

# Love the Lord with All Your Heart

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Sunday Plan

SCRIPTURE

Deuteronomy 6

MEMORY VERSE

Deuteronomy 6:5

OPTIONAL VIDEO

Moses Blesses the Tribes

<https://southside.cc/204-397>

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*We love God with all our heart, soul, and strength.*

## For the Teacher

Read this before you teach. The kids have followed God’s people out of Egypt, through the wilderness, and right up to the edge of the Promised Land. Today is Moses’ last big speech before he dies and the people cross over. He gives them the most important command in the whole Old Testament. The kids should leave with one idea firmly in place.

### KEY TRUTH

We love God with all our heart, soul, and strength.

**This is the Shema.** Deuteronomy 6:4–5 is the prayer faithful Jews have prayed twice a day for over three thousand years: “Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.” It opens with the word *Shema* — Hebrew for “hear.” When Jesus is asked to name the most important commandment, he quotes this verse (Mark 12:29–30). It is the spine of how God’s people, then and now, are supposed to love him. The kids need to know they are reading the most important command in the Old Testament — and that it isn’t a list of rules. It’s a single command, and the command is love.

**Heart, soul, and strength is the whole person.** Hebrew doesn’t slice up the human the way we do. “Heart” is the inner life — what you want, what you decide, what you love. “Soul” is the whole self, your life. “Strength” is everything you can do — your body, your energy, your stuff. Moses is saying *all of you*. Not Sunday-only. Not feelings-only. Not actions-only. The whole kid loves the whole God.

**The order is rescue, then love.** Moses gives this command at the very end of Deuteronomy 6:1–3 — *after* he has reminded the people that the LORD their God brought them out of Egypt. The same pattern the kids saw at Sinai (Q2L5) is here again. God rescues. Then God’s people respond by loving him with everything they are. Loving God isn’t how you get rescued; it’s how rescued people live.

**Don’t forget when life gets good.** Verses 10–12 carry the warning that drives Wednesday’s prayer card too: when the people get to the Promised Land and life is easy — houses they didn’t build, vineyards they didn’t plant — they will be tempted to forget the God who gave it all. Loving God with everything you are means remembering him in the good seasons too, not just in the hard ones.

**What we’re skipping and why.** Deuteronomy 6 also includes the “bind them on your hand and write them on your doorposts” image (verses 8–9), which is how observant Jewish families came to wear *tefillin* and put a *mezuzah* on the doorframe. Mention it in passing during the Wednesday craft if it comes up — but don’t make this Sunday into a lecture on Jewish tradition. The Sunday lesson is the Shema itself, plain and undecorated.

**Repeat the bottom line all morning.** Say it at least six times. Have the kids say it back. Write it on the board. End with it.

### MATERIALS

- Bibles for every student
- Whiteboard or large paper, markers
- Pencils, crayons or colored pencils
- Two paper hearts cut from cardstock — one whole, one already cut into four or five pieces
- A few sticky notes or pieces of tape
- Activity sheets (printed in advance from this week’s activities — pick what you’ll use)

## 1. Gather

Welcome the kids back. Tell them today is the very last day of the big story they’ve been following all quarter. God’s people have walked through the desert for forty years. Moses, the man who led them out

of Egypt, is about to die. He gathers everyone together for one last speech. And out of all the things he could say, he picks *one* command to be the most important one of all.

**ASK**

*What's something — a person, a pet, a place, a thing — that you love a whole lot?*

Let two or three kids answer. Don't lecture — just collect the honest answers. Then tell them: today Moses is going to tell God's people who and how to love most of all. Write the bottom line on the board:

**SAY**

*We love God with all our heart, soul, and strength.*

## 2. The Story

### Setting the Stage

Tell them, in your own words: it has been forty years since the Red Sea. The kids who walked out of Egypt are now grandparents. A whole new generation is about to cross the Jordan River into the land God promised. Moses won't go with them — he's old, and God has told him he won't enter the land. So before he dies, he stands in front of everybody and gives them the most important sermon of his life.

The book where this sermon lives is called Deuteronomy. The word means "second law" — Moses is reminding the people of everything God has told them, one more time, before he sends them in.

### Why God Gave the Commands

Have everyone open to Deuteronomy 6:1. Pick a confident reader.

#### Deuteronomy 6:1–3

**DISCUSSION**

1. Who gave Moses these commands to pass on?

→ *The LORD their God. Moses isn't making these up — he's delivering a message.*

2. Why did God give his people commands? Look at verses 2 and 3.

→ *So they would fear (take seriously) the LORD, so it would go well with them, and so they would multiply in the land. The commands aren't punishment. They're how rescued people live well.*

### The Most Important Command — The Shema

This is the hinge of the whole lesson. Slow down here. Pick your strongest reader.

