



# Loving Others

Goal: To name ways to love others.

## RECOGNIZING GOD'S GRACE . . .

### . . . In Exodus 20:12-17

Moses went up on Mount Sinai and received the law of God, what we call the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments are a guide for living as God's people in the ways God desires. The first four commandments concern the people's relationship with God. The last six concern relationships with other people. Jesus summarizes the last six commandments with the words, "Love your neighbor as yourself."

We all have heard, over and over, that we should love our neighbor as ourselves. We aren't always clear on what that means in specific circumstances. Today's verses are a call to holy living that spells out how we are called to love our neighbor.

For a fuller picture of loving the neighbor, read Deuteronomy 24:17-22 and Leviticus 19:1-4, 9-18, 33-37. We often think of justice as retaliation or punishing someone for violating the laws and standards of society. These verses remind us that God has a different idea of justice. God thinks of justice as caring for the needs of those who, for whatever reason, are not able to care for themselves. The intent of Scripture is clear. Loving our neighbor is closely related to caring for our neighbor's needs.

### . . . In Your Children's Experiences

Like adults, children experience many obstacles to loving their neighbors. Peer pressure to wear certain kinds of clothing and hairstyles and to belong to specific groups or activities may prevent them from befriending others. Older children are at a developmental stage in which peer acceptance, love, and friendship are critical needs. Help them understand that others have the same dreams and desires for belonging that they have. Engage your learners in conversations about their daily lives, and be alert to the challenges they face as they try to love their neighbors as themselves.

### . . . In Your Relationships with the Children

Take time to explore love by connecting the commandments with Jesus' greatest commandment (Matthew 22:36-40). The word *love* may have many different meanings for the participants in your group. Children need to develop a broad definition of love that includes all feelings and acts of kindness, compassion (feeling with), and generosity. Encourage learners to think about how love is lived out between individuals, within families, in communities, and in the world. We also need to love ourselves, or else we will not be able to extend that love to others. Be sure to underline that doing justice is an important way of expressing love. Love is not only a wonderful emotion that we share in relationships; it is also something we must live out in concrete ways. Many children have little occasion to memorize Scripture, and they may enjoy being able to say these commandments by heart.

*O God, by your grace, you call us to your side. By my gratitude,  
let me live in your ways and offer glory to your holy name. Amen.*



## Supplies

**Music & Melodies**  
(MM) 2022–2023

**Stories, Colors & More**  
(SCM) i–iv, 5, 5a, 20, 24

basic supplies  
(see p. vii)

e-book or story audio  
(see p. vii)

sheet or blanket

cardboard “Ten  
Commandments” tablet  
used September 25

candle

strips of cloth or dish  
towels

## Responding

### Celebrating

card-stock copies of  
**Grace Notes (GN) 1–3;**  
**SCM 5b, 5c, 5d**

### Praying

various colors of air-dry  
clay

### Extra

card-stock copies of  
**GN 4**, dice made on  
September 25

Keep the tablets for use in  
future sessions.

## GATHERING IN GOD’S GRACE

Post **SCM i–ii**, “Your Visual Schedule,” to provide clear expectations and a visual cue for the group.

See **SCM iii–iv** for the key to icons (for example, **LG** **T**) and ways to adapt for children who have special needs or disabilities.

This session, “Loving Others,” is inherently connected to the previous session, “Loving God.” Together they form sessions about the Ten Commandments. The two sessions have been formed so that the children may focus more intently on the overlying concepts of commandments 1–4 and 5–10. The “Responding in Gratitude” activities are repeated in the two sessions focusing on either loving God or loving others.

“Praying God’s Grace” requires more prep.

### Welcoming and Preparing

**LG** **A** **B** **MS**

Play “Make a Joyful Noise”—**MM 16**—as children arrive. Welcome each child with “Grace and peace be with you, (*Name*).” Prompt the children to respond, “And also with you.”

Invite them to help create a setting for today’s story. Place two chairs back-to-back on a table. Drape a sheet or blanket over the chairs and table to resemble a mountain peak. Have children cut out trees, bushes, and clouds from construction paper to add to the mountain.

Have a volunteer glue **SCM 5a** to a piece of cardboard and cut the top corners to look like a tablet.

