only when someone is being nice.

A friend loves when it is easy.

A friend loves when someone gives them a present .

Say: **God wants us to show love to our friends ALL OF THE TIME.**

Memorization Activity

Divide the children into two groups. One group will say the phrase, "A friend loves." The other group will say the phrase, "at all times." Ask the groups to face each other and say their phrases to each other while jumping on one foot, with their eyes closed, whispering, shouting, etc.

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "David's Best Friend," I Samuel 18:1-4, 19:1-20; 20:1-42

Preparation

Read and study 1 Samuel 18:1-4; 19:1-20, 20:1-42.

Ask two young people, at least a week prior to this lesson, to learn the dialogue below and to be ready to present it to the children during your class. Provide them with clothes similar to those used during biblical times.

Materials
Bible
2 Bible costumes

Presentation

David: **Hello. I'm David. Do you remember me? I'm the little shepherd who wrote several songs. I'm the little warrior who killed the giant Goliath! You remember. I'm here because there is someone special I want you to meet. This is ...**
(starts looking around for Jonathan) **Jonathan?**

(Jonathan enters hesitantly, looking timidly around the classroom.)

This is Jonathan, son of Saul. Saul was chosen by God to be the first king in Israel. Jonathan is the best friend I've ever had. (Jonathan smiles, and timidly greets the audience.)

He's a little shy. He would never tell you this, but he's a war hero.

Jonathan: **That's not true.**

David: (Speaking to the audience): **You see what I mean?** (Speaking to Jonathan): **You won the victory against the Philistines in Mishmash, all by yourself.**

Jonathan: **David, it was God who worked that victory. Besides, I was not alone. My armor-bearer was with me.**

David: **The rest of Israel's mighty army was hiding in caves when you decided to attack.**

Jonathan: **They were afraid because the enemy had a lot of soldiers. We only had a few.**

David: **But you were not afraid!**

Jonathan: **Numbers are meaningless when you have God on your side. But if we are going to talk about heroes—**(Turns to speak to the audience): **The first time I saw this young man was when he was fighting against a giant with a slingshot...and he won.**

David: (Jokingly) **Jonathan was so impressed that he gave me his shirt.**

Jonathan: (Speaking to the audience): **My father was very impressed with him, too. He took David to the palace and made him part of the family.**

David: **Until Saul disobeyed God, and I was chosen to become the next king.**

Jonathan: **My dad didn't like that very much.**

David: **He hated it. And because of that, he hated me.**

Jonathan: **I don't think he hated you. I think that he was just afraid of you, and he was very jealous.** (Speaking to the audience): **People started to sing: "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands." Every time my father heard this, it made him very angry.**

David: **The truth is that he became crazy and wanted to kill me.**

Jonathan: **David, on one occasion, I convinced him not to kill you. I reminded him of all the things you had done for him, and he changed his mind. He allowed you to marry his daughter, didn't he?**

David: **Yes, I married Michal, and she warned me the next time Saul decided to kill me. (Speaking to the audience): She took me out of the house and went to Jonathan for help.**

Jonathan: (Speaking to the audience): **I couldn't believe it. Usually, my father would tell me everything. I thought I would know if he planned to kill David.**

David: **He wouldn't have told you that. He knew how close we were as friends.**

Jonathan: (Speaking to the audience): **Well, we needed to know the truth, so David came up with a plan.**

David: (Speaking to the audience): **It was almost time for a big celebration at the palace, and I knew that Saul was expecting to see me there. I felt sure that instead of welcoming me to the celebration, he was going to try to kill me. My plan was to hide out in the woods instead of going to the party. Jonathan would signal to me if there was any danger by shooting arrows into the woods.**

Jonathan: (Continuing to speak to the audience) **If my father asked about David, I was going to tell him that I had given David permission to miss the celebration.**

David: (Speaking to the audience): **If I was wrong about Saul, he wouldn't be upset that I wasn't at the celebration. But if he was planning to kill me, my absence would make him very mad.**

Jonathan: **And that's what happened.**

David: (Still speaking to the audience): **Saul got mad and accused Jonathan of plotting some sort of evil with me. Then Saul threw a sword at Jonathan, his own son!**

Jonathan: (Speaking to the audience): **He ordered me to take David to the castle and kill him. But instead, I warned David by shooting arrows into the woods, and then I helped him escape.**

