

Unit 2 — Who Am I?

Lesson 5 — The Greatest Commandments

Introduction — Last week you taught your children that we are all responsible for choosing between good and evil. But that might sound pretty hard to them. Is there an easy way to distinguish right from wrong?

Fortunately, God made it pretty easy for all of us by giving us ten clear commandments. Then Jesus simplified it even more:

Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." (Matthew 22:35-40, NKJV)

Love. It's that simple (and that hard!) By showing love, we reflect the very nature of God. "God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God [abides] in him." (1 John 4:16b, NKJV) Ask your children, "Do you want to be like God Himself?" If they say yes, then answer, "Here's how: Love one another!"

Here's the Activity:

What you need:

You will need a flashlight and a variety of objects—such as stuffed animals, a spoon, bottles, shoes, a remote control and eyeglasses.

What you do:

Set up a flashlight somewhere in a room where you can cast shadows on a plain wall (or a sheet hung on the wall). Have children sit near the wall but in front of the light so they won't be able to see what you're holding up. One at a time, put different objects in front of the light so they cast shadows on the wall. Have children take turns guessing what the objects are. Have fun with the items you choose, and be sure to include some that might be difficult to guess.

Ask:

What did you see on the wall? (Kids may list the actual objects they saw or explain that they saw shadows.)

How was the shadow similar to the actual object? (It was the same shape.)

How was it different? (It was just a shadow; it wasn't the item. You can't pick up the object's shadow.)

What you Share:

Share that the object reflected the shadow, but the shadow wasn't the object. In the same way, our obedience is not love but only a reflection of our love for God. People who obey the Ten Commandments may or may not love God. But people who love God will know that it is important to reflect that love by obeying Him. Our obedience comes out of our love.

Memory Verse:

Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.'" (Matthew 22:37-39, NKJV)