

BIBLE TRUTH 5, LESSON 1: PLANNER/OVERVIEW

GETTING STARTED: Welcome and Opening Songs (*introduce unit and get kids moving with these songs*)

Welcome to Praise Factory: PFI: Praise Factory Investigators Theme Song *PFI NIV Songs 7, Track 1*

Rules to Help Us Worship God and Love One Another: WoGoLOA Classroom Rules Song
PFI NIV Songs 7, Track 2

Big Question Under Investigation: Big Question 7 Songs *PFI NIV Songs 7, Tracks 3,4*

Big Question Bible Verse: Psalm 19:7,9,10,11 Song *PFI NIV Songs 7, Track 5*

DIGGING DEEP DOWN: Key Concept and Story (*introduce the Bible Truth and tell the related story*)

Bible Truth 5: The Heart of God's Law is Love

Bible Truth Hymn: Take My Life and Let It Be, v.1 *PFI NIV Songs 7, Track 18*

Bible Verse: Matthew 22:36-40

Bible Verse Song: Love the Lord *PFI NIV Songs 7, Track 19*

Lesson 1 Old Testament: The Case of the Two-faced Lover
Ezra, Nehemiah, Malachi

TAKING ACTION: Response Activities (*choose from among these activities*)

Snack and Discussion Planner: The Israelites' Bad Sacrifices

ACTS Prayer: Prayer Sheet

Bible Truth Review: Discussion Questions and Game: Menagerie

Bible Truth Hymn: Take My Life and Let It Be, v.1 *PFI NIV Songs 7, Track 18*
Song, Sign Language and Song Game: Pass the Secret Sign **PFI NIV Songs 7 BOOK or ONLINE**

Bible Verse Review: Matthew 22:36-40 Discussion Sheet and Game: Hoop & Holler

Bible Verse Song: Love the Lord: Matthew 22:37-40 *PFI NIV Songs 7, Track 19*
Song, Sign Language and Song Game: Mimic Me! **PFI NIV Songs 7 BOOK or ONLINE**

Story Review: Discussion Questions and Game: Keep It Under Your Hat

Case Replay, Jr: Drama Activity for Youngest Children (children do same story actions together)

Case Replay, Sr: Drama Activity for Most Children (children re-tell story with individual parts)

Craft: Sick, Imperfect Sheep on the Altar of Burnt Offerings

VIPP (Very Important Prayer Person) Prayer Time: Coloring Sheets (back of book); Game: Mix and Match

TAKING IT HOME: Take Home Sheet for Review and Family Devotions

PFI Pronto: Bible Truth 5, Lesson 1 **PFI NIV PRONTOS 7 BOOK or ONLINE**

The Case of the Two-faced Lover by Connie Dever Ezra, Nehemiah, Malachi**Our story is called:****The Case of the Two-faced Lover.****As you listen to the story, see if you can figure out:**

1. To be two-faced means to say one thing, then do another. Who was the two-faced lover? How did they show they were two-faced?
2. Who loved the two-faced lover? How did He show His love to them?

This story takes place in Old Testament times, in Jerusalem, starting about 600 years before Jesus lived on earth.

Weeds and rocky ruins. That's all the people of Judah saw as they entered Jerusalem. Just seventy years earlier, this city had been magnificent. It had been the home of their kings and the glorious Temple. Thousands of people had lived within its great walls. Thousands more came from all over Israel to worship the LORD, bring their offerings to and learn God's laws. What did they learn from His laws? What did they see when they came to the Temple? That the LORD was a holy God who called them to live holy lives. And, He was a loving God who called them to live lives of love towards Him and others. For the heart of this holy God and His good laws is love.

Yes, Jerusalem had been very special: the one place in all the earth where people could come and draw near to the one, true God. The one place they could hear His Law and learn how to live in love. But something terrible had happened and it started where most troubles start: in the hearts of the people. For, the heart of God's Law might be love for God and others, but the heart of the people and their kings was sinful rebellion. They knew God's laws were perfectly loving and good, but they chose to break them. They worshiped idols instead of the LORD. They acted selfishly and hatefully towards others. God sent many prophets to warn them to repent or face destruction of their land and seventy years of slavery in Babylon.

But they refused to change and the LORD sent Nebuchadnezzar and his mighty Babylonian army into Judah to smash Jerusalem and everything else. Down it all went and the Temple with it. Nebuchadnezzar carried back to Babylon thousands of people and all the best things in Jerusalem--including 5400 articles of

gold and silver from the Temple. The land of Israel lay abandoned and in ruins. The people of Israel were taken far away from home, forced to serve the Babylonians, and then the Persians, as slaves for seventy years, just as the LORD had warned them.

But now the seventy years was over. The LORD worked in the heart of King Cyrus of Persia to let them return to Judah and rebuild their land and the Temple. The LORD had Cyrus free 50,000 slaves, and send them home with great riches. He gave them 100 priestly garments of the finest white linen; a half ton of gold and 3 tons of silver; 736 horses, 245 mules, 435 camels, and 6,720 donkeys, and all 5400 articles of silver and gold that King Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the LORD's Temple years earlier.

The people set out across the miles of deserty wilderness for Judah, their home. They settled their families back in their homes, then gathered back together in the weeds and rocky ruins of Jerusalem. It was time to rebuild the altar of the LORD. With humble, repentant hearts, they dedicated themselves to the LORD. The priests offered up their best lambs as a sacrifice to Him. This was a day of new beginnings for the people. Once more, they promised to love the LORD most of all and love each other too, by learning and living by His good laws.

Over the next twenty years, more of the people came back to Judah. Together they rebuilt their land. Best of all, they rebuilt Jerusalem, their beloved capital city: its houses, its walls, and of course, the Temple. Once more they came together in Jerusalem for feasts, to make sacrifices and to listen to the priests read God's Law. They confessed their sins and committed themselves to the LORD. The heart of God's Law was love; and now

Story-telling Tips

Ahead of time:

1. Read the Bible verses and story. Pray!
2. Create story cue cards on index cards (or highlight text).
3. Practice telling story dramatically, timing your presentation. Shorten, if necessary to fit your allotted time.
4. Decorate area with story props that help bring your story alive.

During your presentation:

1. Maintain as much eye contact as possible as you tell the story. Point to/use props at important points in the story. Include the kids in your story with a few questions about what they think will happen or words/concepts that might be new to them.
2. Watch the kids for signs that their attention span has been reached. Shorten, if necessary.

the heart of the priests and the people seemed to love God and each other, too. Could it be that the people had learned their lesson? Could it be that the days of hearts full of sinful rebellion were over? Only time would tell...and so it did.

As years passed, the people began to forget the hard years of slavery in Babylon. Sin began to creep steadily back into their hearts and the hearts of the priests, too. Their love for God began to grow tired and cold. It showed in their sacrifices. Oh yes, they kept bringing sacrifices to the Temple, but not the best animals of their flocks that the LORD required. Now they brought Him only animals they did want themselves: those who were sick, injured, blind. When their crops came in, they kept all of the best grain for themselves. They didn't love Him enough to give the full portion that they were to supposed to present to Him. Not only that, but they began to marry women who worshiped idols. No longer did they care that their families worshiped the LORD and lived according to His good laws. Some of them even began to practice witchcraft.

Their love for each other grew selfish and hateful again, too. They didn't take care of widows and orphans. They cheated the people who worked for them out of the money they deserved. They treated unfairly the people from other countries that came to live among them. Husbands didn't want to live with their wives anymore.

The priests should have helped the people. They should have refused their bad sacrifices. They should have warned the people to repent and turn back to the LORD, but they did not. They didn't care about honoring God any more than the people did.

The people and the priests didn't care, but the LORD did. Out of love for them and the glory of His name, He began to discipline them. He withheld His blessings from them that they might see their sinfulness. Their crops did not grow very well. The enemy nations around them began to hate them. Did the people repent of their sinful ways? No, they did not. They kept on sinning and blamed everything on God saying, "What does it matter if we keep God's laws? What has He ever done for us? He doesn't listen to our prayers!"