Ask one of the children to help you spread a sheet or blanket on the floor in front of the mountain, allowing space for children to sit at the base of the mountain. Create a worship center in the space with the tablet from last session, the tablet created today, a candle, and a Bible.

Ask some children to help prepare today’s “Responding in Gratitude” activities. Suggest that one or two prepare to lead today’s singing. Ask for one or two volunteers to practice today’s Scripture reading.

Help the children secure strips of cloth or dish towels over their heads and shoulders. Ask them to sit at the base of the mountain.

### Singing

**MS** **T**

Sing and dance to “Make a Joyful Noise”—**MM 16; SCM 20**.

**T** *Transitioning from an activity with movement to a quiet or listening one can be difficult for some children. Alerting them of the change in advance, such as saying, “After this we will be praying,” allows children time to anticipate the change and act accordingly.*



### Praying

Turn on the candle. Ask the children to name some of the people they care about.

Pray the following prayer.

Dear God, thank you for loving us.  
Thank you for . . . *(name people they love and care about)*  
May our actions show our love and care for others. Amen.

### Preparing to Hear the Story

L M C

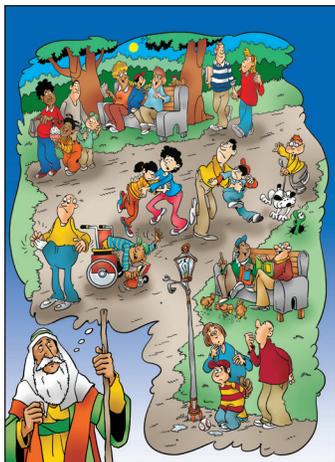
Tell the children that they are pretending to be the Hebrews traveling from Egypt to the land God has promised them. Remind them that Moses led them across the Red Sea, and they are now camped at the base of Mount Sinai.

Explain that today's Bible story tells about God's gift of laws to the Hebrew people and how the people took the laws with them on their journey to the land God had promised. Ask the children what we call these laws (*Ten Commandments*).

Invite volunteers to tell about rules they have at home and at school. Wonder together why those rules are in place.

Review the hand motions for the first four commandments using the tablet from the last session. Remind the children that Moses has not yet received the tablets, but we will use them to help us today.

1. Hold up **one** index finger and say, "There is only one God."
2. Hold up both index fingers (**two** fingers). Bow one to the other, and say, "Worship only God."
3. Hold up **three** fingers to form a "W," which stands for *words*. Place the "W" over your lips, and say, "When you say my name, speak with love and respect."
4. Hold your hand up, with fingers together and thumb folded in, with palm facing out (**four** fingers). Say, "Stop." Lay hand down, and say, "Rest and remember the Sabbath."



Today's story can be found in *Growing in God's Love: A Story Bible*, edited by Elizabeth F. Caldwell and Carol A. Wehrheim (Louisville, KY: Flyaway Books, 2018), [pcusastore.com](http://pcusastore.com).

### Hearing the Story

L VI

Invite a child to find Exodus 20 in the Bible. Have one or two volunteers read Exodus 20:12-17. Conclude by saying, "Word of wisdom, Word of grace," and prompt children to say, "Thanks be to God." Place the open Bible on the worship table.

Collect the second tablet from the worship center. Point to each commandment as you teach the hand motions for the remaining commandments.

5. Hold up your hand (**five** fingers) and salute. Say, "Treat your father and mother with respect."



6. Hold one palm up, with thumb facing you (five fingers). On the other hand, point other index finger (plus one finger equals **six**) in toward the open palm, and say, “Don’t kill anyone.”
7. On one hand, hold up five fingers; on the other hand, hold up two fingers representing people (**seven** fingers). Move the hand with two fingers away from the five fingers, and cross the two fingers, saying, “Be true to your husband or wife and keep your promise.”
8. Hold up four fingers on each hand (**eight** fingers). Grab one hand over the other and say, “Don’t steal.”
9. On one hand, hold four fingers with palm down (*as if on a Bible*). Hold the other hand up with palm facing out (plus five fingers equals **nine**). Say, “Always tell the truth.”
10. Hold both hands out in front of you and make a grabbing motion with all **ten** fingers. Say, “Don’t want what others have. Be happy with what you have.”

