

A NOTE TO PARENTS

*If I were rich, I'd have the time that I lack
to sit in the synagogue and pray,
And maybe have a seat by the eastern wall;
And I'd discuss the holy books with the learned men
seven hours every day:
That would be the sweetest thing of all ...*

These lines from *Fiddler on the Roof* communicate the intensity of Judaism's love of the Torah, the law of God. This is the heart of Jewish spirituality, and it is vitally important that, as Christians, we do not misunderstand it. Our view of the law of Israel is highly colored by Jesus' condemnation of the arrogant and elitist legalism he perceived in the religious power structure of his time. We tend to lose sight of the joy with which the Hebrew Scriptures approach God's statutes and commandments. Jesus shared this joy: he did not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it. He knew that the poor and ignorant, as well as the rich and learned, hunger for the ravishing "sweetness" of God's law; the clear, energizing vision of holiness that gives life to the rules and commandments.

Children have plenty of experience with both these ways of encountering the Law, or the "rules" that govern their lives. The rules may be a prison for them, a weapon that adults use against them and they use against each other ... or they may be a liberating vision of goodness and right. Ask your child to name some of the rules in your household. Probably the answer will range all the way from "Hang up your pajamas when you get dressed" and "No dessert till you finish your vegetables," to "No hitting, ever." You might try asking what is the single most important rule. When you've heard your child's suggestions (and they might surprise you!), you can use Jesus' summary of the most important laws of God as a model for expressing your own sense of the really basic, important principles in your family, the law that does not oppress but is "sweeter than honey." And remember that any such rule is binding on the parents every bit as much as on the children! Pray together for help to keep your rule with love.

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THE SUNDAY PAPER JUNIOR

Year A
PROPER 25
TRACK 1

The Pharisees asked Jesus, "Which is the most important of all God's laws?"

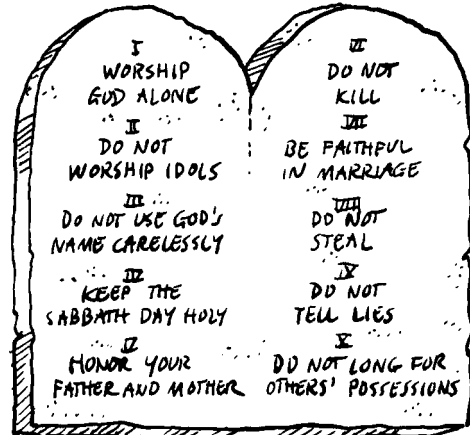


MATTHEW
22:36

In the Bible, there are many rules. They are called **COMMANDMENTS**, or **LAWS**.



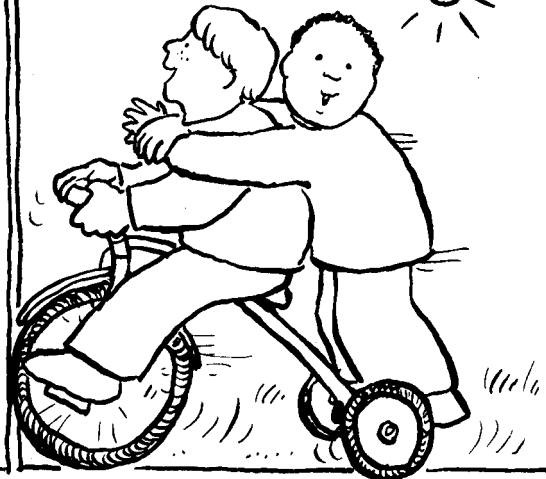
Ten very famous ones are called the **TEN COMMANDMENTS**.



Jesus said that two commandments are greatest of all. One is:



The second is: **LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.**



Jesus said, "All the other laws in the Bible come out of these two commandments."