The LORD sent the prophet Malachi to warn the

people. "Listen up, you priests! Listen up, you people!" Malachi said to them. "The LORD sees everything you are doing. He is a great King, yet you give Him only poor sacrifices. He sees how you are treating each other. He hates it! The heart of God's Law is love: love for Him and love for others. It is clear that you do not love Him or each other. It's because of your sins that He has been withholding His blessings from you. Turn from your sinful ways! Turn back to Him! Start obeying His good laws again!" Malachi urged them.

"Return to Him and He will return to you. Don't just honor Him with your lips. Honor Him with your lives. Bring good sacrifices with repentant and grateful hearts that show you really love Him," he told them. "Start to treat each other in loving ways according to His good laws and see if He doesn't answer you with blessings."

Some of the people listened to what Malachi said. They confessed and repented of their sins. They turned back to the LORD and offered Him right sacrifices. They treated others as God's good Law commanded. But most people and many of the priests did not repent.

"How could our people keep being so stubborn?" the godly wanted to know. "Will there be a day when the hearts of God's people are filled with love for God and others and the wicked will be gone forever?" they wondered.

The LORD gave them the answer through Malachi, "Yes, a very different day is coming. The day when the LORD will send the Messiah. He will come to save God's people from their sins once and for all," the LORD promised.

"The Messiah will be the good priest who will really teach you God's Law. He will turn many from sin. He will be the "Sun of Righteousness" who will live a perfect life. Then He will offer it up as the final sacrifice for the sins of all who would ever repent and trust Him as their Savior. He will send the Holy Spirit to give them new hearts full of love towards God and others," he told them.

"Then, at the end of time, this Messiah will come back to earth again," the LORD promised. "He will bring final punishment to the wicked who refuse to repent and trust in God. But for God's people, all those who repent of their sins and trust in Him, He would bring complete

and everlasting healing from sin and death," He promised. "And on that Day, so great will be the rejoicing of God's people that they will leap as calves do when they are released from their stalls. The heart of God's Law is love; and at last on that Day, it would be the heart of God's people, too," He said.

The godly people rejoiced at these wonderful promises. They didn't know His name, yet they looked forward in faith to the day the Messiah would come. But we do know His name, don't we? It's Jesus! He is the Messiah who God sent to save God's people from their sins and whom God will send back again once day to bring an end to sin and death and a beginning to perfect life with God forever. Come, Lord Jesus, come!

Cracking the Case:

It's time to answer our Case Questions.

1. To be two-faced means to say one thing, then do another. Who was the two-faced lover? How did they show they were two-faced?

The people of Israel. They promised to love God: to worship Him and keep His laws of love. But, they did not love Him in their hearts, with their worship gifts or by keeping His good laws.

2. Who loved the two-faced lover? How did He show His love to them?

The LORD did. He showed His love by being patient, by discipling them to help them to repent, and by sending Jesus to save from their sins, all who would ever turn from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior.

Something for You and Me

Our Bible Truth is: The Heart of God's Law is Love

Our Bible Verse is: Matthew 22:36-40

"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest command. And the second in like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

What about you and me? If we are honest with ourselves, we know there are too many times that we are just like those people of Judah. How often do we only honor God with our lips, but our hearts are really far from Him? Do we know the right answers to questions

about loving God and others, but don't look to see if we really love them as we know we should?

Let's praise God for giving us His Law so we can know how to love Him and others. Let's ask Him to work in our hearts that we would repent of our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Let's ask Him to work in our hearts so that we do not just honor Him with our lips, but truly honor Him with hearts full of desire to keep His Law by loving Him and others.

Close in prayer.

Closing ACTS Prayer

A God, we praise You for being so patient with Your sinful people. We praise You for not only being the Giver of Laws of Love, but being the Fulfiller of those laws through Your Son, Jesus.

C God, we confess that we, like the Israelites, are sinners who turn away from Your laws. We know that they tell us how to love You and to love others, yet we choose to not trust that Your ways are best. We need a Savior!

T God, we thank You for giving Your Holy Spirit to live in the hearts of Your people and help them keep Your good and loving laws. He helps them do what they cannot do on their own.

S God, we ask that You would work in our hearts that we might turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Send the Holy Spirit to live in our hearts and help us to live out Your loving laws.

Special Words

Judah: The name for the nation made up of the two, southern tribes of the original twelve tribes of Israel.

Messiah: The special king God promised to send to save His people and bring His kingdom. Jesus is the Messiah.

Babylon: A mighty nation to the east of Israel who conquered many nations, including Judah.

ACTS PRAYER ACTIVITY

Use this sheet to write down your ACTS Prayer

Instructions:

Use this sheet to help the children apply the Bible Truth into a prayer. You can use the ACTS provided or even better, have the kids think of their own applications. Also have the children add their personal requests to the prayer, too. Lead the children in the prayer or let them pray sections, with your help. Never force a child to pray! Non-readers can participate by you whispering a section of the prayer into their ear and allowing them to pray it aloud for the group.

ADORATION:

God, we praise You for being the Giver of Loving Laws.

God, we praise You for being.....

Add your own Adorations:

CONFESSION:

God, we confess that we have chosen not to love You or others according to Your loving laws. We need a Savior!

God, we have sinned against You....

Add your own Confessions:

THANKSGIVING:

Thank You, God, for giving us Your laws so we might know what it means to live a life of love towards You and others.

God, we thank You for...

Add your own Thanksgivings:

SUPPLICATION:

God, work in our hearts, that we might all turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us truly love You and others, as You have told us to in Your laws.

God, we need Your help...

Add your own Supplication:

SNEAKY SNACK

Can you figure out how this snack ties in with our case?

Snack: The Israelites' Bad Sacrifices

Face of Imperfect lamb sacrifice" bagel with a few pieces of wheat chex or shredded wheat "small wheat offering." Lamb face bagel: Spread cream cheese on bagel half and add raisin nose, chocolate chip eyes, black licorice mouth, sliced almond ears. Add a few extra raisins or chocolate chips on face to make blemishes. This is only a suggestion. Feel free to modify. Be mindful of allergy issues among your children!

Case Tie-in: The people of Israel did not love God as they should. This love showed in how they failed to keep God's laws. It showed in the worship gifts they offered Him. They didn't give Him their best lambs, showing that He deserved the best of their love. Instead, they gave Him their sickly lambs that they didn't really want themselves.

SOUL FOOD

Food for thought during snack time

1. What does the snack have to do with the story?

Choose a few questions from the other activity discussion sheets to talk about during this snack time.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Directions: Read and discuss Bible Truth, using a FEW of the questions. Play game. Feel free to modify the game to fit your children.

The Heart of God's Law is Love

Love is more than just a good feeling we have inside our hearts. Real love acts in love towards others.

God gave us His laws to tell us how we should live if we would love God and others. They tell us that we should always love God most of all. They tell us to love others as much as we love ourselves. Jesus said that to love God most of all, and to love others as yourself, sums up all of God's Laws.

Jesus lived a perfect life of love that fulfilled all of God's laws. He lived this way because He loved God most of all. This is the only way He would ever want to live. He also did this as part of God's plan to save His people. He offered His life lived in perfect obedience to God's laws as the perfect sacrifice for their sins when He died on the cross. All who turn away from their sins and trust in Him as their Savior are forgiven for all the ways they break God's law. They receive eternal life with God as His free gift to them.

Jesus paid for their sins, that doesn't mean God's people don't care about God's laws anymore. God's laws are how God wants His people to live. They are always the best way to live because they are perfectly good and loving. Like Jesus, God's people want to keep God's laws because God's people love God and want to please Him. The Holy Spirit living in their hearts helps God's people keep God's laws so that they love God and others in ways they never could before.

