

Today's Suggested Schedule—February 2026, Week 2

Bible Story: The Most Important Commandment • *Matthew 22:34-40*

Bottom Line: Love God. Love others.

Conversation Starter: How have others shown love to you?

Monthly Memory Verse: *"I give you a new command. Love one another. You must love one another, just as I have loved you."* • John 13:34 NIV

Supplies NOT Included In the Activity Bags

Bible Story Review: Bible Story Extension and Discussion Questions

Memory Verse Activity: Verses to Take with You

Bibles

Prayer Activity: Make It Personal with Prayer

Coloring supplies

Prayer books from Week 1

Bible Story Summary

During Week 2, we explore the Most Important Commandment. Several religious leaders try to trap Jesus with a trick question: basically, choose your top commandment so everyone can take you down for picking the wrong one. Just how many rules are we talking about here? We revisit the original Ten Commandments in Exodus, as well as the additional 603 laws and the extras added around them by the religious leaders. Instead of debating, Jesus rolls them all into two simple commands. [BOTTOM LINE] Love God. Love others.

1. Bible Story Extension

What You Need:

- No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Start by asking: “What is your favorite thing to do? What is a talent or hobby you have?”
- After a few kids share, transition the conversation by asking: “How can you use that thing you love to do to love God or love others?”
- Give them some examples to get them thinking:
 - “If you love to draw, how could you use that to love God or others?” (*You can draw a picture for someone who is sad; you can create art for the church*)
 - “If you love playing video games, how could you use that to love others?” (*You can be a good sport online; you can invite a new kid to play with you*)
 - “If you love to bake, how could you use that to love God or others?” (*You can make cookies for a neighbor; you can thank God for the food He provides.*)
- Let the kids brainstorm and share their own creative ideas.

What You Say:

“These are incredible ideas! It shows that ‘loving God’ and ‘loving others’ isn’t just something we do at church. We can do it everywhere, using the exact talents and interests God gave us. Jesus took the massive list of laws and simplified them down to two. Jesus said the most important commandment and the second most important are: *“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Love him with all your mind.” This is the first and most important commandment. And the second is like it. “Love your neighbor as you love yourself”* (Matthew 22:37-39 NIV).

2. Discussion Questions

Ask:

- Jesus said the most important commandment is to love God with all your heart, soul, and mind. What does it look like to love God with all of who you are—not just your words, but your thoughts, choices, and feelings?
- The second most important commandment says to love your neighbor as yourself. What are some ways it might actually be hard to love yourself—or hard to love others the same way? How can God help you do both?
- Jesus simplified over 600 laws into two commands—love God and love others. Why do you think love was the foundation of everything God wanted His people to do?
- When you think about your normal day—school, friends, family—where do you think it’s easiest for you to show love, and where is it hardest? What could help you love better in the hard places?
- The story says the Holy Spirit can nudge us to notice people who need love. How can you stay aware of those “nudges” during your day, and what’s one practical way you could respond when you sense one?

3. Verses to Take with You

What You Need:

- Bibles
- Prepared “Memory Verse Puzzle” Activity Page in a zip-top bag

What You Do:

- Give every kid a Bible.
- Invite them to look up John 13:34 using the Bible Navigation Tips below.

Finding verses with 4th-5th graders: Ask kids to tell you if the book of the Bible they’re looking for is in the Old Testament or New Testament. If it’s in the Old, instruct kids to flip slowly, starting at the front of the Bible and heading toward the back, until they find the book they’re looking for. If it’s in the New, instruct kids to start flipping from the back, going forward to find the book they’re looking for. Once they find the book, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. First, have them find the chapter they’re looking for. Then explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell kids to find the verse within the chapter they’ve already found.

- Read the Memory Verse together out loud several times.
- Encourage the kids to set the Bibles aside.
- Divide the kids into two groups.
- Give each group a zip-top bag containing pieces from the “Memory Verse Puzzle” Activity Page.
- Challenge the kids to pour out the pieces, and be the first group to put the verse in the correct order.
- Recite the verse together as a group once everyone has finished.

What You Say:

“Great job putting all the words to our Memory Verse in order! Jesus’ new command in our verse is the same as one of the greatest commandments from our story. He wants us to love one another, because that’s how He loves us. When we love each other, we are showing the world what God is like. We can love God by getting to know Him through His Word, the Bible. Our goal is to: **[Bottom Line] Love God. Love others.**”

4. Make It Personal with Prayer

What You Need:

- Kids' "Prayer Journal" Activity Page from Week 1 with their names on them
- Extra "Prayer Journal" Activity Pages for kids who didn't attend Week 1
- Coloring supplies

What You Do:

- Set out the coloring supplies.
- Give each kid their "Prayer Journal" Activity Page from the previous week.
 - If a new kid attends this week who didn't attend the week previously, give them a blank "Prayer Journal" Activity Page and instruct them to write their name on the front.
- Encourage the kids to turn to page 3 in their "Prayer Journal."
- On the "Love God." page (page 3), encourage the kids to write or draw one specific way they can show love to God this week (e.g., spend 5 minutes praying each day, sing loudly during worship, thank Him for my family).
- After a few minutes, direct the kids to turn to page 4 of their "Prayer Journal"—the "Love others." page.
- On the "Love others." page, encourage the kids to write or draw one specific way they can show love to someone else (e.g., help my sister with her homework, invite the new kid to sit with me, don't argue with my parents).
- Give the kids a few minutes of quiet to work and reflect.
- Let the kids know they'll add to their journal each week.
- Collect the prayer journals and keep them in a safe place for the following weeks.
- Close in prayer.

What You Say:

"These are awesome, practical game plans for loving God and others this week. Let's ask God to help us follow through.

"God, thank You for making it so simple. Thank You for showing us that what matters most is loving You and loving the people around us. Please help us with the things we wrote in our journals today. Give us the strength and the courage to love like Jesus this week. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen."