

THE ORDER OF SERVICE

- I. Bell tap or organ voluntary as a signal for silence
- II. Singing
- III. The Apostles' Creed
- IV. Prayer, closing with the Lord's Prayer in concert
- V. Singing
- VI. Calling roll of officers and teachers
- VII. Responsive reading of the lesson text by school
- VIII. The Decalogue

THE LESSON

- I. Organ interlude while the classes are being arranged
- II. Class study of the lesson
- III. Warning bell—5 minutes
- IV. Closing bell—silence

THE CLOSING

- I. Singing
- II. Review and application of the lesson
- III. Secretary's report
- IV. The Church School Creed
- V. Singing
- VI. Benediction

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THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; the third day He arose from the dead, He ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Church Universal, the communion of the saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.



THE CHURCH SCHOOL CREED

I believe my A.M.E. Church School must grow and grow; and that I must make it a top priority to make it so. Every member a Christian, every Christian a worker, every worker trained so that a worker need not be ashamed. This we ask in Jesus' name.

LOVE AND DEVOTION

LESSON SCRIPTURE: DEUTERONOMY 6:1-9

FOCUS SCRIPTURE: DEUTERONOMY 6:1-9

Key Verses: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Deuteronomy 6:5

Deuteronomy 6:1-9 (NRSV)

1 Now this is the commandment—the statutes and the ordinances—that the Lord your God charged me to teach you to observe in the land that you are about to cross into and occupy,

2 so that you and your children and your children’s children may fear the Lord your God all the days of your life, and keep all his decrees and his commandments that I am commanding you, so that your days may be long.

3 Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe them diligently, so that it may go well with you, and so that you may multiply greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, as the Lord, the God of your ancestors, has promised you.

4 Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone.

5 You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.

6 Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart.

7 Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise.

8 Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead,

9 and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

VOCABULARY

- **Commandment** – a command; instruction
- **Devotion** – love, loyalty, or enthusiasm for a person, activity, or cause
- **Observe** – notice or perceive (something) and register it as being significant
- **Love** – human love for another, includes family love; to have affection toward
- **Shema** – “to hear”

INTRODUCTION

How do you know when someone loves you? What actions identify love? What do people say to someone they love? What do people do for the person whom they love?

What is love? How do we define love? Merriam Webster defines love as “strong affection for another arising out of kinship (related by blood) or personal ties (a close connection).” Based on that definition, love involves a relationship.

You can tell what a person loves by how they devote themselves to the object of their affections. What’s your favorite sports team? How devoted are you to that team? What do you love to do every day? How devoted are you to it?

BIBLE STORY

Deuteronomy 5:1-5 – Moses tells Israel of God’s commandment that he, Moses, was required to teach them to observe the commandments. Israel had left Egypt and bondage. They are headed to the land God promised. God wanted to make sure the Israelites were taught what they should do before they entered the new land. Therefore, Moses reminds them that they are to fear the Lord all the days of their lives, not only them, but also their children and their children’s children. Israel feared God and at Mt. Sinai (which is also known as

Horeb) where the law was given, Israel solicited God for Moses to serve as their mediator.

Deuteronomy 5:6 – Moses reminds them to observe the commandments that were given to them by God so that their lives would be amazing in the new land, a land that would be so productive, that it would be like a place where milk and honey flowed, just as the Lord had promised.

Deuteronomy 5:7-9 – Moses repeats the first commandment to them, “The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.” Israel knew the Lord, as it was one of the commandments they were taught leaving Egypt. Moses then provided instruction: 1. Keep God’s word in your heart. 2. Recite it (God’s word) to the children and talk about it when you are at home, away, lying down, or getting up. 3. Bind them on your hand and create emblems on your forehead. 4. Write them on the doorpost of your house and the city gates.

LIFE APPLICATION

Loving God is a commandment, not an option. We can all agree it is difficult to love someone when you don’t know the person. It’s easier to love when you know and are familiar with the person’s habits and how they interact with you. How do we approach God’s command, to love God completely?

We are taught to love God completely from our parents, guardians, teachers, preachers, and others. We can only learn to love God by learning to *know* God. We know God by reading God’s word, and then we are able to learn more about God’s attributes. Loving God becomes natural when we are intentional in our quest to know more about God.

How do you demonstrate your love toward God? Is it how you treat others? Is it how you make decisions? Loving God completely means we consider how our actions will affect our relationship with God.

God loves us unconditionally. God doesn't barter love with us. That means God doesn't bargain with our love, for example, "I'll do this for you if you do that for me." God loves us despite what we do, what we say, or what we think.

Be intentional this week to consider how your actions demonstrate complete love and devotion toward God.

SUMMARY

God's law is connected directly to God's love. Understanding the law requires understanding how love is revealed. Love is the link to our relationship with God and humanity. Moses shares God's message with Israel again. God's message describes an eternal love, a love and devotion for God. God instructs Israel not only to love God but to teach their children and future generations to love and obey God and God's commands. God also instructed them to repeat the commands (the law), so they would never forget the law and to write it on their doorposts (the entryways).