David: (Speaking to Jonathan): **You disobeyed your father in order to save my life.**

Jonathan: **He was wrong.**

David: **But still, it must have been difficult to choose between us.**

Jonathan: **Not really. I did what God wanted me to do.**

David: **What do you mean?**

Jonathan: **Well, I love you David because you are my best friend. However, the reason I helped you was because I knew that was what God wanted me to do.**

David: (Speaking to the audience): **Didn't I tell you he is a great man? He was the prince of Israel. He could have let Saul kill me, and he would have been the next king.**

Jonathan: **God chose you to become king. Besides, we had made a promise to each other.**

David: **That is true.** (Speaking to the audience): **We promised to be friends forever.**

Jonathan: **And we always were.**

David. **And we always will be.**
(David puts his arm around Jonathan, and they both leave.)

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APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Game, "Shooting the Arrow"

Preparation

Use a poster board to make a big target. Give a numeric value to each circle inside the target.



Presentation

Say: **Today we are going to play a game. We'll pretend that these balls are arrows, just like the ones Jonathan used to warn David.** Divide the children into two teams. Take turns asking each team the questions listed below from the Bible story. Each time a team gives the correct answer to a question, one team member can throw a ball and try to hit the target. The team receives the points marked on the circle that was hit. The winning team is the one with the highest score after all questions have been answered. Be sure each child has an opportunity to throw the ball at least once during the game.

- How were David and Jonathan similar?
- Mention one way Jonathan showed his friendship to David.
- Mention one way David showed his friendship to Jonathan.
- How did Jonathan's friendship show true kindness towards David?
- What things did Saul do that demonstrated his hatred towards David?
- What other member in Saul's family saved the life of David?

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

Draw the outline of a person on a sheet of paper. Prepare enough for each child in the class to have one.



Presentation

Say: **We have learned today that God wants us to show love to our friends. I want you to think of one of your friends who might be having a hard time in their life right now. Maybe they are dealing with bullies at school or the divorce of their parents. Write their name on the top of your paper. Inside the person outline, write or draw ways that you can show love to your friend and help them through this difficult time.** When the children have finished, pray with them for their friends. Also, ask God to help the children show love by doing the things they wrote on the paper.

Loving My Neighbor

Lesson Scripture: Luke 10:25-37

Bible Truth: I will love my neighbor.

Bible Story: Luke 10:25-37

Bible Verse: “He answered: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength, and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” (Luke 10:27, NIV)

FOCUS

Learning Activity: “Who Is my Neighbor?”

Preparation

Look for pictures of people in magazines and old newspapers: people of different ages, races, expressions, etc. Cut them out and paste them on a poster board. If you do not have access to magazines or newspapers, draw pictures of different people on a piece of paper or poster board.

Write the following rhyme on the poster board:

Helping others is the way
To show God’s love each day
Having Jesus in me helps me
To be good to all I see
Show love to others
Show love to others
Show love to others
No matter who they are.



Presentation

Say: **The Bible tells us to love our neighbors. Who is your neighbor?** After allowing each child to answer the question, show them the visual aid. By asking some questions, guide the children to understand that their neighbors are not only the people living next door. Since we love Jesus, we need to love and help everyone. Read the rhyme together several times. End with a prayer.

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION: Luke 10:27

Preparation

Write Luke 10:27 on a poster board or the whiteboard. Next, divide the verse up into several short phrases and write each phrase of the verse on a separate card. Be sure to include the reference on a card as well. Hide the cards throughout the classroom.

Materials
poster board
markers
small cards

Explanation

Read Luke 10:27 to the children. Say: **In this Bible verse, Jesus gives us two commands. Can anyone tell me the first command?** Allow children to answer. **Yes, we are to love God with our whole selves. We learned about this in lesson one.** Ask a child to underline this command on the poster board.

Say: **In the next part of this verse, Jesus gives us a second command. Can anyone tell me the second command?** Allow children to answer. **Yes! Jesus wants us to love our neighbors. We will learn in our Bible story today that our neighbors aren't just the people who live near us. Jesus told us that our neighbors are anyone we meet.** Ask a child to underline the second command on the poster board.