Understanding the Bible Truth

1. What is real love like? *More than just a good feeling in our hearts; it acts in love towards others.*
2. What did God give us His laws to tell us? *To tell us how we should live if we would love God and others.*
3. How do God's laws tell us to love God? *Most of all.*
4. How do God's laws tell us to love others? *To love others as much as we love ourselves.*
6. What did Jesus say sums up all of God's Law? *To love God most and to love others as yourself.*
7. What kind of life did Jesus live? *A perfect life of love. He loved God most of all and others as much as Himself. He kept all of God's laws.*
8. Why was it so important that Jesus live a perfect life? *It was a part of God's plan to save His people.*
9. Did Jesus fulfilling all the requirements of God's Law for God's people's salvation mean they don't need to live by God's laws anymore? Why or Why not? *No. Because God's laws are how God wants His people to live. They are always the best way to live.*
10. Why do God's people want to keep God's laws? *Because they love God and want to please Him. Not because they have to in order to be saved.*
11. How does the Holy Spirit help God's people? *He lives in their hearts, changes them and gives them strength to keep God's laws, to love God, and to love others in better ways than they ever could before.*

Bible Truth Story Connection Questions

1. How did the hurt and diseased sacrifices the people of Judah offered show that they had missed the heart of God's Law? *They were showing that they really thought they were more important than God b/c they chose to keep the best animals for themselves.*
2. Why would hearing about the coming of Jesus, the "Sun of Righteousness" encourage the godly few who sought to love God and love others? *They knew there would be a day when at last there would be only righteousness. He would bring an end to all wickedness. Then, all would love God and others. At last love, the heart of God's Law, would be the heart of all His people, too.*

Bible Verse Connection Question

1. What does our Bible Truth have to do with our **Bible Verse: Matthew 22:37,39-40**: "'Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?' Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest command. And the second in like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."?
- These verses are Jesus explaining that the heart of God's Law is love for God and for others.*

Life Application Questions

1. What does the way we break God's laws tell us about ourselves? *It shows us how we are really loving ourselves more than we love God and others.*
2. What does it look like to love God most of all? *A life that chooses to please God, even when it is very hard. A life that trusts Him even when what He has planned doesn't make sense or is hard. A life that takes joy in pleasing God. It looks like Jesus!*
3. What does it look like to love others as ourselves? *To treat them in the same loving way as we would want them to treat us.*
4. If we know that God's laws are the best and most loving way to live, why is it so hard for us to keep them? *The sin in our hearts tempts us to think that God's ways are not the best and most loving way to live. Also, many times, we just want to do what seems best for us, rather than thinking about what will be best for God's glory or for the good of others.*
5. When will God's people's hearts at last live out the heart of God's love? *In heaven, when God changes their hearts to love Him most of all and to love others perfectly.*
6. How can we become one of God's people? *By turning away from our sins and trusting in Jesus as our Savior.*

ACTS Questions

1. What is something we can praise God for because of this Bible Truth? *Praise God for being the Giver of Loving Laws.*
2. What are sins we can confess to God because of this Bible Truth?
Confess ways that we have chosen not to love God or others according to His loving laws.
3. What is something we can thank God for because of this Bible Truth?
Thank Jesus for offering up His life as the perfect sacrifice for God's people's sins.
4. What is something we can ask God for because of this Bible Truth?
We can ask God to work in our hearts that we would want to turn away from disobeying Him and trust in this wonderful Jesus as our own Savior. Ask God to work in our hearts and lives by His Holy Spirit that we might truly love Him and others as He has revealed in His laws.

The Gospel

1. The heart of God's Law is love, but we do not love God or others as we should. We deserve God's punishment! Is there any hope for us? What is the gospel?
Yes, there is! God is the good Creator and King of the world. He made people to worship Him and live by His good laws. But we are all sinners who have rebelled against Him. We all deserve death--God's just, eternal punishment for our sins. How terrible! But God has good news for us. In His great mercy, God sent His Son Jesus to earth to save sinners. Yes, Jesus, the perfect Son of God, left His home in heaven and became a man. He lived the perfect life that pleases God. (He's the only one who has ever done that!) He offered it up to God His Father as the perfect sacrifice for sins when He suffered and died on the cross. Then, on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead in victory. He had fully paid for the sins of God's people, so they wouldn't have to! Now all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior will receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life with God. They will be His very own special people who will know Him and enjoy Him forever. We can be God's people, too, if we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our own Savior.

Game: Menagerie

Materials

Small Bag/Bowl
Bible Truth Questions

Preparing the Game

1. Choose 20+ questions for your game from the Bible Truth Discussion Questions, or make up your own.
2. Write the Bible Truth questions on small thin strips of paper (or make a photocopy of the Bible Truth Discussion Questions and simply cut them into strips) and put them in the bag/bowl.

Playing the Game

Divide the children into three or four teams, depending on how many children you have. Each group of children is given the name of an animal and is assigned a corner of the room. You are "It" and stand in the middle of the room. When everyone is ready, give instructions to different groups of animals, such as "I want the bears to change places with the monkeys." The bears and monkeys when then run to change places. You, as It, will try to tag bears and monkeys. Choose a question from the bag to read to your caught animals. If they get it right, they are released to be back with their fellow animals. If not, they must wait until another, correct answer to be released.

Game continues as number of questions, time, and attention span allow.

Non-competitive Option

Do not exclude "caught" animals from the game, even if they get the answer wrong. Instead release them back to their fellow animals and put the question back in the bag for review again.

Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Quiz Questions

Have the children choose a few of the questions from the game to ask the parents/other children during TAKING IT TO OTHERS time. Help pre-readers by whispering the question in their ear and letting them ask it aloud to the parents/other children. Make sure you read the Bible verse aloud before you ask your questions.

Directions:

1. Write words to song in large print before class.
2. Play the song for the children, helping them follow along on the song sheet.
3. Discuss the song, using a few questions from the discussion sheet. *Don't use them all!*
4. Introduce sign language for key words of your choice from sign language sheet for your song. Use as few or as many as you think the children can learn.
5. Sing and sign the song. Sign language as well as large format lyrics and sheet music are found in the PFI Unit Songbook or online.
6. If desired, play the Song Game.

Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Presenting and Singing the Song

1. Sing and sign the song, encouraging the watching children/parents to join in.
2. Ask the class some of the questions listed below. The Bible Truth Connection Question is particularly good to help them understand how the song ties in with the Bible Truth.

Take My Life and Let It Be

Verse 1

Take my life and let it be,
 Consecrated, Lord, to Thee;
 Take my hands and let them move
 At the impulse of Thy love,
 At the impulse of Thy love.

Listen to it on PFI NIV Songs 7, Track 18

Understanding the Song

1. What does it mean to ask God to take your life and consecrate it to Him? *To consecrate something means to set something apart for a special purpose. Asking God to take your life and consecrating it to Him means to have Him use your life to do something special just for Him.*
2. What is an impulse? *An desire to do something for a particular reason.*
3. What is God's love like? *God's love is greatest for Himself, since He is the most wonderful person to know. He alone is perfectly good and loving. His special love for His people endures forever. Because of His love for them, He sent Jesus to save them, covering over their many sins with His very own blood. His love for all people is patient, kind, compassionate; it is always more than we deserve. It takes no joy in evil. It rejoices with the truth.*
4. What would the impulse of God's love be like? *A desire to do things that display God's love for Himself and for others. It would be loving God most of all, and loving others as much as we love ourselves.*
5. What kinds of things could we do with our hands that more at the impulse of God's love? *To God: lift our hands in praise of God; write down words that praise God; make beautiful things that reflect His glory, etc. To others: serve them and take care of their needs; give them hugs; write words of encouragement, etc.*

Bible Truth Connection Question

1. How does this song relate to our **Bible Truth: The Heart of God's Law Is Love**? *It is a prayer to God to help us keep the very heart of His Law by making everything we do with our hands an impulse of His love. God's laws show us what it means to have our hands move at the impulse of His love.*

Story Connection

1. How does this song relate to today's story? *After the Lord's message to the people of Judah through Malachi, most did not repent of breaking God's laws and not loving Him. But a godly few did. They turned from their sins and consecrated their hands and the rest of their lives to loving God and others by keeping God's Law. He encouraged them that one day Jesus, the "Sun of Righteousness," would come and do away with wickedness forever. Then their hands, their lives, would only move at the impulse of His love. They would be so happy about this that they would jump for joy like calves released from their stalls.*

Bible Connection Question

1. What does this hymn have to do with our Bible Verse: **Matthew 22:36-40**: "'Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?' Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest command. And the second in like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."?

