

Love God, Love Your Neighbor

Theme

Jesus names the greatest commandments.

Object

Two large construction paper hearts, one saying "Love God" and the other "Love Your Neighbor"

Scripture

"The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." Mark 12:29-31 (NIV)

One day Jesus was in the temple teaching the people who were gathered there. A group of religious leaders began asking him tricky questions to try to embarrass him so that the people would not listen to his teaching. One of the men asked Jesus, "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment?" Which one do you think Jesus said was the most important?

(Hold up the heart that says, "Love God.") Jesus answered him, "The most important is this, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind,' this is the greatest commandment.

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How do you think we might show our love to God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. (Allow time for them to suggest some ways.) Those are all great suggestions. Here are some ways that I thought we might show our love to God. Worship, prayer, Bible study, singing praises, bringing our offerings, and giving thanks for all his blessings.

Do you know what Jesus said next? (Hold up the heart that says, "Love Your Neighbor.") He said, "The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

Well, how do you think we could love our neighbor? (Allow time for responses.) Good ideas! Here are some things you might not have thought of. We could treat them like we want to be treated, be kind to them, forgive them when they hurt our feelings, be helpful in times of trouble, be their friends.

These are the commandments that Jesus thought were the most important. It isn't easy to keep those commandments, is it? We need God's help each and every day. Let's pray and ask him to help us to love as he has commanded us.

Dear Father, help us to love you with all of our heart and to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Interactive Group Activities
by Carol Williams

Sermon Title: "Loving God, Loving Your Neighbor"

Scripture Reading: Mark 12:28-34

LOVE BALLOONS: This can be played as a relay with 2 teams who run to the designated area and stomp and pop a balloon and retrieve the little slip inside the balloon that has words about LOVE inside, and then run back to the next team player; OR, each child can be given a balloon to pop and do the same as the relay, but all at one time. Children can take turns in a circle, reading what their paper says about LOVE and then tape or glue onto a LOVE poster board, with hearts all around the outside border.

HEART EXCHANGE: Divide the children into teams. Each team will have hearts taped to their side of a classroom wall. When the children begin the relay, they will take turns running to grab a heart from their heart box across the room or playing area and then will run back to their heart wall and tape their heart on to the MATCHING HEART. So when the teacher makes the hearts for this game, there will be two matching hearts of each heart for EACH team. In other words, the teacher will make FOUR matching hearts (TWO FOR EACH TEAM... and one of each heart will be on the team's wall and the other matching hearts will be in the heart box that the children take turns running to get!

HAND HEARTS: Provide the children will construction paper, pencils or markers and scissors. The children will trace their hands and then cut them out as much as possible. Then place the hands on another piece of construction paper with the thumbs and pointer fingers laying together. This should form a HEART. Glue the hands on the paper and let children write words on the fingers of the hands from today's lesson about showing love and GOD's love for us.

HAND PAINTING: Provide children with finger paints and painting paper. Children can spread their colors of paints around the paper and then lay their colored hands on the paper with the thumbs and pointer fingers together to form a HEART. Children could use a cotton swab or craft stick to write at the top of their hand painting - LOVING GOD, LOVING YOUR NEIGHBOR, or other words of choice.

LOVE HEART PERSON: Provide children with a piece of construction paper to cut out a very large heart. Children can be given strips of paper that the children can tape on their heart as arms and legs. Let children decorate and use glitter for children to spread around their heart with paint brushes. Children can write LOVING GOD on their heart person and hang around the room.

LOVE CARD: Children can be given a small piece of card stock or construction paper to fold in half. Write LOVE on the outside with a decorated heart and stickers, if available. Inside the card, the children can write words from today's Bible verse and stand on their kitchen tables at home to talk about God's Love and how to love others.

MATCHING HEARTS: Each child can use construction paper to make two identical hearts, decorated with the same details and a word from today's lesson on each heart. The teacher can give each child the word or a phrase from today's Bible verse to put on their own heart. After each child has made their own hearts, the teacher will hang one heart from each child on a classroom wall or door. Then the teacher can collect the other matching heart from each child and mix them up and place them in a pile. Then each child can be called on to pick a heart and to match that heart to the one on the wall. After all the children have matched the hearts, then they can take turns moving the hearts and placing them in the correct order to be able to recite the Bible verse today, using the words from the hearts.

SING A SONG: INTO MY HEART, PRAISE HIM ALL YE LITTLE CHILDREN

SHARE A SNACK: Heart shaped cookies with frosting and sprinkles for the children to decorate.

"Praise Him All Ye Little Children"

Words and Music



Piano Accompaniment MP3

"Into My Heart"

Words and Music



Piano Accompaniment MP3

About Carol Williams

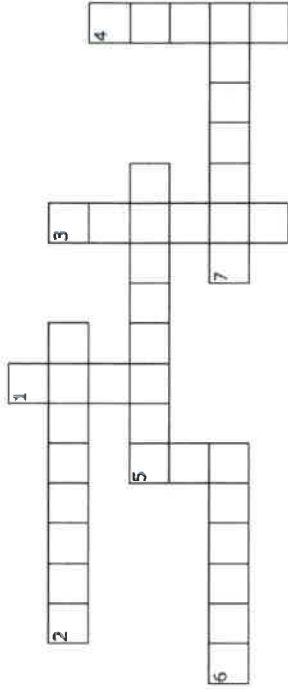
Carol and her husband have served churches in Illinois, Minnesota, Mississippi, Michigan, and Indiana. Carol loves to work with children so you will find her teaching in Junior Church and children's Sunday School. She also has clowning ministry in which she is known as Bubbles tc (the clown).