Memorization Activity

After discussing the meaning of the verse, explain to the children that the words of Luke 10:27 are scattered throughout the classroom. After you give them a signal, they should start looking for the words. Once they've found the cards with the words, they should bring them to the front of the classroom and work together to place the cards in the correct order. Say: **Jesus wants us to love everyone just as much as we love ourselves.**

INSTRUCT

Bible Story: "Who Was this Man's Neighbor?" Luke 10:25-37

Preparation

Read and study Luke 10:25-37.

The week before presenting this lesson, choose four children or teens to dramatize the Bible story. Practice and provide them with costumes.

Materials
Bible
costumes for the characters in the skit:
priest (Jewish minister)
Levite (a man who assisted in the temple)
Samaritan
bandages

Presentation

Read the following Bible story while the children dramatize it.

Once upon a time, there was a man who knew a lot about the law of Moses and asked Jesus a question. He didn't really ask the question because he wanted to know more about God. Instead he asked the question because he wanted to trick Jesus into speaking foolishly.

"What does a man need to do to obtain eternal life?" asked the man.

Jesus replied with another question: "What does the law of Moses say about this?"

The man knew the law very well, so he immediately answered: "Moses' law says that you should love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind. And that you should love your neighbor as yourself."

"Very good!" answered Jesus. "If you follow this commandment, you will live forever."

But the man had another question: "Jesus, who is my neighbor?"

Jesus went on to tell a story that would help this man understand who his neighbor was. Can you discover who your neighbor is as you hear this story?

"On a certain occasion, a Jewish man was traveling from Jerusalem to the city of Jericho. While traveling he was attacked by some robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, took his money, and hit him. Then they left him on the side of the road.

A Jewish minister was also traveling to Jericho. As he approached the place where the man was lying down, he crossed the street and continued on his way. Then, another man passed by. He assisted in the temple. When he saw the man lying down on the road, he crossed over him, looked at him, and moved on.

Last, a man from Samaria walked by. Now, the people from Samaria and the Jews hated each other and wanted nothing to do with one other. But when this Samaritan saw the man, he felt very sad for him. He cleaned the man's wounds and put bandages on them. Then, he put the man on his donkey and walked with him to an inn. The Samaritan stayed with the man throughout the night and took care of him. The next day, the Samaritan gave money to the innkeeper to take care of the injured man.

After Jesus told the story, he asked the man, "Which one of these three men do you think was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by robbers?"

Quickly the man answered, "The one who took care of the man."

Jesus told him, "Go and be like the Samaritan."

End the story by asking:

In what ways can we say that the Samaritan behaved as a neighbor to the wounded man? He stopped to help; took the man to an inn; paid for his care; bandaged his wounds.

Why was it hard for a Samaritan to help a Jewish man? The Samaritan and Jewish people did not like each other because they were different from one another. Samaritans and Jews were often mean to each other.

Is it hard for you to help some people? Answers will vary. Discuss with children that it is sometimes easier to love our friends instead of those who are mean to us. However, Jesus says that we should show love to everyone.

Whom does Jesus want us to help? Anyone who needs it.

Who are some of the people you need to help? Family, friends, and even your enemies.

What can you do to help them? Be kind, pray for them, do chores for them, etc.

What will happen if we help those who need our help? We will be obeying Jesus' commands.

Does showing love to people demonstrate our love for God? Yes. When we obey Jesus' commands, we show that we love Him.

APPLICATION

Learning Activity: Art, "Helping My Neighbor"

Preparation

If you are teaching younger children, write "Who is my neighbor?" at the top of each sheet of paper.

Presentation

Ask older children to title their paper "Who is my neighbor?" Then instruct the children to draw pictures of as many people as they can. On the back of the paper, ask them to draw a picture of themselves helping someone. When the children are finished, discuss their projects. Emphasize that anyone who needs help is our neighbor.

Materials
paper for each child
crayons, pencils, or
markers

MINISTRY TIME

Preparation

Cut out enough hearts for each child to have one. Write the following phrase on the heart, "I will show love to _____ by _____."

Materials
paper
scissors
crayons or pencils

Presentation

Give each child a heart. Ask them to fill in the first blank with the name of a person they can help this week. Then, in the second blank, ask them to list a specific way they can show love to that person. Encourage them to choose someone they might normally have trouble showing kindness toward. Pray together asking God to help the children show kindness to those people whose names are on the hearts. Encourage the children to display their hearts at home as a reminder of what God wants them to do.