All of God's Word--called the Law and the Prophets in Jesus' day--are based upon loving God most of all and loving others as we love ourselves. God's people want God to take their lives and use them to love God and others like this. They know they can't do this on their own. They need God fill their heart with His love and help them live out God's love in everything they do.

ACTS Questions

1. What is something we can praise God for from this hymn?

Praise God for being the Powerful Worker of His Will in the Hearts of His People.

2. What are sins we can confess to God from this hymn?

That many times we don't want God to take our lives and consecrate them to Him. Many times we don't want to do His will, but our own. We deserve His punishment! We need a Savior!

3. What is something we can thank God for from this hymn?

We can thank God His good plans for His people. His will never will be to do something bad. It is always loving and good.

4. What is something we can ask God for from this hymn?

That God would work in our hearts that we might turn from our sins and trust Jesus as our Savior. We can ask Him to consecrate our lives. We can ask Him to take our lives and work in them so that they move at the impulse of His love.

Life Application Questions

1. How can God's people be affected by the message of this song? *We can praise God for giving us His Laws that show us how to love Him and love others. We can ask Him to send His Holy Spirit to help us to turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our own Savior. We can ask Him to put love for God and others in our hearts and cause our hands to move at the impulse of His love.*

Gospel Question

1. Why do all people need for God to work in their lives? Why don't they just love God as they should? What is the gospel?

God is the good Creator and King of the world. He made people to worship Him and live by His good laws. But we are all sinners who've rebelled against Him. We all deserve death--God's just, eternal punishment for our sins. How terrible! But God has good news for us. In His great mercy, God sent His Son, Jesus to earth as a man to save sinners. He lived the perfect life that pleases God. (He's the only one who's ever done that!) He offered it up to God His Father as the perfect sacrifice for sins when He suffered and died on the cross. Then, on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead in victory. He had fully paid for the sins of God's people, so they wouldn't have to! Now all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior will receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life with God. They will be His very own special people who will know Him and enjoy Him forever. We can be God's people, too, if we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our own Savior.

Song Game: Pass the Secret Sign

Materials

Sign Language signs used in song, particularly choose words with important meanings you want the children to learn, such as “grace”, “redeem”, etc.

Bag or bowl

Blindfold

Preparing the Game

1. Cut out signs and put in bowl.

Playing the Game

1. Practice the song and signs until the children know them well.
2. Have all the children stand in a tight circle, except one, “It” who will stand in the middle of the circle, blindfolded.
3. Have the children in the circle to put their hands behind their backs. Choose a sign from the bag and hand to a child in the circle, still keeping hands behind their backs, not looking at the sign.
4. When “It” says “Pass the Secret Sign”, the children will begin to pass the sign around behind their backs.
5. When “It” says “Stop the Passing!” the child who has the sign freezes with the sign behind his back.
6. The child with the sign brings it around and looks at it. You can help the child practice the sign.
7. Then take the blindfold off of “It”, watch the child with the card do the sign, then have “It” guess the name of the sign. (If desired, “It” can ask another child in the circle for help with their guess.)
8. The holder of the sign then becomes “It.” Sing the song with all the signs, then repeat.

choose a FEW questions for discussion, then choose the game and/or music activity

Meditation Version: Matthew 22:36-40

“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest command. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

Alternate Memory Version: Matthew 22:37,39-40

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. . . . Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

Understanding the Bible Verse

1. What is a commandment? *Something God tells us that we must do.*
2. What is the Law? *The word ‘law’ (with a little ‘l’) means any set of rules that a group of people set up to live by. But when the word ‘Law’ (with a big ‘L’) is used in the Bible, it means the Law of Moses which is the name for the first five books in the Bible that the LORD had Moses write down. These books contain the 10 Commandments and the many other laws that God gave to His people to live by.*
3. Which commandment did Jesus say was the greatest commandment in the Law? *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.”*
4. What does it mean to love the Lord with all your heart? *If you love Him with all your heart, does that mean there is no room to love anything or anyone else? It means to have nothing that you love more than Him. It doesn’t mean we don’t love anything else, just that our love for Him comes first. Our love for others flows out of our love for Him.*
5. What is the difference between your heart and your soul? *God gave each human a soul to know and love God. Another word for soul is spirit. It never dies, even when our bodies do. We cannot see our soul, but it is inside of us. The word heart is a bit tricky. Sometimes it is used by itself in the same way as spirit. When it is used together with soul (as it is in this verse), it means your feelings and desires.*
6. What does it mean to love the Lord with all your heart and soul? *Soul: To worship and honor Him as God alone. Heart: To delight in knowing Him. To want everyone to praise the greatness of His name.*
7. What is a mind? What do we use our minds to do? *Our minds are our brains. We think with our minds. We use it to decide what is true; to make plans and to learn about things. We use our minds to do everything we do.*
8. What does it mean to love the Lord with all your mind? *To think about God. To learn about His great Truths, presented in the Bible. To make pleasing Him shape what we plan to do and how we do what we do.*
9. What is the second great commandment? *“Love your neighbor as yourself.”*
10. Who is your neighbor? How do you love them as yourself? *Not just the person who lives next door to you, but everyone we come in contact with. We treat them with the same godly kindness, love, mercy, compassion, respect, etc. that we would want if we were in their situation.*
11. What does it mean the all the Law and Prophets hang on these two commandments? *“The Law and the Prophets” means all of the Old Testament Bible (that was all they had in Jesus’ day.) Jesus meant that all of God’s others commandments given in the Bible all have to do with loving God and loving others.*

Bible Truth Connection Question

1. What does this verse have to do with the **Bible Truth: The Heart of God’s Law Is Love?** *Loving God and loving others is what is behind every single law that God has given us to live by.*

Story Connection Questions

1. How does this verse relate to our story? *When the people of Judah broke the LORD’s commandments about not worshiping idols, presenting only perfect sacrifices, treating each other fairly, and not marrying women who worshiped idols, they were not just breaking laws. They were choosing to stop loving God and each other, which was the purpose for all the laws. God disciplined them so that they might turn back to love Him and each other.*

Life Application Questions

1. How can you love God with all your heart today? Your soul? Your mind?
2. What is the first step we each need to take to love God with all our heart, soul and mind? *We need to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our own Savior.*
3. Can we ever love God perfectly? *No! We are sinners. Not even God's people love God perfectly because they still have sinful hearts...but they wish that they could! Only Jesus loved God perfectly.*
4. Who are your neighbors, God wants you to love as yourself?

ACTS Questions

1. What is something we can praise God for from this Bible Verse? *Praise God for being worthy of our love most of all.*
2. What are sins we can confess to God from this Bible Verse? *Confess that we have not loved God or others as God calls us to. We deserve God's punishment! We need a Savior!*
3. What is something we can thank God for from this Bible Verse? *We can thank God for sending Jesus to save all those who repent of their sins and trust in Him. He will even forgive us for not loving Him and others as we should.*
4. What is something we can ask God for from this Bible Verse? *We can ask God to work in our hearts that we would want to turn away from disobeying Him and trust in this wonderful Jesus as our own Savior. We can ask Him to work in our hearts that we would love Him and others as He wants us to.*

The Gospel

1. We do not love God or others as God calls us to. We deserve His punishment! Is there any hope for us? What is the gospel?

Yes, there is! God is the good Creator and King of the world. He made people to worship Him and live by His good laws. But we are all sinners who have rebelled against Him. We all deserve death--God's just, eternal punishment for our sins. How terrible! But God has good news for us. In His great mercy, God sent His Son Jesus to earth to save sinners. Yes, Jesus, the perfect Son of God, left His home in heaven and became a man. He lived the perfect life that pleases God. (He's the only one who has ever done that!) He offered it up to God His Father as the perfect sacrifice for sins when He suffered and died on the cross. Then, on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead in victory. He had fully paid for the sins of God's people, so they wouldn't have to! Now all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior will receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life with God. They will be His very own special people who will know Him and enjoy Him forever. We can be God's people, too, if we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our own Savior.

Game: Hoop & Holler

Materials

Bible verse written up in large print so that all can see
1 hula hoop for every 2 children

Preparing the Game

1. Make up some questions about the verse and/or story. Use the Bible verse and Story Review Discussion questions, if desired.

