



## Here We Come!

Fill a large box or bag with assorted stuffed animals. The children can take turns drawing out an animal to talk about.

- Name the animal.
- Would it make a good pet?
- Would it be happier living in the wild?
- What are some rules to follow for the health and happiness of this animal?
- What part can you play in caring for the animal?
- How can you show this animal that you love it?

## Sense-ations

Play games that involve following specific rules.

- Provide cotton balls and spoons.
- The object of the game is to move the cotton balls from one side of the room to the other.
- The rule is they can only be moved one at a time on a spoon.
- Children scoop up a cotton ball and hurry across the room with it.
- Hands cannot be used to help pick it up or hold it on the spoon.
- Share in the activity by taking turns.

## Up and at 'Em

Take the animals for a walk. What needs to be done to make it a comfortable, safe trip for the “animals”?

# Keep My Commandments

Love is an important part of every commandment.

*Keep My Commandments*  
by Marge Nelson

If you love me, keep my commandments,  
Commandments, commandments.  
If you love me, keep my commandments  
In all that you do.

Love God, love each other,  
And love yourself too.  
If you love me, keep my commandments  
In all that you do.

In this activity, children learn to work together to achieve a goal. Without the sharing rule, one child could grab all the cotton balls and move them without the help of anyone else. It would get the job done, but wouldn't be much fun for those who didn't get to help.

## Scripture Words

Jesus said, “Love me. Keep my commandments.”  
—John 14:15 NRSV adapted

## Moving Music

Adapt the following melody to fit the words of the song, “Keep My Commandments.” Add rhythm and movement to help the children remember it.



## Story Talking

- What are some of the rules in individual families?
- Why do they have these rules?
- How do we help Jesus by obeying these family rules?
- Why would Jesus give us a commandment to share with others?
- Why would Jesus give us a commandment to pray for others?

Take turns offering prayers for friends and family of the children. Who else can they pray for?

## Scripture Words and Worship

People need guidelines to follow. Sometimes those guidelines take the form of rules or laws. The Jewish people were trying to keep track of all the laws of their faith, even if they weren't keeping the laws by their behavior. Jesus simplified things for everyone. He said, "Love God. Love your neighbor. Love yourself."

Write the words "Love me" on a picture of Jesus, "Keep my" on a heart, and print the word "commandments" on a long, narrow folded piece of paper. Slip these in the pages of the Bible to be discovered by the children. Talk about the big, long word, "commandments." Let the children tell you what rules they think Jesus would make. Use phrases such as, "Jesus wants us to..." or "Jesus said we should..." to get them started.

## Live and Learn

The scripture story is based on John 14:15–21. The concepts are abstract, but by using things the children can touch and feel, you can help them understand.

One night Jesus and his friends were eating supper.

*Would you like to eat supper with Jesus?*

Jesus wouldn't always be able to eat supper with his friends. He told them he would have to go away soon.

*Has anyone ever come to stay with you and then had to go back home? How did you feel?*

Jesus' friends were sad, too. Jesus smiled and said, "Just remember all the things I've told you." Jesus' friends looked at each other. They knew Jesus had told them many wonderful things.

*How would they be able to remember them all?*

Remembering can be fun, but it can also be difficult. Play a game using assorted objects on a table covered by a cloth. Uncover the objects and let the children look at them. Then replace the cover and ask what they remembered.

Repeat the activity, but this time let them handle the objects. Did that help with the recall? Does it help to have others in the class who can remember some of the things? Can you work together to name them all?

Jesus' friends wanted to remember what they had learned. Sometimes they would see something that reminded them of a story Jesus told or something that happened when they were with him. (Choose objects that are connected to stories the children have heard about God and Jesus such as boats or fish.) Jesus promised to send something very special to help the disciples remember. "My Spirit will always be with you. You may not be able to see the Spirit or touch the Spirit, but if you listen, you can hear the Spirit."

The disciples were glad. They could be together and tell stories. They could see something that reminded them of a story Jesus told. But if they needed help remembering, they could listen for the whisper of the Spirit.

"Remember," the Spirit might say, "when I told you to love God, love your neighbor, and love yourself?"

If the disciples remembered that, it would be hard for them to say something unkind to another person. It would be hard for them to hurt another person.

The disciples were glad they could count on the Holy Spirit for help.

## There We Go

Decorate heart shapes with either the words of the scripture verse or the words of the song printed on one side. Ask the children to share what they did with family and friends.

