

Explore It

FOR LEADERS



HOLY LIVING

Matthew 22:36-40 The most important command

Each child will need:

- Pens/pencils and paper or card
- Hand templates on card or paper and scissors (both optional)

You will need:

- Prepare images of people and professions – for example a doctor, a firefighter, policeman, care worker, teacher, lifeboat volunteer, footballer, singer, actor, author, a Salvation Army member – see Start It section
- You may wish to provide hand templates on card, depending on your group – see Action It section

Start It

Screen share images of people and professions – for example, a doctor, a firefighter, policeman, care worker, teacher, lifeboat volunteer, footballer, singer, actor, author, and last of all, a Salvation Army member.

For each example ask what is important to each type of person, what is their priority? Ask the children to sum up in as few words as possible. Quickly discuss how they achieve this goal. (Practise, education, training, experience ...)

Say: In this session we will be exploring more about The Salvation Army, what is our priority and how we can do this. And from what we've just discussed, some of these you already know!

Sing It

Here's a song that will sound very familiar! (From Session One)

'Love one another' by Yancy and Little Praise Party (2 mins 43 secs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=47Kf90d7Tf8>

Tell It

Screenshare: Matthew 22:36-40 (ICB)

'The Pharisee asked, "Teacher, which command in the law is the most important?"

Jesus answered, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind. This is the first and most important command. And the second command is like the first: Love your neighbour as you love yourself. All the law and the writings of the prophets depend on these two commands."

Ask: What are the two most important things that God asks us to do as his followers?

🗨️ **Say:** The Salvation Army is listening to the words of Jesus carefully. We are a church that wants to do everything we can to love God and love others even more than we do now. Loving God and loving others is who we are – it's our identity.

Ask: Over the last three sessions we have thought of lots of different ways that we can love God and love others. How many can you remember? Share them with the group.

🗨️ **Say:** As a church we have been thinking very carefully about how we can love God and love others. We're going to focus on these five words.

Screen share:

- ➔ share
- ➔ serve
- ➔ nurture
- ➔ care
- ➔ seek

Ask: Are there any words that you are not sure about their meaning?

🗨️ **Say:** These five words are The Salvation Army's Mission Priorities, the five things that are really important for us to do. We're going to spend some time looking at each one and the way it will help our church love God and love others.

As you move on to the next Mission Priority, keep reminding the children what has gone before. The aim is for them to remember the five words by the end of the session. To help with this, decide on an action to represent each priority word.

SHARE

Share the good news

(Possible action: hands on each side of the mouth; hands over the heart; waving hands)

🗨️ **Say:** The first way that we are going to love God and love others is by sharing the good news of Jesus.

Song

Here's a song to help us discover why Jesus is the good news.

'Jesus is the good news' by Child Evangelism Fellowship (2 mins 17 secs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mdu1Q5rI0Po>

🗨️ **Say:** Knowing Jesus and knowing that he loves us makes our lives better. This is such a good thing that we can't keep this to ourselves, so we need to let others know about it too.

Ask: How can we share the good news of Jesus with our friends and the people we meet?

SERVE

Serve others without discrimination

(Possible action: open hands; open arms for a hug; arms reaching out)

🗨️ **Say:** Jesus was the perfect example of how we can serve other people no matter who they are.

Video

Jesus and the children by Saddleback Kids (1 min 17 secs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VPUMDVBO7dY>

Discuss

In the clip we saw Jesus being with and helping lots of people from different backgrounds. His disciples wanted to turn the children away as they didn't think they should spend time with Jesus. (Children weren't seen as important back then.)

- ➔ How does it make you feel that Jesus took special time to be with the children?
- ➔ Who else did you notice Jesus serving in the clip?

🗨️ **Say:** Jesus healed the sick and spent time with people no one else wanted to be with. He didn't care about the colour of their skin or where they were from, because we are all made in the image of God.

🗨️ **Say:** Jesus just wanted to help people. Our church, The Salvation Army, wants to do the same. This is another way that we can love God and love others.

NURTURE

Nurture disciples of Jesus

(Possible action: arms growing up; opening hands like a book; hands praying)

🗨️ **Say:** Nurture is a tricky word to understand. It means to look after something so it can grow. In church, we mean it is the way that we support people and help them to love God more. When your group leader spends time with you in the Explore It sessions, they are 'nurturing' you as they help you to learn more about Jesus.