Learning the Verse

Some or all of your children may be non- or early readers. Teach the verse in sections, having them say it after you. Repeat a few times. Add clapping or other movement as they say it.

Directions

1. If desired, lead the children in a discussion of a **FEW** of the most important questions before beginning game.
2. Explain the game to them as follows:
Have the children pair up. Give each pair a hula hoop and tell them that you are going to tell them different things that they will do with the hula-hoop after they say the verse all together. Three activities might be: having the children hold hands and jump in and out of the hula hoop, for each word the group recites, rolling it back and forth on each word the group recites,; or having buddies take turn while one person from each group sees how far through the verse he can keep the hula hoop going. Allow the children to think up other activities. Repeat the verse again after each activity.

Game continues as time and attention span allow.

Optional **TAKING IT TO OTHERS** Activity: Quiz Questions

Have the children choose a few of the questions from the game to ask the parents/other children during **TAKING IT TO OTHERS** time. Help pre-readers by whispering the question in their ear and letting them ask it aloud to the parents/other children. Make sure you read the Bible verse aloud before you ask your questions.

Directions:

1. Write words to song in large print before class.
2. Play the song for the children, helping them follow along on the song sheet.
3. Discuss the song, using a few questions from the discussion sheet. *Don't use them all!*
4. Introduce sign language for key words of your choice from sign language sheet for your song. Use as few or as many as you think the children can learn.
5. Sing and sign the song. Sign language as well as large format lyrics and sheet music are found in the PFI Unit Songbook or online.
6. If desired, play the Song Game.

Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Presenting and Singing the Song

1. Sing and sign the song, encouraging the watching children/parents to join in.
2. Ask the class some of the questions listed below. The Bible Truth Connection Question is particularly good to help them understand how the song ties in with the Bible Truth.

Love the Lord

Love the Lord your God with all your heart,
 Love the Lord your God with all your soul,
 Love the Lord your God with all your mind,
 This is the first and greatest command.

And the second is like it...

Love your neighbor as yourself,
 Love your neighbor as yourself,
 Love your neighbor as yourself,
 All the law and prophets hang on these two commandments.
 Matthew Twenty-two, thirty-seven through forty.

Listen to it on PFI NIV Songs 7, Track 19

Song Game: Mimic Me!**Materials**

Sign Language
 Song

Preparing the Game

None.

Playing the Game

1. Practice the song and signs until the children know them well. Choose a person to be the leader and let them decide upon an action for everyone to do as they sing the song, such as jump on one foot, etc.
2. Sing the song while doing the chosen action.
3. Select another child to be the leader.
4. If desired, you can choose a different action for different important words in the song, such as jump on one foot when you sing the word "grace", but clap your hands when you sing the word "Jesus". Ask the children the meaning of each of the words before adding in their action.

Game continues as number of questions, time, and attention span allow.

STORY REVIEW

Directions: Read and discuss Bible Truth, using a FEW of the questions. Play game. Feel free to modify the game to fit your children.

General Story Questions

1. Why was Jerusalem in ruins? *The LORD had allowed the Babylonians to destroy it when the people of Judah kept refusing to turn back to love Him and others according to His good laws.*
2. What did the priests and leaders do in Jerusalem at the ruins of the Temple? *They rebuilt the Altar of Burnt Sacrifices.*
3. What did the people, priests and leaders pray to God after making their sacrifices? *To love God and love each other according to His good laws.*
4. What about the people's sacrifices showed that they were once more rebelling against God? *They presented Him with sick and diseased animals instead of perfect ones as the LORD required.*
5. What about the people's grain offerings showed that they were once more rebelling against God? *They only gave Him part of what He told them in His law to present.*
6. Why was it bad to marry the women they had begun to marry? *The women followed idols instead of the LORD. They would not want to obey God's laws or love Him or others as He wanted them to.*
7. What did the Lord do to help the people of Judah see they had stopped following His good laws? *He did not bless them with as big harvests. He did not protect them from enemies who wanted to attack them.*
8. What did the people of Judah accuse God of when their harvests were not plentiful and their enemies threatened to attack them? *That it was His fault. He wasn't taking care of them as He should.*
9. What did the LORD tell the people of Judah to do? *To repent of their sins and turn back to loving Him and others according to His good laws.*
10. What did the LORD promise to do for them if they turned back to Him? *He would bless them greatly.*
11. Did anyone turn back to the LORD? *Only the few, godly people.*
12. Why were the godly people discouraged? How did the LORD encourage them? *Because so few would turn back to the LORD. He promised them that the Messiah, Jesus, would come. He would save them from their sins; He would come back and destroy all wickedness once and for all.*
13. Why do you think the LORD gave Jesus the nickname "Sun of Righteousness"? *Because Jesus would be completely without sin—perfectly righteous. When He came He would brilliantly display God's righteousness, just like the sun brightly display light. Also, He would give righteousness to His people, just like the sun gives light to the world. He would be the perfect sacrifice for His people's sins that they might have His perfectly righteous standing before the LORD and be saved.*

Bible Truth Connection Questions

What does this story have to do with our Bible Truth? *The people of Judah knew that the heart of God's Law was love, but their hearts were often too filled with rebellion and hate to keep His Laws. The godly few repented of their sins and turned to the LORD. Malachi gave them hope of the day when Messiah Jesus would come as the "Sun of Righteousness" He would pay for His people's sins, once and for all. They would have the Holy Spirit fill their hearts with love for Him and His good laws. Then one day, He would come back and do away with all wickedness forever. Then they would rejoice to perfectly live lives that loved God and each other forever.*

Bible Verse Connection Question

1. What does the story have to do with our **Bible Verse: Matthew 22:37,39-40**: "'Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?' Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest command. And the second in like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."?

Loving the LORD with all their heart and loving each other as themselves was how the LORD called His people to live. One day, at the end of the world, Jesus will put an end to all sin and death. Then, God's people will truly love the LORD and each other in this way. And they will do it forever!

Life Application Questions

1. How are God's people today like the people of Judah? *They still have hearts that rebel against Him and do not live perfect lives of love according to His good laws.*
2. How are God's people today NOT like the people of Judah? *Their hearts are filled with the Holy Spirit. He works more and more love for God and each other in their hearts so that they love in ways they never could before.*
3. Why is it so hard for us to keep God's Laws, even when we know that they show us how to live lives of love for God and for others? *We have the same rebel hearts that love ourselves more than God or anyone else.*
4. Who will help us to keep God's laws? *Jesus promises to help all of us who come to Him in repentance and faith. He will send His Holy Spirit to live in our hearts and give us more and more strength to love Him and love others, as His Law tells us to. When we go to live with Him, He will change us to perfectly love Him and others, like He does.*

ACTS Questions

1. What is something we can praise God for being that we learned in our story?
Praise God for being so patient with His sinful people. Praise Him for being the Savior of His People. Through Jesus, He will work out His wonderful plan for His people to love Him and each other perfectly.
2. What is something we can confess as sin that we learned in our story?
Confess that many times, like the people of Israel, we know God's laws, but do not want to keep them. We love ourselves more than Him and others. We deserve His punishment. We need a Savior!
3. What is something we can thank God for that we learned in our story?
We can thank God for promising to send a Savior to save all those who turn from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior. We can thank Him for doing away with all wickedness one day.
4. What is something we can ask God for that we learned in our story?
We can ask God to work in our hearts, helping us to turn away from our sins and trust Jesus as our own Savior. We can ask Him to help us to truly love Him most and to love others as we love ourselves.

The Gospel

1. We are all sinners. We all fail to love God and love others as God requires. We all deserve His punishment. Is there any hope for us? What is the gospel?
Yes, there is! God is the good Creator and King of the world. He made people to worship Him and live by His good laws. But we are all sinners who have rebelled against Him. We all deserve death--God's just, eternal punishment for our sins. How terrible! But God has good news for us. In His great mercy, God sent His Son Jesus to earth to save sinners. Yes, Jesus, the perfect Son of God, left His home in heaven and became a man. He lived the perfect life that pleases God. (He's the only one who has ever done that!) He offered it up to God His Father as the perfect sacrifice for sins when He suffered and died on the cross. Then, on the third day, Jesus rose from the dead in victory. He had fully paid for the sins of God's people, so they wouldn't have to! Now all who turn away from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior will receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life with God. They will be His very own special people who will know Him and enjoy Him forever. We can be God's people, too, if we turn from our sins and trust in Jesus as our own Savior.

