Tuesday Morning Small Group Lesson 2026

Lesson Plan: Loving God with all of Our Hearts

Camp Theme: Love God / Love People
Time: 25-30 minutes
Location: Outdoors under the pavilion
Materials Needed: Index Cards & pens for each student

—Start with a Prayer—

Warm-up -

Ask the kids if they are enjoying camp so far. What are they liking the most. Examples: Did you sleep good last night? Did you go swimming at the pool or the lake? Did you eat breakfast? Did you spend all your money? (Save some more questions for the end, in case you are done with the lesson early)

Opener -

Say: "Hey everyone! This morning the speaker talked about loving God first. What stood out to you from the main session last night? What about the lesson today? Did you like the illustration with the big rocks and small rocks?"

(Let 2–3 kids share briefly.)

Say: "The big idea is that loving God has to come first. When you build a house, you start with the foundation, and when you live you life you start with a foundation…God. Today in our small group we're going to look at what it means to love God with all your heart and why that matters for our whole lives."

Read Mark 12:30 (or Deuteronomy 6:5):

"'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'"

Say: "Jesus said this is the greatest commandment. Did you notice it starts with your heart?? It doesn't say 'love God by how good you can be at school'. In the Bible, the heart isn't just the organ that beats.

Who here is really smart and can tell me what heart inside your body does? It pumps blood right? It makes sure your body has all the blood and oxygen it needs to keep

on moving and growing. Now, if you tried to tell that red, beating heart and tell it to love God, do you think it would? What if it tried really really hard, do you think your heart could love God? No way! So when the Bible says, 'love God with all your heart', it isn't talking about your organs, it means something else.

Say: In the Bible, your 'heart' represents our deepest desires, what we care about most, and what we *love* to do. Loving God with all your heart means we don't just *say* He's important. It means we truly want to live for Him. When our heart loves God first, we naturally begin to love people better too. That's how the whole 'Love God / Love People' theme works."

Discussion Questions (Call on some kids or go popcorn style. Model it yourself first if the group is quiet):

Question 1: What are some things kids your age usually desire or want to do most? (video games, sports, friends, phones, etc.)

Question 2: Why do you think God cares so much about our desires and not just our actions?

Say: "God knows that whatever captures our heart will shape our whole life.

Read Proverbs 4:23 out loud to the group.

Proverbs 4:23 says, 'Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.'

Activity - The Pulse Game -

Have all kids hold hands making one big circle. (This can be done standing up or sitting). The leader is the starter, and the kid to the left is the receiver.

Round 1 (The Clear Connection): Tell everyone to close their eyes and pay close attention to the game. Tell them, "We are sending a pulse of God's love down the line." The leader squeezes the hand of the first kid. That kid immediately squeezes the next kid's hand, and so on, passing the squeeze down the circle as fast as possible. When it reaches the leader's opposite hand stop and let everyone know how fast it was.

Time it on your phone if you want. Do it 2 or 3 times to see if they can beat their speed.

Round 2 (The Distracted Connection): Now, tell the kids: "This time, the world is full of distractions. While you are waiting for the squeeze, you have to tap your feet, look around at the other churches, and mentally repeat your favorite video game or hobby in your head. But your eyes must stay open."

Send the squeeze. Because their focus is divided by visual and physical distractions, the reaction time will lag, someone will forget to pass it, or the chain will break entirely.

The Point of the Illustration -

Stop the game and debrief the illustration.

Say: ”What happened when we were totally focused and quiet in Round 1? That’s right, the connection was instant and fast.

Say: ”What happened in Round 2 when your eyes were wandering to other groups and your mind was on other things?" That’s right, the signal got delayed or lost.

Say: ”This is exactly what happens with our hearts. God is constantly trying to send His love, peace, and direction into our lives. But when our hearts are focused on a million other things like screens, sports, camp noise, we miss the signal completely. Guarding your heart means keeping the line to God clear."

Say: If our heart is full of love for God, good things will flow out. We will have better attitudes, make better choices, and really love the people around us. Who in here is perfect and does all these things all the time? Probably nobody. Because sometimes our hearts drift. We get busy with school, sports, screens, and friends, and God slowly moves down the list. What are some things in your life that can take time away from God?

Say: The good news is God doesn’t force us He invites us to fall in love with Him so we want to put Him first.”

Reflection -

Say: Think about your favorite hobby or sport. When you really love something, you don’t have to be forced to do it — you look forward to it, you make time for it, you think about it even when you’re not doing it. That’s the kind of love God wants from us.”

—Give each kid an index card and a pencil.—

Say: Write your Top 3 Priorities right now. Mainly, what you know should matter most. (Give them a minute)

Say: Now, under that write 3 things you actually spend your free time doing when you have a choice. (Give them a minute)

Say: Now, on the back, write one thing you think you could do to help you grow closer to God. Start off by writing, "One way I want to love God more with my heart is…"

Give them 3–4 minutes to write quietly.

Ask 3–4 volunteers to share what they wrote down with the whole group. (Model it yourself first if the group is quiet.)

Practical Application -

Say: Here are three simple ways to love God with all your heart this week:

— Pray Honestly: Talk to God about what you actually want and care about. Tell Him your real thoughts and feelings.

— Read the Bible: Even 5–10 minutes a day. Ask God to speak to your heart and change your desires.

— Worship Freely: Sing or listen to a worship song and actually mean the words. Let it shift your heart toward God.

Say: "Pick one of these three and commit to trying it every day for the rest of camp. When we love God with our hearts, it becomes easier to love the people around us."

Group Prayer & Closing -

Say: "Let's close by praying together. If you're comfortable, you can pray out loud one sentence asking God to help you love Him with all your heart."

(Guide the prayer if needed.)

Extra Questions (if time remains) -

"What's the coolest thing you've done at camp so far?"

“What’s one way you can follow God’s commands at home or school?”

“Who can you tell about what you learned today?”