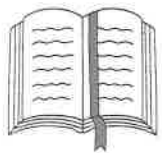
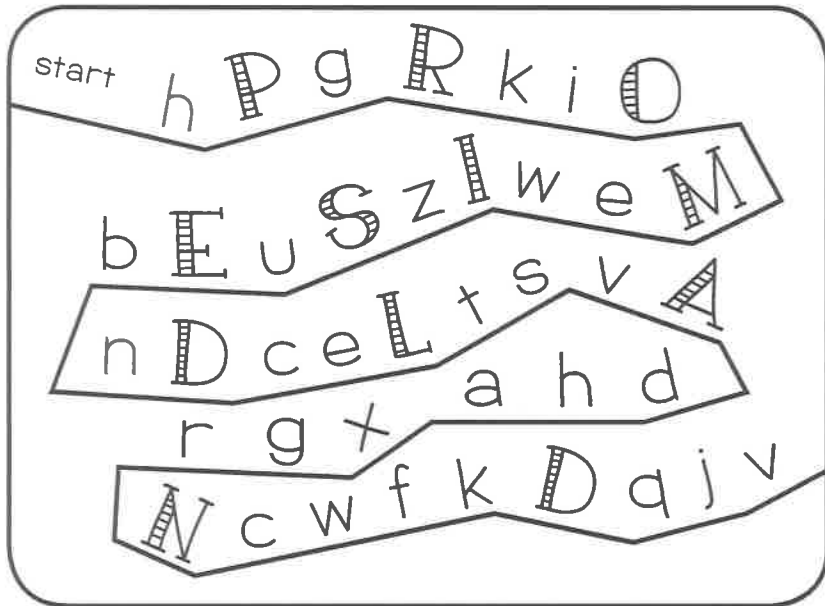
Jesus came to show us that God is all about love. He died to show us God's love. If we love Jesus, we will try to show his love to other people.

Draw some people for this boy to love. What can he do to show that love?



FOLLOW the PATH

God fulfills God's promise to Moses before Moses dies by letting him see something special. What is it? Follow the path of letters, and each time you come to a capital letter, write that letter down at the bottom of the page. When you get to the end of the path, see what is spelled out below.

