

JESUS TEACHES US TO LOVE OTHERS

All Activity Sheets

KEY WORDS

JESUS' TEACHINGS SADDUCEES PHARISEES GREATEST COMMANDMENT

BIBLE REFERENCE

Matthew 22:34-40

LESSON OBJECTIVE

To help the children learn that Jesus teaches us to love God's ways.

MEMORY VERSE

"Jesus said, 'Blessed...are those who hear the Word of God and obey it'" (Luke 11:28, NIV*).

PREPARE YOURSELF TO TEACH

The Sadducees and the Pharisees were the two most important religious groups in Judaism. They were the leaders of the Jewish community. The Sadducees did not accept the authority of spoken law and did not consider it obligatory; they interpreted the law as specified in the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament). The Pharisees held that the Pentateuch or the Torah had the same authority as that contained in the oral tradition.

The teachings of Jesus represented a threat to both religious groups, because of the interpretation He gave to Scripture and the large number of followers He had.

In Matthew 22:23-33, the Sadducees questioned Jesus about the resurrection of the dead. His answer perplexed these teachers of the law. When the Pharisees heard about what had happened, they also sought the opportunity to question Jesus. They asked: "Teacher, what is the greatest commandment in the law?" (v. 36) Jesus answered them using the Greek verb "agapo," which refers to a kind of deep and sincere love.

This kind of love, born in the heart of God and offered regardless of the price, was something the Pharisees did not know. They had concentrated so much on keeping and respecting the law that they overlooked the greatest commandment: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself" (Luke 10:27).

ADAPTATION

Many children have heard about love and have experienced it in their family. However, others have suffered emotional neglect and do not have an adequate perception of love. It is difficult for them to think and accept that God loves them. They do not clearly understand the concept of love or how to demonstrate love to others.

As a Sunday school teacher, you are responsible for demonstrating God's love to your children, especially those who have suffered neglect or have emotional problems. Through your words and actions, help them understand God's love for them. When you show affection through a friendly hug, say, "I love you and God loves you too." This is introducing them to the knowledge of God's love for them.

INTRODUCE THE LESSON

Love calls

For this game you will need a phone. Place the phone on a table and allow each child to make an imaginary call to a person the child loves and say, "____, (the name of the one loved) I love you and Jesus loves you too."

When everyone has participated, remind the children that Jesus teaches us to love each other. Prepare them to listen to the Bible story.

TEACH THE LESSON

Love posters

Before class, cut out a paper heart for each child. Write the phrase, "Jesus loves you." On the heart. Gather crayons, glue or tape, and wooden sticks. Bring these materials to class.

In class, distribute the hearts to the class. Let the children color the hearts. Let the children attach the hearts with tape or glue to the sticks to make a love sign. Ask the children: "Who loves all of us?" Tell them to raise and wave their signs in response.

The most important rule

The Pharisees were a group of people who were teachers in the time that Jesus lived. They taught the laws and the Jewish religion to the people. They also made sure that everyone knew and obeyed God's laws. However, many of them did not really love God, nor did they love Jesus.

One day the Pharisees met together and went to look for Jesus. The Pharisees asked Jesus: "What is the most important rule that we must obey?" They referred to the Ten Commandments that God gave to His people to teach them how they should live.

These men thought that Jesus could not answer this question, but Jesus knew what they were thinking. He said to them, "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.

But that was not the only thing Jesus answered. He also reminded them: "And the second is like it.: 'Love your neighbor as yourself'" All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

When you love God and love others, you are obeying and keeping the commandments of the Lord.

CONNECT THE LESSON

Heart mobiles

Before class, gather glue, string/yarn, colored pencils or crayons, clothes hangers or wooden sticks and a holepunch. It will work best if Student Activity Sheet #54-A and #54-B are aligned and printed back to back. You could also make a sample finished mobile prior to the session. It may be necessary to cut out some of the hearts from the activity sheets prior to the session to help some children.

Hand out Student Activity Sheet #54-A and #54-B. Ask those who are able to cut out the four hearts. Next, assist the children to punch a hole in the upper part of each heart.

Then, guide the children to make a simple mobile. Ask the children to think of four people they love. You may need to help the children by writing these names on the hearts. Help the child insert a piece of wool/yarn in each heart and secure it with a knot. Then help the children attach the hearts to the hanger or stick to form a mobile.

Encourage the children to take home the mobile and share the lesson with their families and friends.

PRACTICE THE MEMORY VERSE

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Tell the children to sit in chairs in a circle. Recite the words of Luke 11:28. Then select one child to begin the activity. This child says the first word of the verse. The second child says the first two words of the verse. The third child says the first three words of the verse. Continue until the children say the whole verse and reference. Repeat the activity moving in the opposite direction, if time permits. If any child forgets a word, tell the child the word and keep the activity going.

WRAP-UP

Pray

Let the children state their prayer requests. Give any child who wants to pray an opportunity to do so. Close the prayer by thanking God for his love for each one.

Encourage

Ask: "How do you feel when people tell you that they love you?" Everyone wants to hear that they are loved. God wants to hear you tell him that you love him too. Find time during the week to talk to God and let him know you love him.

Invite

Give the children their activities to take home. Invite the children to show their activities to family members and to tell them: "I love you, and God loves you."