Game: Keep It Under Your Hat

Materials

Paper and pencil
5+ hats
Story Review Questions

Preparing the Game

1. Choose 20+ questions for your game from the Story Review Discussion Questions, or make up your own.
2. Write each question on a separate, small piece of paper. Assign a point value to each question, based on difficulty. Pin a question to the underside of each hat, except one. Save the unused questions to pin to the hats when the first set have all been selected.
3. Place all the hats on the floor or on the table.

Playing the Game

Divide the children into two teams. Teams will take turns choosing one of the hats and answering the question pinned to the hat. Each question is worth the number of points indicated on the question. If the first team does not get the right answer, then the question goes to the other team who can win half the points for a correct answer.

When the blank hat is chosen, the team who chooses gets to come up with their very own question to try to stump the other team. If they can, then they get the highest point value worth on the question AND another turn. If the other team gets the right answer, then play continues as normal. When all the questions on the hats have been answered, pin a new set in, changing the empty hat.

Game continues until all children get to choose a hat, or as number of questions, time, and attention span allow.

Non-competitive Option

Divide the children into two groups. Set a target point number for whole group, telling them that together they are going to see how many turns it takes to reach the target number. Have one set of children be the hat wearers and the other set be the hat pickers. Once one set of children have had a turn, switch out hat wearers and the hat pickers. If someone chooses the blank hat, they make up a question to ask the rest of the children. Tally number of turns on a piece of paper. When the target number has been reached, start over and try to reach the target number in fewer turns.

Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Quiz Questions

Have the children choose a few of the questions from the game to ask the parents/other children during TAKING IT TO OTHERS time. Help pre-readers by whispering the question in their ear and letting them ask it aloud to the parents/other children.

CASE REPLAY ACTIVITIES

Use this guide to review the Case Story and act it out for others to enjoy!

CASE REPLAY, JR: YOUNGEST CHILDREN

Description: The children will act out the story together, everyone doing the same action/sound effect at the same time. This activity is most suitable for kindergarteners.

Materials

The Case RePlay, Jr. script for younger children

Preparation

1. Read through the script and write in the blanks along the side possible actions/sound effects the children could do to act it out.

Instructions

1. Tell the children that they will be re-enacting the story together as you tell it.
2. As you read the script, lead the children in actions/sound effects to do with you.
3. If desired, you can read the script and stop at certain sentences and ask them what a good action/sound effect would be to act out what you just read.
4. Repeat the re-enactment one or two times more.

CASE REPLAY, SR: OLDER CHILDREN

Description: The children act out the story as a three-scene play. You will narrate it using the Case RePlay, Sr. script and they will act it out (no spoken words, for the most part), with each child assuming a different character's role. This activity is most suitable for first grade and up. You will review the story, then practice it a few times before performing it for others.

Materials

The Case RePlay, Sr. script

White board or other large format paper

Costumes and props

Preparation

1. Prepare for the play by choosing costumes and props for each character in the story. Decorate the area with any scenery props.
2. Write the words "Beginning," "Middle," "End" on a large piece of paper/whiteboard with plenty of space under each heading. You will use this paper to help the children think about the story as a three-scene play, as it is presented in the script.

Instructions

1. Tell the children that they will get to act out the story as a three-scene play, with a beginning, middle and end section. Tell them that before they can act it out, they need to think it out. as you narrate it with your script.
2. Take the children's answers as they recount the story, helping them put key incidents in the right order.
3. If desired, when they have filled in their Beginning, Middle, End, read through your whole (real) script, so they hear exactly what you will have them act out.
4. Then tell the children that it's time to practice acting out the story.
5. Assign parts to each child. If you are using costumes, do NOT give them out at this point. They will be a distraction.
6. Have all the children sit on the floor or in chairs on one side of the "stage," then call the characters up in place as their part in the story comes.
7. As you read the script, guide the children in where you want them to move or do to act it out.
8. After going through the whole script once, give out any costumes and props and act out the script once or twice more.

Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Re-enacting the Story

Read the script as the children act out together (younger) or assuming different roles (older) as the other children or the parents watch.

CASE REPLAY, JR--YOUNGER KIDS (KINDERGARTEN) P.2

“Welcome to our play! The name of our story is called: The Case of the Two-faced Lover.

This is an Old Testament story, that starts out about 600 years before Jesus lived on earth.

And now we present: “The Case of the Two-faced Lover.”

Scene 1:

Jerusalem had been the jewel of Judah. Home to great King David and King Solomon. It was the city of the magnificent Temple of the LORD. This was where spotless sacrifices were offered to keep the fellowship between them and their holy God: the LORD. This was where the people gathered to learn God’s Law from the priests. But God’s people rebelled against God and His good and loving laws. They worshiped idols and began to mistreat each other. God sent prophets to urge them to repent or face seventy years of slavery in Babylon, but they would not. So the LORD sent Nebuchadnezzar and his soldiers to smash Judah and Jerusalem. He took back to Babylon the people as his slaves and 5400 silver and gold articles from the Temple as his own.

Actions:

Scene 2:

When the seventy years of slavery had passed, the LORD changed the heart of King Cyrus to let the people go back to Judah and to give them fine linen tunics for the priests, many animals, lots of gold and silver, and all 5400 articles from the Temple. The people rebuilt their towns, then gathered in Jerusalem in the rubble of the Temple grounds. They watched as the priests and leaders rebuilt the altar, then together they offered the first sacrifices to the LORD in seventy years. They confessed their sins and rededicated their lives to love God and His good laws.

Scene 3

But all too soon, the people and the priests forgot their vows to the LORD. They began to bring sick and injured animals for their sacrifices nor they didn’t bring the LORD the full offering from their crops they were supposed to bring. They married women who worshiped idols. The LORD withdrew His blessings from their crops and His protection from their enemies to show them what they had done; but they simply grumbled and blamed Him for their problems. Once more the LORD sent a prophet to urge them to repent so that the LORD would once more bless them. A godly few listened and repented; but most did not. The godly were discouraged about the wickedness of the others. Through Malachi, the LORD encouraged them: He would send a Messiah, His Son Jesus, “the Sun of Righteousness”—purely and perfectly sinless. He would pay for His people’s sins on the cross, once and for all. To all who repented and believed in Him, He would send the Holy Spirit to live in their hearts that they would truly love God and His good ways. Then, at the end of time, Jesus would come back and bring an end to all wickedness forever. In that day, they would leap and rejoice like calves released from their stalls.

Bible Truth Tie-In: The Bible Truth we are learning is: **The Heart of God’s Law Is Love** . Through the prophet Malachi, the LORD urged the people to turn back to loving Him and loving each other by keeping His good laws. He promised great blessings to those who did.

CASE REPLAY, SR--OLDER KIDS (1ST GRADE AND UP) P.3

"Welcome to our play! The name of our story is called: The Case of the Two-faced Lover.

This is an Old Testament story, starts out about 600 years before Jesus lived on earth.

The characters in our story are: the people of Judah, the prophets, King Nebuchadnezzar and his army, Women who worshiped idols, King Cyrus, the prophet Malachi, and Jesus

And now we present: "The Case of the Two-faced Lover."

Scene 1: (Beginning)

Jerusalem had been the jewel of Judah. Home to great King David and King Solomon. It was the city of the magnificent Temple of the LORD. This was where spotless sacrifices were offered to keep the fellowship between them and their holy God: the LORD. This was where the people gathered to learn God's Law from the priests. But God's people rebelled against God and His good and loving laws. They worshiped idols and began to mistreat each other. God sent prophets to urge them to repent or face seventy years of slavery in Babylon, but they would not. So the LORD sent Nebuchadnezzar and his soldiers to smash Judah and Jerusalem. He took back to Babylon the people as his slaves and 5400 silver and gold articles from the Temple as his own.

