

HERE WE COME!

Sing songs about joy and love with the children. Use ones they are familiar with, or teach old camp songs such as “I Want to Be a Friend of Yours” or “The More We Get Together.”

SCRIPTURE WORDS AND WORSHIP

The two scriptures come from two different books in the Old Testament. Print the words on heart shapes and hide them in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. Then on two hearts hooked together, print the same words with the reference, Matthew 22:37–39. Place these in the New Testament.



The people who lived before Jesus came knew the laws. They knew they were supposed to love God and love their neighbor as they loved themselves. But when Jesus came, the religious leaders asked him to pick one commandment that was the most important. Read his answer on the combined hearts.

STORY TALKING

Let the children tell about a time when they were away from home for an extended period.

- Where were they going?
- Who went with them?
- How did they travel?
- Where did they stay?
- What did they take with them?
- How was living away from home different?
- What would it be like to grow up moving from place to place like the Israelites?

Invite a baby and a forty-year-old person to come for a visit. Talk about babies born in the wilderness who were as old as the adult by the time they got where they were going.

God Is Right There

Traditional

No mat - ter where I may hap - pen to be;

God is right there with me, God is right there with me,

God is right there with me, close as can be.

MOVING MUSIC

- “God Is Right There”
- “Jesus Loves Even Me” (page 24)
- “Tell How You Love Jesus” (page 25)

LOVE ONE, LOVE ALL

Love is an important part of every commandment.

Scripture Words

You shall love the LORD your God.
—Deuteronomy 6:5
NRSV

Love your neighbor as yourself.
—Leviticus 19:17
NRSV

LIVE AND LEARN

The story comes from the book of Deuteronomy, chapters 6 and 34.

Moses stood and looked over the plain. There were tents as far as he could see. People were moving about, doing their daily chores. Joshua came up to stand beside him.

“Can you believe there are so many? We came out of Egypt forty years ago and thought there were a lot of people then. Some of those have died. But others were born and families have grown. There are great numbers of us now.”

“Yes, I know,” said Moses. “Soon they will move out across the plain to the Jordan River. And just beyond that is the land where they will settle and raise their children.” Moses was quiet for a moment. Then he said, “Call the people together. I want to speak to them.”

The word went out. People stopped doing their chores, put down their loads, gathered their children, and came to where Moses was. When they were quiet, Moses spoke.

“It won’t be long now. Remember what God wants you to do when you cross over into the new land. It is important for you and your children and your children’s children to look to the Lord your God all the days of your life.”

A great cheer went up from the people. They were ready to do as God said.

But Moses knew people sometimes forget, even when they mean well. “Hear, O Israel,” he called out. Joshua helped quiet the people. Moses continued:

“The Lord is our God, the Lord alone.” The people cheered.

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.”

“Wow,” said a little child standing by his mother. “That’s so much love it would take everything I have to give!” His mother nodded and gave him a hug.

“Remember these words. Tell them to your children. Talk about them when you are at home. Talk about them when you are away. Talk about them at bedtime and when you get up in the morning.”

“We can do that!” someone yelled. Others joined in.

“Remember these words. Write them down. Wear something on your arm with the words inside. Put them in a band around your head. Write them down and stick them in a box by the door of your house. Remember them every time you come in and go out.”

“We will!” all the people cheered.

UP AND AT 'EM

Set up an obstacle course for the children. Pretend they are walking in the wilderness, headed for the river. Cover a card table with a blanket so they can crawl under. Place stepping stones across a brook. Put something in the way to represent a mountain they have to go around. Spread a blanket on the ground where they have to stop to eat. Serve a snack. Take a side trip to get a drink of water.

SENSE-ATIONS

In Bible times Jewish men wore phylacteries—small leather boxes attached to straps (worn on their left arms and foreheads). Inside were tiny bits of parchment with scriptures on them. The customary scripture was Deuteronomy 6:4–9, but sometimes the Ten Commandments were also carried. Scraps of these have been found by archeologists.

Let the children make one of their own. Any small compartment attached to a wrist or head band can be used for the container. Make copies of the scripture for each child. The scriptures were folded to fit into the box, but could be removed and read.

YOU SHALL LOVE THE
LORD YOUR GOD.
—DEUTERONOMY 6:5 NRSV

THERE WE GO

Ask the children to share the stories and the craft they made with family and friends.