#### Deuteronomy 6:4–5

Tell them: the very first word in Hebrew is *Shema* — it just means "hear." Faithful Jewish families have prayed this verse out loud every morning and every night for over three thousand years. It is the most important command in the whole Old Testament. When Jesus was asked which commandment was the greatest, he quoted this exact verse.

Write the three words on the board, big:

**HEART. SOUL. STRENGTH.**

## DISCUSSION

1. What three ways does the verse tell us to love God?

→ *Heart, soul, and strength. Make them find it themselves — don't say it for them.*

2. What do you think “heart” means here? Is it just feelings?

→ *More than feelings. In the Bible, your heart is what you want, what you decide, what you love. It's your want.*

3. What might “soul” and “strength” mean?

→ *Soul is the whole you — your life, your inside self. Strength is everything you can do — your body, your energy, even your stuff. Together, the three words mean the whole person. All of you.*

## SAY

*This is the most important command in the whole Old Testament. Not a command among many — the command. The whole kid loving the whole God.*

**Keep These Words Close**

Have a different student read the next two verses.

**Deuteronomy 6:6–7**

## DISCUSSION

1. Where does Moses say God's commands should be?

*On their hearts. Not just on a wall, not just in a book — on their hearts. The way you remember something you really love.*

2. When are God's people supposed to talk about his commands?

→ *All the time. At home, on the road, when they lie down, when they get up. Loving God isn't a once-a-week thing. It's everyday talk.*

**Don't Forget When It Gets Good**

Have one more reader take the last short passage.

**Deuteronomy 6:10–12**

Tell them, in your own words: Moses warns the people that when they get into the Promised Land — into houses they didn't build, with food they didn't grow — they're going to be tempted to forget the God who gave it all to them. Loving God with everything you are means remembering him when life is hard *and* when life is easy. The easy times are sometimes the most dangerous, because that's when we stop paying attention.

**3. The Point**

Say the bottom line again, with the kids:

## SAY

*We love God with all our heart, soul, and strength.*

### Whole Heart vs. Half Heart

Hold up the heart that's already cut into pieces. Lay the pieces out on the table where the kids can see them.

#### SAY

*Sometimes we give God only part of our love. We pray sometimes. We obey when it's easy. We sing along on Sunday but ignore him on Wednesday. That's a half heart. That's not what Moses said.*

Now hold up the whole heart. Hold it up high.

#### SAY

*God isn't asking for a piece. He's asking for all of it. Heart, soul, strength — every part of you, every day of the week, in everything you do. The whole you, loving the whole God.*

### The Memory Verse

Have everyone turn to Deuteronomy 6:5. Read it together:

#### SCRIPTURE

*Deuteronomy 6:5*

*You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.*

Read it together three ways: all together normally; then once with their hand on their heart on the word "heart"; then once with their hands held high on the word "strength." Make them feel the three words land on three different parts of them.

### What This Means For Us

#### DISCUSSION

1. Which is easiest for you — loving God with your heart, your soul, or your strength? Why?  
*Listen. Don't fix. Some kids will say "heart" because feelings come easy. Some will say "strength" because they like to do things. Any honest answer is the right answer.*
2. What's something you do every day where you could love God a little more on purpose — at school, at home, with friends?  
*→ Push for specifics. "Be nice" is too vague. Push for: thank God before breakfast, be honest with parents, help a sibling without complaining, pray when something is hard, stop scrolling and actually listen when someone talks.*

Say the bottom line one more time, with the kids:

#### SAY

*We love God with all our heart, soul, and strength.*

### Closing Prayer

#### PRAY

*God, you rescued your people out of Egypt and walked them all the way to the edge of the Promised Land. Then you gave them the most important command of all — to love you with everything they are. Help us, this week, give you our whole hearts. Not just on Sunday. Not just when it's easy. All of us, all the time. Amen.*

## 4. The Work

Pick one or more activities from this week's menu. Print enough copies for each kid in advance. The kids don't have to do all of them — pick what fits the group's energy and what time you have left.

The menu for this week:

- **Moses and the Shema** — coloring page of Moses standing in front of the people, with the memory verse.
- **Heart, Soul, Strength** — word search with key words from Deuteronomy 6.
- **My Whole Heart** — drawing prompt where the kids draw what loving God with all their heart looks like in their week.
- **Hear, O Israel** — fill-in-the-blanks recall using the kids' Bibles.

The full production specs for each activity are in this week's activities file.

### NOTE

While the kids work, sit with them. Ask one or two what they're working on. Reinforce the bottom line one more time before class ends.

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## What Comes Next Week

The kids will start Quarter 3 with a new story — God's people in the Promised Land, learning to live as the people God rescued them to be.