



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

bit.ly/GGGMusicMelodies

Stories, Colors & More (SCM) i–iv, 5, 5a, 15, 22

basic supplies
(see p. vii)

internet-connected
device

blanket or mats

snack

tablet from previous
session

tablet made from
SCM 5a

mountains from
previous session

Guided Play

choice 2: **SCM 4a, 4b, 4c**

Exploring

choice 2: Ten
Commandments books
begun in previous
session (extra copies
of **GN 3** and **GN 4**
from previous session
if needed); copies of
Grace Notes (GN) 1,
GN 2

choice 3: mobile begun
in previous session;
copies of **GN 3, GN 4**

choice 4: copies of
GN 5



GATHERING IN GOD'S GRACE

Before the Children Arrive

Designate a story corner, and lay out a blanket or individual mats for the children so that their backs will be to the door.

Use **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. All “Exploring God’s Grace” activities are repeated in the two sessions with each session’s particular focus.

Before the session, line up ten craft sticks and tape them together on one side. Number the sticks 1–10 (see sidebar photo). Make a set for each child. Glue **SCM 5a** to a piece of cardboard; cut the top corners to look like a tablet. Save both tablets for use in future sessions.

“Exploring God’s Grace” choice 2 and choice 3 require more prep.

Welcoming and Guided Play

B M FM

Greet children as they arrive, and say, “Grace and peace be with you.” Prompt them to respond, “And also with you.” Be sensitive to any children who might be coming for the first time.

Introduce yourself to parents/caregivers. Explain to them that the children will hear a story about God giving the Ten Commandments, and how the second six commandments focus on loving others.

Invite the children to look at the guided play activities and pick one to start:

- 1. Counting**—Provide blank sheets of paper. Suggest that the children make groups of tens on their papers. They can add ten stickers, draw ten circles, glue ten scraps of paper, make ten crayon marks, punch ten holes, cut ten snips in the side of the page, and so on.
- 2. Making a Puzzle**—Provide prepared craft-stick sets and markers. Place **SCM 4a, 4b,** and **4c** on the table. Have the children draw a mountain on the side of the sticks without the tape. Suggest that they add Moses, a cloud, and the sun. Have the children remove the tape, mix up the sticks, and put their puzzle together again. Have the children put their craft sticks in a bag with their name on it.



3. Making Stone Tablets—Have the children make two tablets with play dough. Show the children how to make a tablet by making a thick rope about the size and length of their thumbs. Once the rope is made, have them press their thumbs down on it, flattening it into tablet shape. Each child should make two tablets and place them on a piece of paper. Have them write their names on the paper. Set aside for “Hearing the Story.”

T Consider how much time your planned activities will take and adjust transition times according to remaining time available.

Transitioning to Story Time

When you sense the children are ready to move into group time, invite the children to follow you as you wind your way around the room, singing “To the Promised Land”—**SCM 15**. Repeat words and phrases as seems appropriate.

God’s Good Rules

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Invite the children to repeat each line after you and follow your motions. Sing to the tune of “Row, Row, Row Your Boat”:

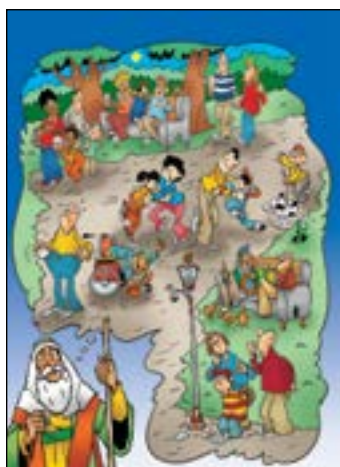
(Sing)

Up, up, up the hill, *(walk fingers up one arm)* /
Moses heard God’s call. *(put hands to mouth, as if calling)* /
Down, down, down he came *(walk fingers down one arm)* /
with God’s rules for all. *(hold hands, palms up)* /

(Say) How many rules did God give? *(count fingers)*
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10! Ten!

(Sing)

Ten, ten, ten good rules *(hold up all ten fingers)* /
to follow in God’s way. *(walk fingers away from you)* /
We will love one God and friends, *(point up and then to friends)* /
love them every day. *(hug yourself)* /



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), www.pcusastore.com.

Hearing the Story

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Display the prepared tablets with the Ten Commandments. Tell the children that the story will talk about the rest of the Ten Commandments, the other six rules God gave Moses.

Open the Bible to Exodus 20 so that the children know that the story comes from the Bible.

Read **SCM 5**. Conclude the story by prompting the children to say, “Amen.”