Discuss

- ➔ When you are growing a plant, what do you do to nurture it? (If your group completed the December Explore It sessions then you could refer back to the Christmas trees they started to grow.)
- ➔ Plants need certain things to grow and develop. What kind of things do followers of Jesus need to do to make sure that they keep growing in their faith? (Read the Bible, join together in worship, pray ...)

CARE

Care for creation

(Possible action: mime a large circle; waving arms outstretched on either side; heart shape with hands)

🗨️ **Say:** God created our beautiful planet, and one way we show our love for him is by caring for it.

Video

BBC Planet Earth trailer (1 min 38 secs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xxibm1ODEpl>

Ask:

- ➔ What do you think is the most amazing thing about the world God created?
- ➔ How do you think God feels when he sees how we are looking after the world he created?
- ➔ What are some of the things you could do to help look after our planet?

Here are some additional ideas for the group leader to discuss.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/findoutmore/help-me-out-going-green>

SEEK

Seek justice and reconciliation

(Possible action: mime balance scales with hands; lift arms up from below and reach up; clasp hands in front with fingers intertwined and rock side to side)

🗨️ **Say:** Justice and reconciliation can be tricky words to understand, but it's about things being fair and making life better for all.

Discuss

Discuss with the children the meaning of justice and reconciliation.

The definitions below are to support the leader with the discussion.

Justice:

- ➔ the upholding of what is fair, just, and right.

- the giving out of something that is deserved; reward or punishment.
- a person whose job is to decide questions brought before a court; judge.

Reconciliation:

- the act of reconciling, or the condition of being reconciled, especially in a personal relationship.
- the process of bringing into agreement or consistency.
- 🗨 **Say:** One of the things The Salvation Army does to show how we love God and love others is to seek justice and reconciliation. We seek to make things fair and help people come to an understanding with each other.

Ask:

- What do you think that means? Can you think of any examples?
- Why is it important that we help people reconcile and repair their friendships?

Action It

As a group, practise saying together 'We will ...' then one of the five words with their action. Try and give a rhythm to it, and when your group is ready, see if they can have some fun with it.

Start by saying 'We will love God and love others.' Then say and do the actions all the way though once. 'We will share; we will serve; we will nurture; we will care; we will seek.'

The second time round, be silent for the word share but do the action. Continue, being silent for one more word each time. Then after the whole thing is said with only 'We will ...' being heard, say it all though one more time aloud and finish with 'We will love God and love others.'

We will love God and love others,
We will *share*; we will *serve*; we will *nurture*; we will *care*; we will *seek*.
We will [*share*]; we will [*serve*]; we will [*nurture*]; we will [*care*]; we will [*seek*].
We will [*share*]; we will [*serve*]; we will [*nurture*]; we will [*care*]; we will [*seek*].
We will [*share*]; we will [*serve*]; we will [*nurture*]; we will [*care*]; we will [*seek*].
We will [*share*]; we will [*serve*]; we will [*nurture*]; we will [*care*]; we will [*seek*].
We will *share*; we will *serve*; we will *nurture*; we will *care*, we will *seek*.
We will love God and love others.

Hand reflection

Ask the children to draw round their hand. (Or use a hand template.) In the centre of the palm ask them to write their own name and then write around it 'Love God, love others'. Finally, write one of the priority words down each finger.

- | | |
|-----------|--------|
| → share | → care |
| → serve | → seek |
| → nurture | |

As the children colour in and decorate, discuss ways that they can do each one of these words. If they wish to, they could cut out the hand and decorate the other side with their ideas.

Pray It

- 🗨 **Say:** We have thought about lots of different ways that we can love God and love others as part of The Salvation Army.

Ask: Can you remember the five mission priority words?

- 🗨 **Say:** We thought about how we can share, serve, nurture, care and seek. This isn't just a job for the grown-ups; we're all in it together.

Screen share: Read the prayer together.

Dear Jesus,

As a church, we want to play our part in making sure that everyone knows just how much they are loved by you.

Help us to share your good news with everyone we meet, serve others without discrimination, nurture disciples of Jesus, care for creation and seek justice and reconciliation.

We are never too young to get started, Lord, so we promise to do everything we can to love you, and love the people you created.

AMEN.

Explore It

Remember to send home the Explore It (For Me) and Explore It (Together) ideas for children and families.