

**Focus:** Sharing God's Love

**Materials:**

CD: America's 25 Favorite Bible Songs  
Gospel: In lesson plan  
Book: Teach Me To Love  
Ball of Yarn

**Gathering** (children find/sit on a carpet square)

Say: *Good Morning everyone, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. Last week we talked about listening to God's laws and this week we are going to talk about God's laws of love.*

**Opening Prayer**

Together we make the Sign of the Cross (do in reverse so children can mirror).

Say: *Now let's put our hands together and bow our heads.*

*Dear Jesus, You loved others especially the poor. Help us to love and care for all people.  
In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.*

**Song/Movement**

*I Will Call Upon the Lord*, track: 17, from [America's 25 Favorite Bible Songs](#)

Play music, encourage children to stretch or move to the music (clapping, stamp feet march in place to the beat), turn to each other and shake hands, saying hello, etc.

I will call upon the Lord  
Who is worthy to be praised  
So shall I be saved from my enemies

Refrain: (Echo in parentheses)  
I will call upon the Lord (I will call upon the Lord)  
Who is worthy to be praised (Who is worthy to be praised )  
So shall I be saved from my enemies (So shall I be saved from my enemies )

Chorus: The Lord liveth, and blessed be the Rock  
And let the God of my salvation be exalted  
The Lord liveth, and blessed be the Rock  
And let the God of my salvation be exalted

Repeat the Chorus 2 times

**Alternate Creative Movement**

Have kids form two equal lines facing each other, or a big circle. To the beat of the music have them take four steps toward each other and clap the hands of the child facing them (or their own), then take four steps back and clap their hands together. Repeat.

### Memory Verse

Say: *Now let's take a moment together to learn a verse from the bible.*

*Love the Lord God with all your heart.*

Have the children repeat the verse after you a couple of times.

Say: *Does this mean that we can't love anyone else? No, God tells us we need to love others, but we need to remember, it is God, who gives us love. Without God, there would be no love in the world.*

### Gospel Story

Say: *Today we are reading from the Gospel of Matthew.*

Have children make sign of the cross on their forehead, mouth and heart saying. *"Lord, open my mind, my lips and my heart so that I may learn it, speak it and love it."*

Read: None, pp. n/a,

Someone asked Jesus:

*[Chatty hand, thumb against fingers]*

"Teacher, which commandment of the law is the greatest?"

*[Wondering hands with a shrug]*

Jesus answered:

*[Chatty hand, thumb against fingers]*

"You shall love the Lord, your God,

*[Point heavenward]*

With all your heart,

*[Cross hands over heart]*

With all your soul,

*[Touch heart and raise hand toward heaven]*

And with all your mind.

*[Touch forehead]*

This is the greatest and first commandment.

*[Hold up one index finger]*

The second is like it:

*[Hold up two fingers]*

You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

*[Cross hands over heart, and then point to everyone in the room]*

All the teaching depend on these 2 commandments."

*[Cross hands over heart]*

After the reading say: *The Gospel of the Lord*

Children respond: *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ*

**Discussion Starters:**

- *What was Jesus asked?*
- *What is a commandment? It is a law or rule given to us by God to live like he wants us to live.*
- *What is the first commandment Jesus tells us?*
- *What are the two parts of the greatest commandment?*
- *What makes the greatest commandment so important?*
- *How do the two great commandments teach us how to live as God's children?*
- *How can you tell others about the great commandment?*

**Reflection on Reading:**

*There are so many books, songs and movies about love. Do you think love is important? God is love; the love we feel in our hearts. We need to remember he has given us this great gift and thank him everyday for allowing us to feel love. The love that we share with our moms, dads, brothers, sisters, grandmothers, etc., and most importantly, with God is what our whole life is about. Without God, there is no love. In today's gospel Jesus sums up all the teaching of a thousand years, five books of the bible and dozens of prophets in one sentence. He tells us what the most important thing God has to tell us.*

*When Jesus is asked "which commandment is most important?" His answer has two parts. First we are to love God, second we are to love our neighbor, as we love ourselves. This teaching was not a new one for the religious leaders of Jesus' time. What made it new and necessary was that Jesus presents both commandments as equally important. Today's reading tells us there is no commandment more important to live by than the two great commandments.*

**Gospel Activity**Activity 1:

Read: Teach Me To Love

- Who wants to find out about love?
- What happens as they meet the other children?
  - The sad girl is happy to be included, the hungry boy is happy to have food shared with him, the angry girl is happy because they listened to her problem, the twins felt much better when they were forgiven, the lonely boy felt much better when he was asked to be their friend,
- What did they find out about love?
  - That they already know all about it.
- How can we show our love for God?
  - Praying, going to church, being happy or friendly, thanking God for gifts, being respectful for things God created, helping our parents, sharing with our friends.

Activity 2:

**Spider Web:**

Have the children sit in a circle and explain that you're going to make a spider web. Give the first child the end of the string and the ball. He or she holds the end with one hand and with the other rolls the ball to another child. It continues in the same manner from child to child. Remind them to hang on. At the end, discuss that because we are all God's children and we were created by him to be like him we are all connected. It is important to be kind to everybody in the class and everywhere to show others God's love.

You can play one of the songs off the CD with the opening and closing songs as they play.

**Read the following poem:**

Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect.

*Chief Seattle*

*Leader of The Suquamish And Duwamish Native American Tribes*

Complete the weekly bulletin as a group-let the children color them if there is extra time

**Closing Prayer**

(Children respond: "We Believe!")

Ask: *Do we believe in God, who loves us and wants us to love one another?*

*Do we believe in Jesus, who came to show us how to love one another as God loves us?*

*Do we believe in the Holy Spirit, who fills our hearts with love?*

**Sending Forth**

Say: *Think of one kind thing that you can do for someone at home or at school this week. How can you show love for your neighbor with a simple act of kindness?*

**Lining Up/Closing Song**

Play "Change My Heart O' God" track 23 from America's 25 Favorite Bible Songs while children put away any materials and lineup. Hand out weekly bulletins. Remind them it is important that they return to their family quietly so that we may all listen and pray together in church.