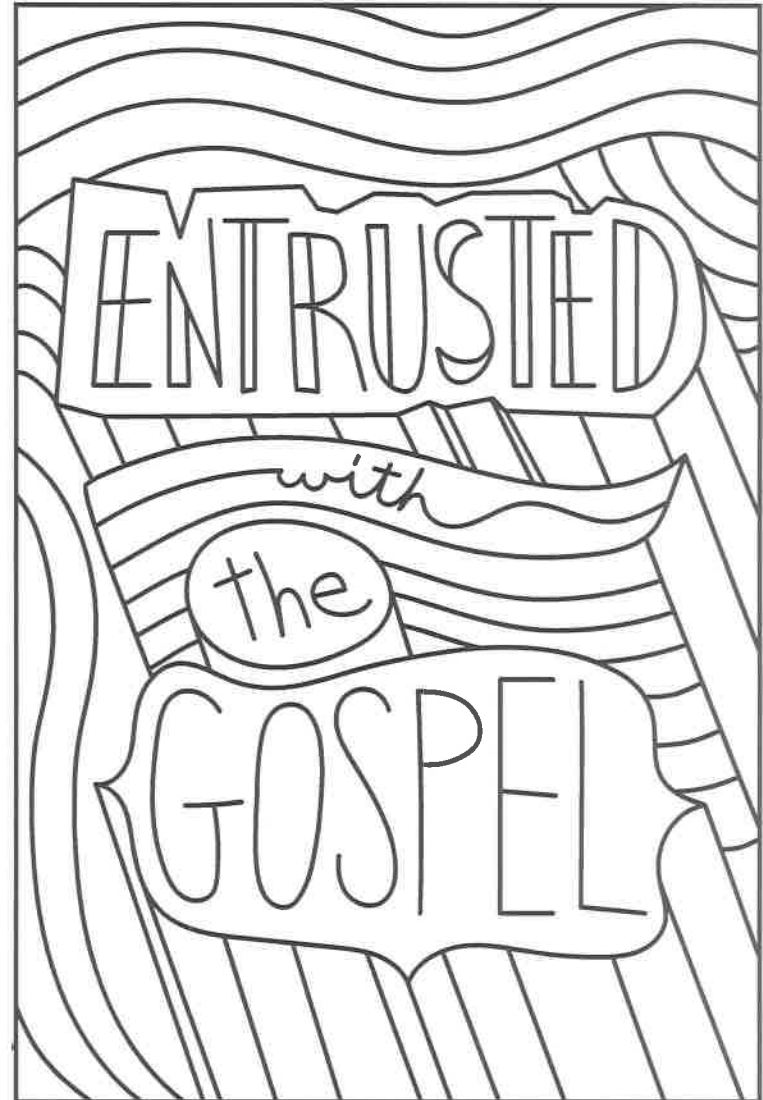


illustrated
CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

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CHILDREN'S WORSHIP • BULLETIN

Activities based on Deuteronomy 34:1-12, Psalm 1,
1 Thessalonians 2:1-8, Matthew 22:34-46.



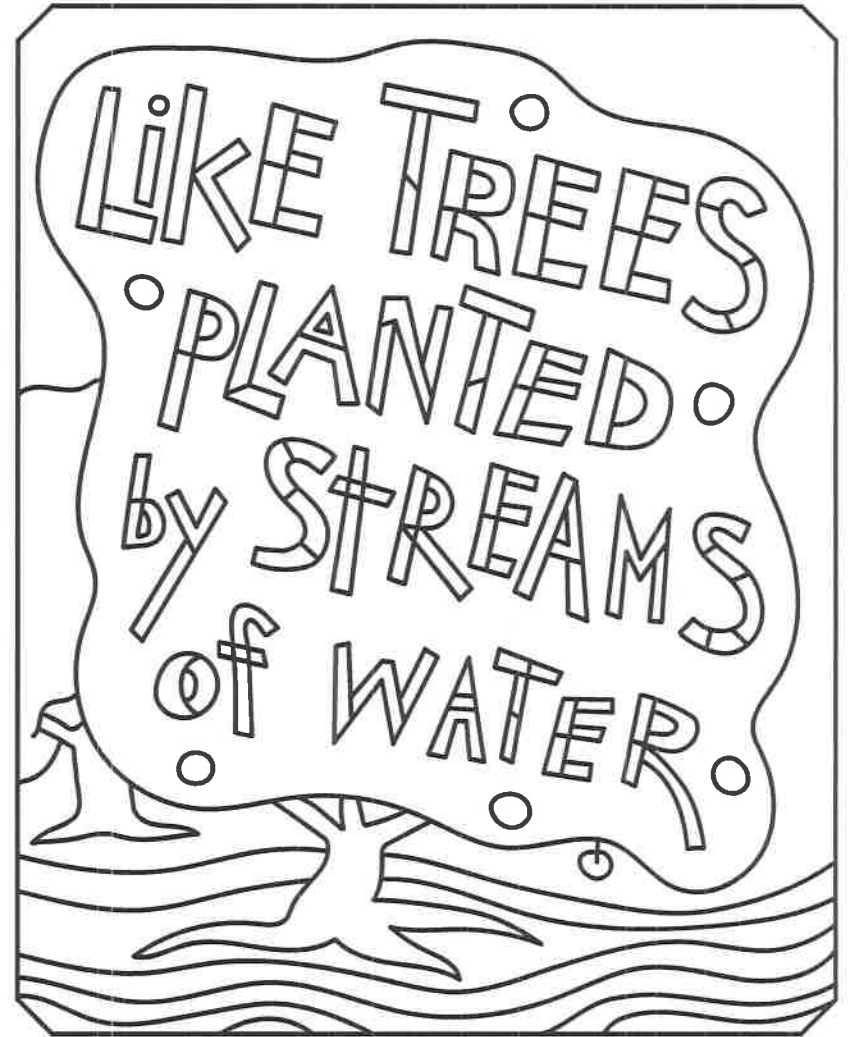


DRAW IT

In Matthew 22, a lawyer asks Jesus what the greatest commandment is. Jesus replies with two - "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" In the two boxes, draw what you think each of these commandments could look like in your life - in the first box, draw how you love God. In the second box, draw how you could love your neighbor.

COLOR IN THE WORDS

Color in the words from Psalm 1:3 - "They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither."



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