Scene 2: (Middle)

When the seventy years of slavery had passed, the LORD changed the heart of King Cyrus to let the people go back to Judah and to give them fine linen tunics for the priests, many animals, lots of gold and silver, and all 5400 articles from the Temple. The people rebuilt their towns, then gathered in Jerusalem in the rubble of the Temple grounds. They watched as the priests and leaders rebuilt the altar, then together they offered the first sacrifices to the LORD in seventy years. They confessed their sins and rededicated their lives to love God and His good laws.

Scene 3: (End)

But all too soon, the people and the priests forgot their vows to the LORD. They began to bring sick and injured animals for their sacrifices nor they didn't bring the LORD the full offering from their crops they were supposed to bring. They married women who worshiped idols. The LORD withdrew His blessings from their crops and His protection from their enemies to show them what they had done; but they simply grumbled and blamed Him for their problems. Once more the LORD sent a prophet to urge them to repent so that the LORD would once more bless them. A godly few listened and repented; but most did not. The godly were discouraged about the wickedness of the others. Through Malachi, the LORD encouraged them: He would send a Messiah, His Son Jesus, "the Sun of Righteousness"—purely and perfectly sinless. He would pay for His people's sins on the cross, once and for all. To all who repented and believed in Him, He would send the Holy Spirit to live in their hearts that they would truly love God and His good ways. Then, at the end of time, Jesus would come back and bring an end to all wickedness forever. In that day, they would leap and rejoice like calves released from their stalls.

Bible Truth Tie-In: The Bible Truth we are learning is: **The Heart of God's Law Is Love** . Through the prophet Malachi, the LORD urged the people to turn back to loving Him and loving each other by keeping His good laws. He promised great blessings to those who did.

Sick, Imperfect Sheep on the Altar of Burnt Offerings

Description

Children will make a clay Altar of Burnt Offerings and a sick, imperfect sheep to put on it.

Materials

Brown clay, about a fist full per child (or salt dough colored with food coloring--recipe on next page)

Black, gray and red markers

Giggly eyes, if desired

Sheep outline copied onto cardstock for each child (next page)

¼" white and/or black pom-poms

Glue sticks

Preparing the Craft

1. Separate the clay/salt dough into a clumps the size of a fist.
2. Make a copy of the sheep outline for each child and cut out along sides.
3. Set out cotton balls/white pom-poms, giggly eyes enough for each child's sheep.
4. Set out glue sticks or small bowls of glue for the children to easily share.
5. Set out a toothpick, gray/black markers for each child.

Making the Craft

1. Show the sample of the craft you have made.
2. Have children shape their clay/salt dough into an Altar, using Picture #1 to get an idea of what it looked like.
3. Have them make sheep by gluing pom-poms, giggly eyes, etc. to the sheep outline and filling in other facial and other body details with the markers. Use the red marker to make spots/imperfections on the sheep.
4. Fold sheep along top, allowing it to stand up.
5. If there is time, children may add additional carvings to stone slab.
6. Place finished sheep on altar.

Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Craft Presentation

If you are presenting the craft to other children or parents the children can hold up their crafts (or your model craft) and read their Bible Truth Connection answers to explain the importance of the craft.

Salt Dough Recipe

2 cups of flour

1 cup of table salt

1 cup of water

1 tablespoon of vegetable oil (makes it a little easier to knead)

1 tablespoon of wallpaper paste (gives the mixture more elasticity)

1 tablespoon of lemon juice (makes the finished product harder)

Directions

Put plain flour, salt and any, or all, of the optional ingredients into a mixing bowl and gradually add the water, mixing to soft dough. This should be neither too sticky, in which case add more flour, nor too dry, in which case add more water. When mixed remove from the bowl, place on a flat surface and knead for 10 minutes to help create a smooth texture. If possible it is best to let the dough stand for approximately twenty minutes before beginning a project. Unused dough can be stored in the fridge, in an airtight container or cling film, for up to a week. Children always love making models, and as long as you don't add wallpaper paste all of the ingredients are natural. So if they are tempted to put it in their mouths, all it will do is taste incredibly salty.

CASE CRAFT**Discussion Guide****Instructions:**

As the children are settled into making their craft, ask them these questions to help them understand the craft's significance. Use the answers provided to guide the children's answers.

Discussion Questions

1. Where did the people and the priests offer up worship gifts (sacrifices) to the LORD? *On the Altar of Burnt Offerings at the Temple in Jerusalem.*
2. What were these offerings supposed to be like? *They were to be only the best, most perfect sheep and other animals and grain.*
3. What were the offerings like that the people and the priests made? What did this say about their love of God?
They only offered up sick, imperfect sheep and other offerings because they didn't love the LORD enough to sacrifice to Him their best animals as He deserved and His laws required.
4. What is the Bible Truth that we are learning?
The Heart of God's Law Is Love.
5. What does our craft have to do with our Bible Truth: The Heart of God's Law Is Love?
The people brought their sick and diseased animals to offer the LORD as if the point of God's Law was sacrificing something to the LORD. But the heart of God's Law Is Love. Even the kind of sacrifice someone brought showed how much they loved the LORD. The people's sick and diseased sacrifices showed how little they cared about Him.
6. What can this craft help us remember?
How we care about and obey God's Laws tells us something about our love for Him. We can ask God to help us love Him and others better by keeping His Laws more completely.