Gather around the mountains that the children made in the previous session. Invite the children to collect the tablets they made in “Guided Play” choice 3. Tell the children that, when they hear about six rules, they can add the tablets to their mountain. Read the story again, and then ask questions for understanding:

- ▼ Whom did God give the commandments to?
- ▼ What was one of the commandments you heard today?
- ▼ What was another one?
- ▼ What do all of these rules or commandments have in common? (*Loving others.*)

EXPLORING GOD’S GRACE


1. Finger Play



Use a fun finger play to help the children learn the last six commandments. Hold the tablet and point to each commandment as you teach the children a hand motion to remember it.

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.”

Review the first four commandments from the previous session and put all ten commandments together.

 *To help children build fine motor skills, encourage children to try activities that require listening and hand coordination. Cheer their efforts.*



2. Making a Book

L FM

*Before the session, gather the books made in the previous session as well as the back cover pages. Make card-stock copies of **GN 3** and copies of **GN 4** from the previous session for children who were not present.*

Tell the children that they will finish a Ten Commandments book to help them remember the rules God gave us to live by. Explain that they will work on the six rules they learned today and add them to the books they began last session. If anyone was not at the last session, give them the prepared materials for the first four commandments to add to today's pages. Use the following instructions for completing the books:

- ▼ Give each child a copy of **GN 1** and **GN 2**, and read the words for each tablet aloud.
- ▼ Invite the children to trace the numbers and decorate the tablets.
- ▼ Help the children cut apart the six tablets and punch holes where indicated.
- ▼ Give the children the back cover.
- ▼ Give the children their books from the last session, and have them add the last six commandments by threading the yarn through the holes, ending with the back cover.
- ▼ Tie the ends of the yarn in a bow.

Encourage the children to take their books home and share the commandments with their families. Remind them that these are God's words to us to help us love God and love others.



3. Make a Mobile

F LG FM A

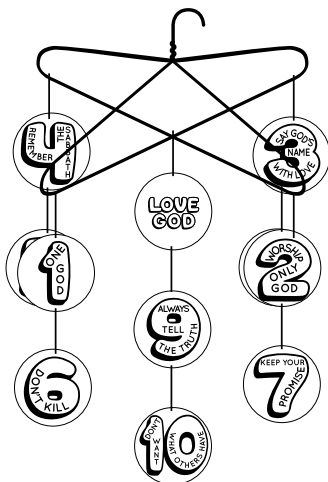
Before the session, collect the mobile started in the previous session.

Remind the children that they are working together to create a Ten Commandments mobile. Review the first four commandments and ask what they focus on (*loving God*).

Cut apart two copies of **GN 3** and **GN 4**. Ask what these commandments focus on (*loving others*). Encourage the children to work together to decorate the numbers using available craft supplies. Encourage the children to keep the words readable.

When they have finished decorating the circles, glue the like numbers back-to-back. Glue one "Love God" to "Love Others" back-to-back. (Discard the other set.) Punch a hole in the top and bottom of each shape. Have the children thread a 12" length of yarn through the top hole of each shape and tie it off. Help them tie the "Love God" and "Love Others" to the intersection of the hangers. Tie four of the remaining circles to the first commandments. The other two will hang from the center "Love God" "Love Others" circle.

Hang the mobile where your group can enjoy it.





Use “wonder” questions that do not force a child to remember facts. Wondering questions help a child think aloud. Answers are neither right nor wrong. They help teach children to speak from their hearts.

Save the tablets for use in future sessions.



Ask parents and caregivers for their email addresses so that you can provide them with the link to www.pcusastore.com/GGGdownloads, where they can download coloring pages, *Grace Sightings*, audio stories, and songs (see p. vii).

4. Coloring Page

C FM

Hand out copies of **GN 5** and crayons. Invite the children to color the picture. Engage the children in conversation as they color, using the following wondering questions:

- ▼ I wonder, “Why do you think Moses is thinking about all these people?”
- ▼ I wonder, “How are the people showing that they love others?”
- ▼ I wonder, “What things do we do to show that we love others?”

T *Transitions can be difficult. This may be a good time for some quick physical activities, such as squeezing your hands, stretching, and so forth.*

LOVING AND SERVING GOD

FA LD

Invite the children to help you clean up the space.

Call the children to snack time, singing “We Are Growing”—**SCM 22**.

Repeat words and phrases as seems appropriate.

Invite everyone to sit around a table or on the floor. Pray:

Yah-weh, Yah-weh. Thank you for the food we share.

Yah-weh, Yah-weh. Thank you for your love and care. Amen.

Explain that the Hebrew people loved God and loved and supported one another. Ask the children to identify ways we show support and encouragement to one another (*hugging, giving high fives, helping one another*). As the children feel comfortable, invite them to share hugs, high fives, or handshakes with one another.

