**Greatest Commandment Lenten Devotion: at home and at church**

**Need:**

* **Home:**
  + **Lenten Scripture and Candle Kit**
* **Church:**
  + **Posters of Lenten Scripture**
  + **Center Floor Prayer Path (Made out of table cloth with symbols on it)**
  + **Optional: Sand tray scripture (Each of the symbols hidden in the sand)**

**Lenten Scripture:**

*“‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’[*[*c*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=luke+10&version=NIV#fen-NIV-25391c)*]; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.”* (Luke 10:27)

**Supporting Scriptures:**

**NOTE:**

* The *Shema* is the first scripture Jewish children learn. It is posted on their doors and wear them (in tiny boxes) bound on their hands and foreheads.
* The fact that the greatest commandment is in all 3 synoptic gospels means it is IMPORTANT!
  + And the fact that a similar command, while not the same verbiage, is found in John further points to it’s importance.
    - **34**“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. **35**By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (John 13: 34-35)

**Duet. 6:4 (The Shema):**

“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. And these words that I command to you today shall be on your heart.

**Luke 10:25- 28:**

**25**On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

**26**“What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”

**27**He answered, “‘**Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’[**[**c**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=luke+10&version=NIV#fen-NIV-25391c)**]; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself**.’[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=luke+10&version=NIV#fen-NIV-25391d)]”

**28**“You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

**Matthew 22:34-40**

**34**Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. **35**One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: **36**“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

**37**Jesus replied: **“‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.**’[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%2022&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23910c)] **38**This is the first and greatest commandment. **39**And the second is like it: ‘**Love your neighbor as yourself.’**[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%2022&version=NIV#fen-NIV-23912d)] **40**All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

**Mark 12:28-34**

**28**One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?”

**29**“The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+12&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24703e)] **30Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’[**[**f**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+12&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24704f)**] 31The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’[**[**g**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+12&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24705g)] There is no commandment greater than these.”

**32**“Well said, teacher,” the man replied. “You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. **33**To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.”

**34**When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions.

**Lent At Church:**

**Opening**

*We will spend Lent pondering what it means to love God…heart, soul, strength, mind and neighbor as self.*

* Experience scripture 3 ways (Trinity: Creator, Son, Holy Spirit)
  + Say core scripture using poster (point to symbols as you speak)
  + Say core scripture using the prayer poses (SEE ATTACHED)
  + Center scripture path
    - *Made out of a tablecloth with the symbols on it.*
    - Give each child and electric candle to carry as they walk around the prayer path.
    - Invite the children/teens to walk around the edges of the path, stopping at each symbols and pondering a moment.
    - After they ponder all five symbols, invite them to place their candle in the middle as a vow to try and love God with their whole heart, soul, strength and mind.
    - As each child finishes invite them to sit quietly while the other children complete the path’
    - Ring a chime and have them sit in complete silence for 30 seconds.
    - Read the scripture again.

OPTIONAL 4th way to ponder the scripture:

Have sand tray with each symbol hidden in the sand… let the children find each symbol and put them in order of the scripture. It will be a great way to memorize the scripture.

**AT HOME**

**In person:**

* Lenten Prayer Kit:
  + Prayer centerpiece
  + Electric candle
* See attached:
  + Prayer centerpiece
  + Letter to parents (To be printed on the back of the centerpiece… feel free to change it and make it your own personal letter)