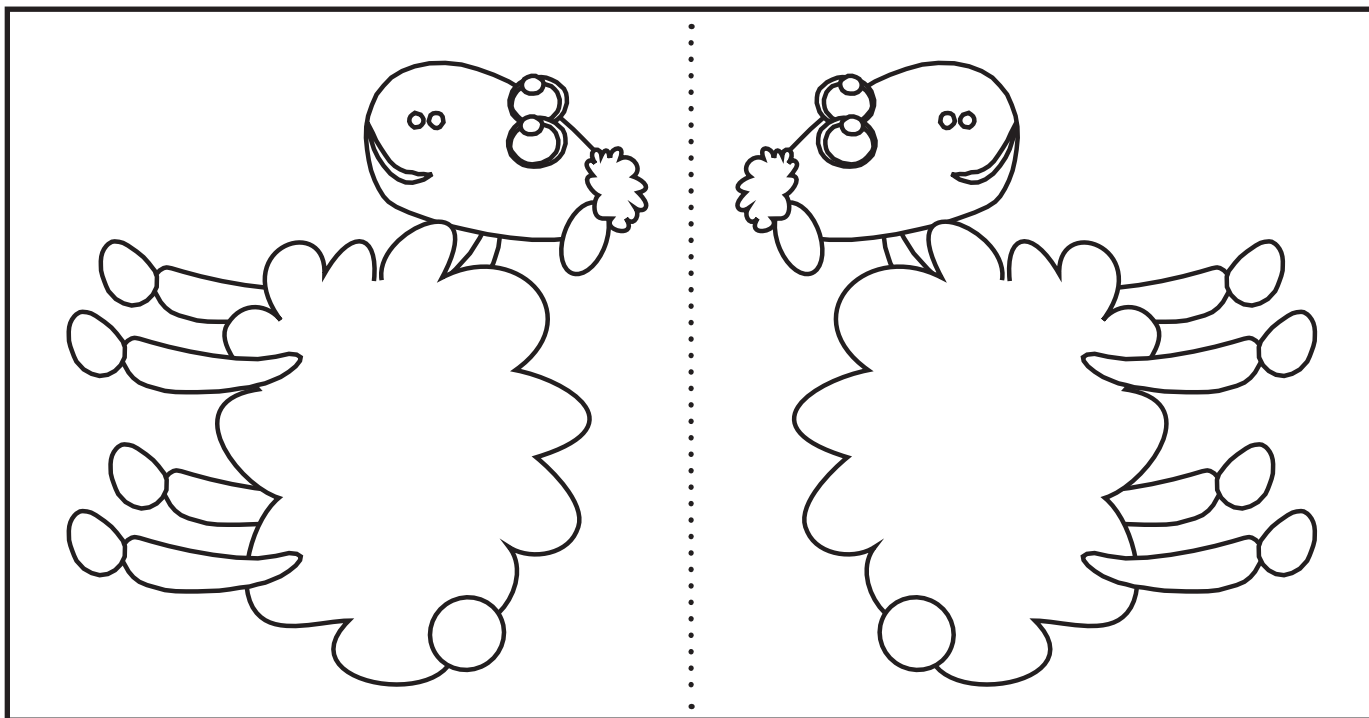
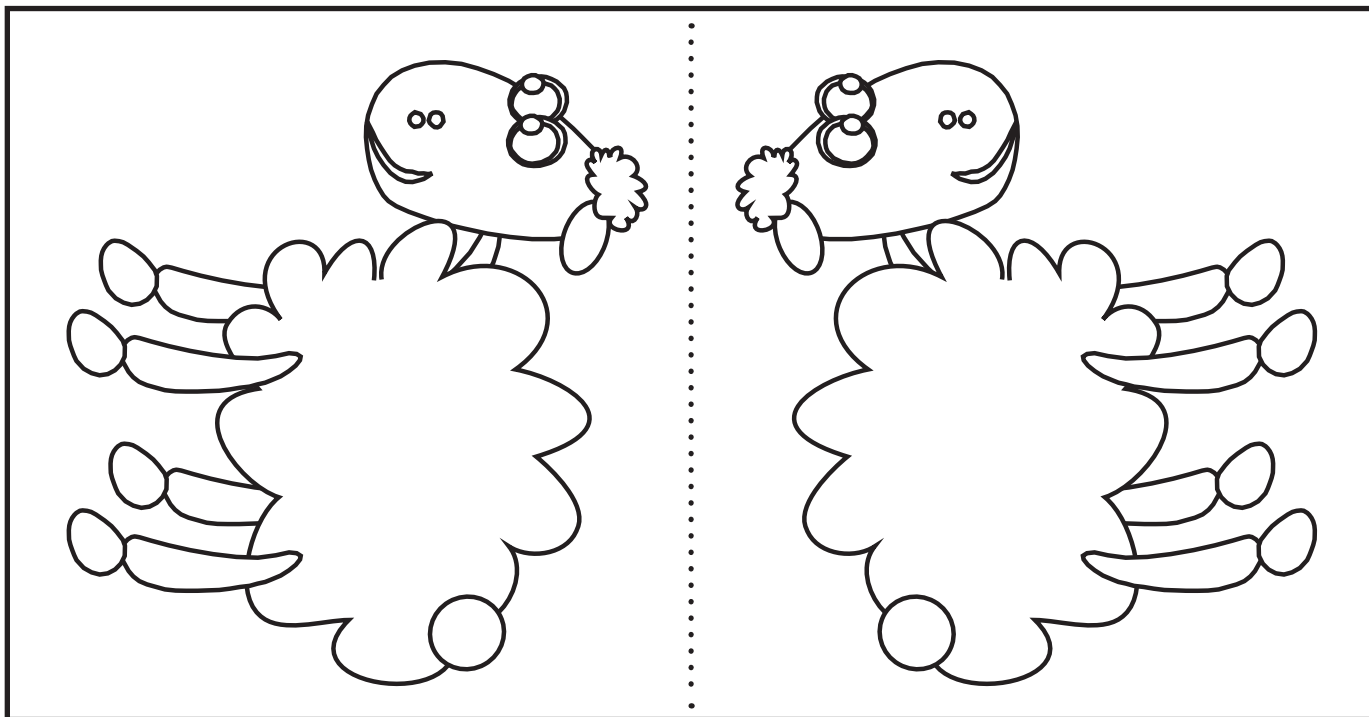
TAKING IT TO OTHERS**Craft Presentation****Instructions:**

Have children hold up your model craft/their crafts. Choose five children (or you say) the five sections below to explain the craft's importance.

Presentation:

1. Our craft is: Sick, Imperfect Sheep on the Altar of Burnt Offerings.
2. At the Temple, the people and the priests offered up sick, imperfect sheep on the Altar of Burnt Offerings because they did not love the LORD enough to sacrifice to Him their best animals as He deserved and His laws required.
3. Bible Truth 5 is: The Heart of God's Law Is Love.
4. The people brought their sick and diseased animals to offer the LORD as if the point of God's Law was sacrificing something to the LORD. But the heart of God's Law Is Love. Even the kind of sacrifice someone brought showed how much they loved the LORD. The people's sick and diseased sacrifices showed how little they cared about Him.
5. Our craft can help us remember that how we care about and obey God's Laws tells us something about our love for Him. We can ask God to help us love Him and others better by keeping His Laws more completely.

Note: Even non-readers can participate in presenting the craft, if you will whisper what they are to say in their ear and let them say it aloud for the others to hear.



BEFORE CLASS:**1. PICK YOUR PERSON**

VIPPs can be anyone in your church! Typically, they fall into 6 categories: Church staff, Elders, Deacons/deaconesses, Special Volunteers (people who aren't paid, but spend a lot of time helping out in particular ways), Supported Workers (aka missionaries), and Church Members.

2. GATHER YOUR FACTS

Use the VIPP Information Sheet to write down the facts about your VIPP. The information on this worksheet is used in the VIPP activities, listed in the "Choose an Activity" section below.

DURING THE ACTIVITY:**1. INTRODUCE YOUR VIPP**

Introduce your VIPP to the children, using the VIPP Information Sheet. Fill in a set of VIPP Clue Cards with the information for your VIPP. If desired, you can even have the actual person come into class for the children to meet.

Need help describing what someone does for the church in a kid-friendly way? Check out the list of common VIPPs on the Praise Factory website in the PFI resources. There are lots of kid-friendly descriptions for common VIPP's, such as pastors, elders, deacons and a lot more.

2. PRAY!

Lead the children in praying for the VIPP. Ask the children if they would like to pray for one of the VIPPs prayer requests. Even non-readers can pray for the VIPP if you whisper the prayer request in their ear, then let them say it aloud. Never force a child to pray!

3. CHOOSE AN ACTIVITY

There are two activities you can use to help the children learn about the VIPP:

VIPP Clue Cards: These are nine coloring sheets in which children fill in the nine things they learn about the VIPP from the VIPP Information Sheet. Photocopy a set of each child. Use as few or as many of these Clue Cards as you desire.

VIPP Game: This is a game that uses a set of Clue Cards for one or two VIPPs.

Choose a VIPP and fill in his/her information on the VIPP Information Sheet. Fill in a set of VIPP Clue Cards with the information for your VIPP. Tell the children about the VIPP, having them fill in the VIPP Clue Cards with the key facts as they learn them. Write any words the children need to write on a white-board or other piece of paper so they can see how to spell them. Help younger children write these words on their clue cards. Ideas for how to tell the children about many common VIPPs are listed at praisefactory.org with the resources for this Bible Truth.

Optional TAKING IT TO OTHERS Activity: Introduce and Pray for the VIPP

If you are presenting the VIPP to other children or parents you can assign children to hold up the 10 clue cards and say what each card tells about the VIPP. (Or, you can have the children hold them up as you tell what each one means.) Then lead the children in praying for the VIPP.

Game: Mix and Match

Materials

Information for two VIPPs
2 Set of Clue Cards
Bag

Preparing the Game

1. Fill in one set of clue sheets for each of the VIPPs you are using.
2. Put all the Clue Cards in a bag, except for the ones with the names and pictures of the VIPPs.

Playing the Game

Reveal: Tell the children about each VIPP, showing them your filled-in clue cards as you tell about them.

Review: Put all the Clue Cards for both VIPPS in the bag. Mix up. Have children take turns pulling clues out and have the class try to remember which clue goes with which VIPP. You can make this a team game by splitting the children into two teams and giving points when their team players correctly put a clue in the right place.

VIPP INFORMATION SHEET

VIPP NAME:

WHAT VIPP LOOKS LIKE

Man or Woman? _____

Hair color? _____

Eye color? _____

FAVORITE ANIMAL

FAVORITE FOOD

FAVORITE FREE TIME ACTIVITY

WHAT VIPP DOES DURING WEEK

VIPP GROUP OF SERVICE:

Church Member

Deacon

Elder

Church Staff

Special Volunteer

Supported Worker
(Missionary)

3 WAYS VIPP SERVES CHURCH

**3 WAYS TO PRAY FOR
THE VIPP**