Bless them as they leave: “(Name), remember to treat others as you would like to be treated. The grace of God is with you.”

5

- Treat your father and mother with respect.
-

6

- Don't kill anyone.
-

7

- Be true to your husband or wife and keep your promise.
-

8

- Don't steal.
-

9

- Always tell the truth.
-

10

- Don't want what others have. Be happy with what you have.
-

**LOVE
GOD**

**TREAT
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FATHER AND
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WITH
RESPECT**

**DON'T
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**KEEP YOUR
PROMISE**

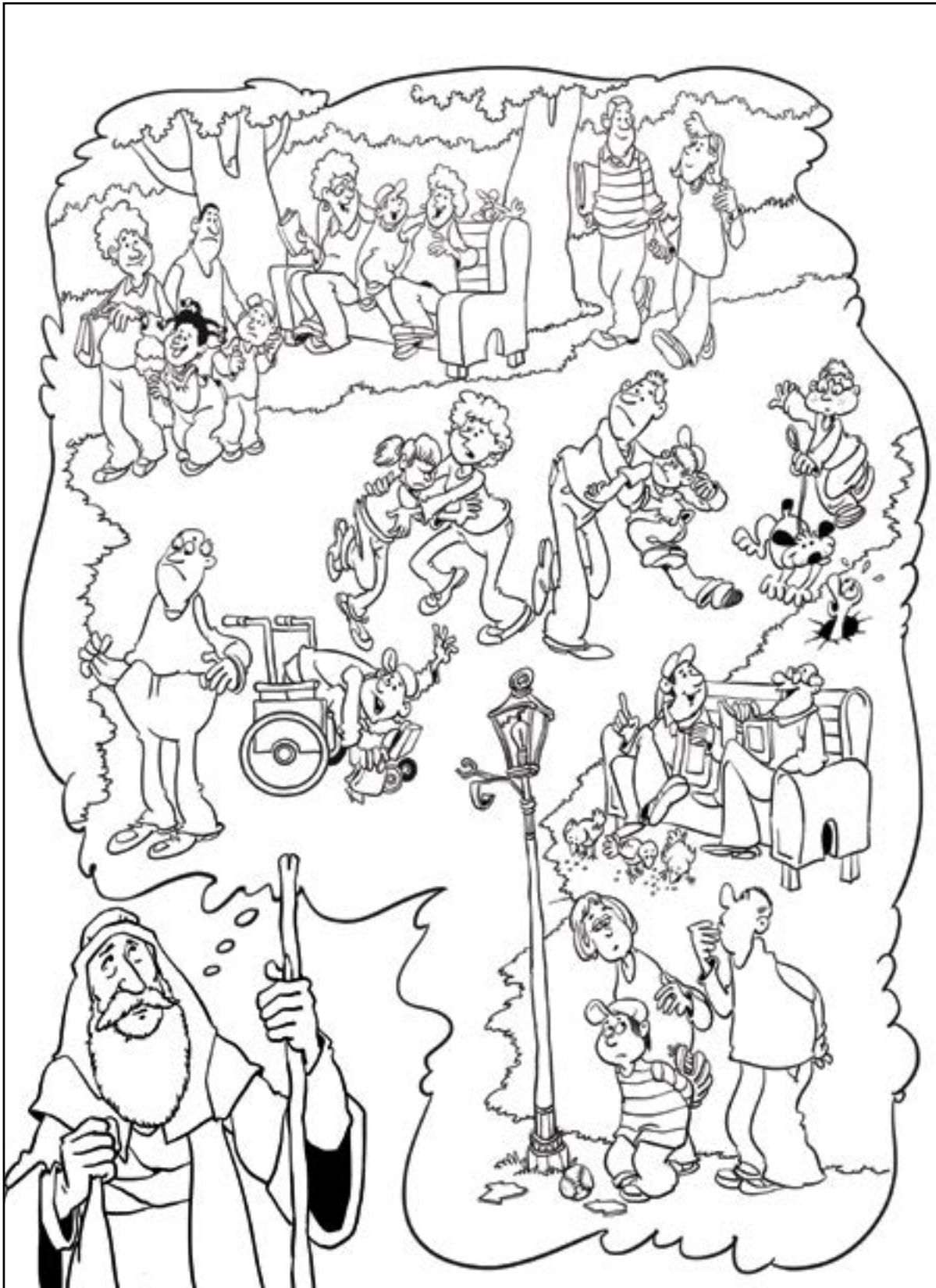
**LOVE
OTHERS**

**DON'T
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Loving Others



We follow the last six commandments by loving others.