Tell the children to listen for these commandments. Invite them to do the hand motions when they hear each as you read **SCM 5**.

### Reflecting on God’s Grace



Invite the children to recall the remaining six commandments using the hand motions. Ask the children what the six commandments have in common. Suggest that they are all about loving others. Ask the children, “What does this rule have to do with loving others?” as you do each hand motion.

### Singing

Play, listen to, clap, and sing “We Are Growing”—**MM 28; SCM 24**. Turn off the candle.

## RESPONDING IN GRATITUDE

Select activities appropriate for your group and for the time available.

### Claiming God’s Grace



Remind the children that God gave the Hebrews, and us, the Ten Commandments as a gift. They are rules to follow to keep us focused on God and able to live together in community. Ask the children what commandments 5–10 focus on (*others*). Wonder together how each of the six commandments helps us to show our love for others.

Form groups or work together to create a scenario for each of the six commandments. The scenario can depict either following or breaking the commandment. Have the children act out their scenes. If the scenario breaks the commandment, ask the children what could be done differently to follow the commandment.



**LG** Activities that encourage teamwork and self-reliance model qualities of good leadership.

### Celebrating God's Grace

**LD VI MS F B**

Before the session, make a set of letters for each team by cutting apart card-stock copies of **GN 1-3**. Fold **SCM 5b-d** in half.

Tell the children that they will play a game to help remember the six, loving-others commandments. Help the children form two teams. Have one volunteer from each team place all their letter tiles face up at one end of the room. (For a challenge, place the letters face down.) Ask the teams to stand at the other end of the room near you. Tell the children that you will show them a commandment with a word missing. They need to form the missing word using the scrambled letter tiles from the other end of the room.

Begin by holding up one of the six commandments from **SCM 5b-5d**. The teams determine the missing word, then send one child at a time to the other end of the room to collect the letters to form the missing word. Play again until the missing words from all six commandments have been spelled out.



### Praying God's Grace

**TD**

Offer an activity to encourage meditation on the commandments. Remember that Moses has heard the commandments at this point, but has yet to receive the stone tablets.

Play meditative music. Help the children to remember the loving-God commandments. Provide various colors of air-dry clay. Invite each child to make a clay heart and to select a word from one of the commandments to inscribe on the heart, or choose the word *others*. Children may use a pencil or other tool to make impressions in the clay to spell out the word. Or they may form letters out of thinly rolled, colorful pieces of clay, and create inlaid words on the heart.

Tell the children that, as they work quietly, they are focusing on a commandment and offering it as a prayer to God.

If you have time, invite the children to make more than one heart. Encourage the children to display their hearts in their homes as reminders to love God.



### Extra Activity



Provide card-stock copies of **GN 4**, scissors, and tape. Have the children cut along the solid lines, fold along the dotted lines, and tape the tabs to the inside of the die. Help as necessary.

This activity may be done individually or as a group. Invite the children to take turns rolling the die. Have them read the side that lands face up and do the corresponding hand motion. If you still have the die from the previous session, consider using both dice. If the die from the previous session lands on the heart or hand, the child calls out “Love God” and rolls again. Continue playing until all have had at least two turns.

### LOVING AND SERVING GOD



Gather the children in a circle. Hold the end piece of a ball of yarn and throw the ball of yarn to one child. Ask the child to name one way she or he can show love for others. After naming a way, ask the child to hold the strand of yarn and throw the ball of yarn to another child. When every child has had a turn, a web of yarn will connect the children to one another. Notice how everyone is connected together in God’s family. Close with a prayer:

Gracious God, thank you for the Ten Commandments. Today we thank you for the six commandments that guide us in ways to show our love for others. Help us to remember to respect our parents, not to harm others, to keep our promises, not to steal, to always tell the truth, and to be happy with what we have. Amen.

Bless each child, saying, “(Name), go in grace to love and serve the Lord!”



Ask parents and caregivers for their email addresses so you can send the Grace Sightings link, or invite them to visit [gracesightings.org](http://gracesightings.org). Remind the parents and caregivers about the e-book and story audio (see p. vii).

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Treat your  
father and  
mother with  
respect.

Don't kill  
anyone.

keep your  
promise.

Don't  
steal.

Always tell  
the truth.

Don't  
want what  
others  
have.