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Crossword Puzzle



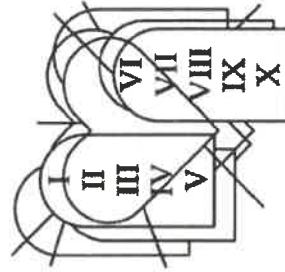
ACROSS

- A person who lives near or next to another
- The most important; better than all others of the same kind
- Coming next in order after the first one
- Someone who educates or trains others

DOWN

- To have a deep feeling of affection or attraction for someone
- A spoken or written reply to a question
- The center and source of a person's emotions or feelings
- The creator of heaven and earth; The One we worship

NEIGHBOR	TEACHER	SECOND	GOD
ANSWER	HEART	GREATEST	LOVE



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Children's Worship Bulletin

The Greatest Commandment

Mark 12:28-34

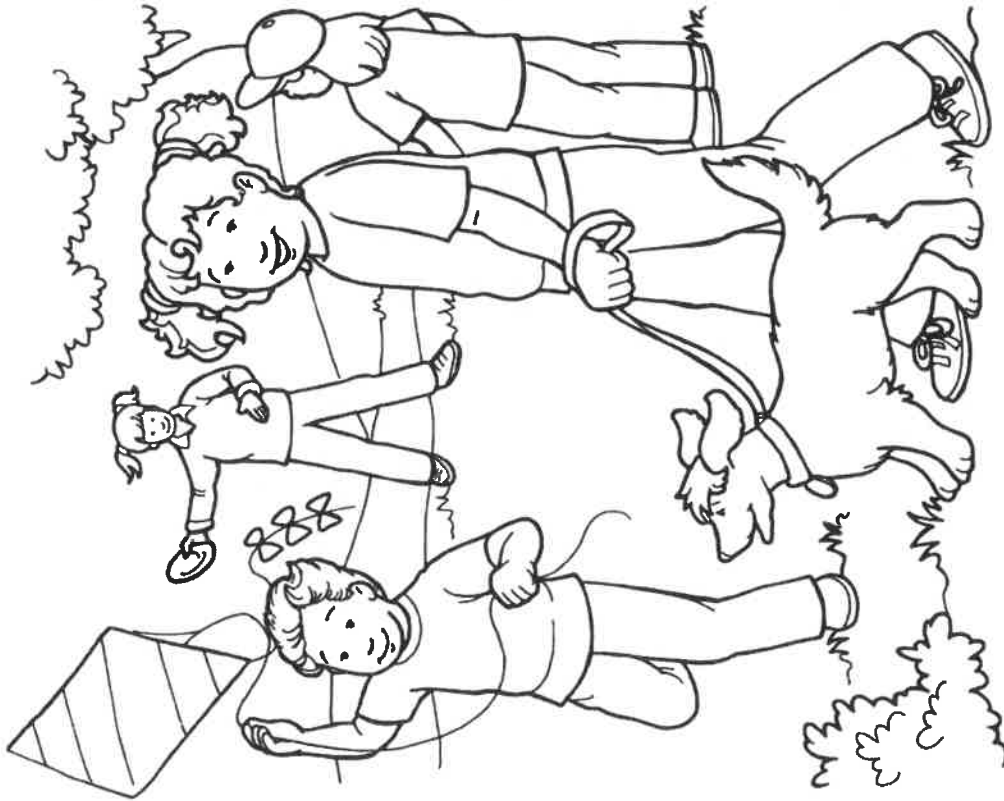
Word Search Puzzle

R S Q E M D D G J E Q G I K K
 R T B F W B U V R I K C D P I
 V R B S E C O N D E M C E Y N
 A E J D B K S C B L A A F C G
 M N X P R M O V M N T T G C D
 E G S Y V A U P I H E G E P O
 P T H W L X L P N C A Y X S M
 A H Q X E E L V D M C Z O E T
 J T C J R R H O J D H Q Y D Z
 A M W H Y Z K X V N E H N T Y
 R S K E N L C J L E R K I O Q
 L A W A Y O U R S E L F Z E K
 C R H R S N E I G H B O R E O
 L D M T H S I M P O R T A N T
 I P Q U E S T I O N S G Z C N

MIND	SOUL	YOURSELF	ANSWER	QUESTIONS
NEIGHBOR	IMPORTANT	STRENGTH	TEACHER	KINGDOM
GREATEST	LOVE	LAW	SECOND	HEART

Your Church Name Here
Anytown, USA

Coloring Page



Love Your Neighbor as Yourself

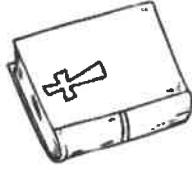
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Connect the Dots

Beginning with the letter a, connect the dots in alphabetical order to complete the picture.



Love the Lord your God with all your heart and
with all your soul and with all your mind
and with all your strength.
Mark 12:30 (NIV)





One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?"

Mark 12:28 (NIV)

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