

# Loving God, Loving Each Other

## Theme

Jesus tells us which is the greatest commandment.

## Object

A poster with "Classroom Rules"

## Scripture

"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" 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.' Matthew 22:36-39 (NIV)

Rules are very important, aren't they? Whether you are at school, at work, or play there are rules that you are expected to follow. In just about every classroom that I have ever been in, there is a poster on the wall like this one with a list of rules that the teacher expects the students to follow. (Read the rules to the children.)

I think that is a pretty good list of rules, don't you? Which one of these rules do you think is the most important? (Allow some feedback.) Which rule do you think your teacher would think is most important? Well, if you were to ask me, I would say that the most important rule is "be kind and respect one another."

The people in Jesus' day had to follow rules too. One day a lawyer asked Jesus, "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment?" How many commandments there are? There are ten, aren't there? Well, there were ten that Moses wrote on the tablets of stone and we call them the Ten Commandments, but the Jews actually had 613 laws. There were 248 dos and 365 don'ts. Wow! That is a lot of dos and don'ts isn't it? Can you imagine trying to remember all of them? Six hundred thirteen laws! Which one do you think Jesus said was the most important? Listen to what Jesus said to the lawyer.

Jesus answered him, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind,' this is the greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." In other words, Jesus was saying that if we could keep these two commandments, we would not have any trouble keeping the others.

It isn't easy to keep the 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. Amen.

**Group activities and crafts,  
next page....**

# Group Activities & Crafts

by Carol Williams

**Sermon Title:** "Loving God, Loving Each Other"

**Scripture Reading:** Matthew 22:34-46

**RULE GAME:** The teacher or leader of this game can have a large red, green and yellow card. Let children stand in a circle. When the green card is held up, the children can jump, twist, turn, hop, etc until the yellow or green card is held up. When children see the green card, they can GO again or if they see the yellow card, they move VERY slowly until another card is displayed!

**SIMON SAYS:** Let children play Simon says but the entire game has to be done in a circle and sitting on the floor. Another way to change the RULES and play the game would be to have children stand "facing" the wall and all "rules" by Simon are done facing that wall, such as wall push ups, ears to the wall, etc.

**PUMPKIN BIBLE VERSE:** Let children draw or cut out 10 pumpkins and glue onto another sheet of paper. Write today's Bible verse scripture on the first pumpkin and the rest of the verse in phrases on the other 9 pumpkins!

**"HEART" Bible verse:** Let children cut out a heart and decorate with sticker hearts and a heart border and LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD, etc. Tape or glue heart to the top of a craft stick!! Let children color the craft stick and hold up to wave like a mini flag!

**HEART NECKLACE:** Give children 3 colors of construction paper to draw and cut out 3 hearts, each one a little smaller than the other one. Hole punch the top of the 3 hearts that are glued on top of each other... and hang the heart like a necklace with yarn or string. Write LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART on the heart necklace!

**COMMANDMENT TREE:** Children can draw a large tree trunk and branches. Draw or cut out and glue Fall colored leaves to the tree with some of God's rules. Make sure that today's Bible verse is on at least one of the leaves to LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD, etc.

Continued next page...

**LOVE PLACEMAT:** Give each child a piece of 8 1/2 x 11" piece of construction paper. Fold the paper in half crosswise. Make 1 inch slits on the folded side about 3 - 4 inches into the folded paper. Open the paper up and weave Fall colored strips of paper in and out of those slits. The children can write today's Bible verse or words from our lesson today around the border of the placemat, as desired, and then cover their placemats with clear contact paper.

**PINE CONE FEEDER:** Tell children that our story today is about God's rules. Tell children that they can make something special IF they follow each rule and listen carefully. Rule 1 - Pick out a pine cone and sit at the table with a paper towel under your pine cone. Rule 2 - Spread peanut butter on your pine cone. Rule 3 - Roll your pine cone in bird seed and lay on your paper towel. Rule 4 - Hang a piece of yarn on the cone to hang from a tree. Rule 5 - Wash your hands. Rule 6 - READ OR RECITE your Bible verse today about God's rule in Matthew 22:36-39.

**RULE BOOKLET:** Give children construction paper to make a cover and several pages for a little LOVE booklet. Children can decorate and color their front page for the booklet and each page can have our Bible verse today or other important lessons from today's story. Write the ending/closing prayer on the last page of their little RULE booklet!

**HEART COOKIES:** Give each child a heart cookie to frost and add sprinkles to the cookie. Ask the children about the Bible verse again and "what are we to love the Lord our God with"..... (Answer... our HEARTS).

**SING A SONG:** Sing the chorus - I LOVE YOU LORD AND I LIFT MY VOICE, TO WORSHIP YOU, OH MY SOUL, REJOICE! TAKE JOY MY KING, IN WHAT YOU HEAR, MAY IT BE A SWEET, SWEET SONG IN YOUR EAR; or the second verse to "Jesus loves me" which is I LOVE JESUS, DOES HE KNOW, HAVE I EVER TOLD HIM SO, JESUS LIKES TO HEAR ME SAY THAT I LOVE HIM EVERY DAY!