God requires us to love God and humanity unconditionally. What do you think hinders us from loving all of humanity if this was the first command God gave? What actions are necessary for us to love others unconditionally—loving them when they do not act the way we think they should act, say the things we want them to say, or do what we want them to do?

This week's challenge: use the hashtag #GodsLove and share a scripture that demonstrates God's love towards humanity on social media. Remember, everyone reading your post may not know or have a relationship with God so be specific in your post as to why that scripture depicts God's love towards us.

CLOSING DEVOTIONS

God, we thank you for loving us; although at times we feel unworthy, you remind us that your love for us is everlasting and never changing. Teach us to love you with the same passion

you have demonstrated love towards us. Help us to read and study your word so we can know you better and allow us to model love toward others. AMEN.

Activity Sheet

Key Verse: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Deuteronomy 6:5 NRSV
I Love...

Draw a heart (the love shape kind) - Write all the things you "love" inside the heart.

What does the Bible say about loving God?

1. Matthew 22:37-39	
2. Deuteronomy 7:8-9	
3. 1 John 5:2-3	
4. John 14:23-24	
5. Mark 12:29-31	
6. 1 John 4:7-8	
7. Luke 10:27-28	

What is the best way to respond to God's love? _____

What I Know About Advent

This week, I will research the full scope of Advent; I will discover its origin, its purpose, how others practice Advent, and its symbolism.

<p>Fact # 1 – About Advent – Its origin</p>	<p>Fact #2 – About Advent – Its purpose</p>
<p>Fact #3 – About Advent – How do others practice Advent?</p>	<p>Fact #4 – About Advent – What are the symbolisms of Advent? Wreath = Candle =</p>

Reflect:

What did you discover that you did not know before the exercise?

What can we do to share this information with others?

What new tradition can you start with your family about Advent?

CHOOSE TO LOVE AND SERVE GOD

LESSON SCRIPTURE: EXODUS 20:1-11; JOSHUA 24

FOCUS SCRIPTURE: JOSHUA 24:1-3 (ENDING WITH “MANY”), 13-15, 21-24

Key Verse: “Choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.” Joshua 24:15

Joshua 24:1-3 (ending with “many”), 13-15, 21-24 (NRSV)

Joshua 24:1-3 (ending with “many”)

1 Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God.

2 And Joshua said to all the people, “Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Long ago your ancestors—Terah and his sons Abraham and Nahor—lived beyond the Euphrates and served other gods.

3 Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan and made his offspring many.”

13-15

13 “I gave you a land on which you had not labored, and towns that you had not built, and you live in them; you eat the fruit of vineyards and oliveyards that you did not plant.

14 Now therefore revere the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord.

15 Now if you are unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”

21-24

21 And the people said to Joshua, “No, we will serve the Lord!”

22 Then Joshua said to the people, “You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the Lord, to serve him.” And they said, “We are witnesses.”

23 He said, “Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your hearts to the Lord, the God of Israel.”

24 The people said to Joshua, and him we will obey.”
“The Lord our God we will serve,

VOCABULARY

- **Idols** – an image or representation of a god used as an object of worship
- **Worship** – the feeling or expression of reverence and adoration for a deity
- **Ancestor** – a person, typically one more remote than a grandparent, from whom one is descended
- **Chariot** – a two-wheeled horse-drawn vehicle used in ancient warfare and racing
- **Possess** – have, own; take as one’s own
- **Witness** – a person who sees an event, typically a crime or accident, take place; a person giving sworn testimony to a court of law or the police

INTRODUCTION

Two little girls begged their grandmother to purchase a puppy for them. Their grandmother did not want the puppy because she knew the girls would not care for the puppy and it would become her responsibility. The little girls begged and made many promises associated with the puppy. Their grandmother gave in to their plea and purchased a little puppy.

The girls named the puppy Mocha. They loved Mocha. They bathed Mocha, walked Mocha, and spent every waking moment with Mocha. Their grandmother became concerned because she noticed the little girls did nothing but cater to their puppy, Mocha. Mocha had taken over everything the girls use to love and do.

Grandma asked the girls why they were so busy with Mocha, and have not played with the other children in the neighborhood or their digital games, and barely completed their schoolwork. The girls’ response, “We love Mocha.”

Is there anything that you allowed to consume your time? Is there anything that you make a priority over everything and everyone else? What causes us to place such importance on people or things?

BIBLE STORY

Joshua 24:1-3 – God wrote the covenant and Israel is the recipient of the covenant. Joshua called all of Israel together at a place called Shechem. He called everyone to gather the elders, judges, and all the leaders of Israel to present themselves before the Lord. Joshua tells the people what the Lord has said. The Lord reminds Israel that they have a history of chasing after other gods.

Joshua 24:13-15 – Joshua reminds Israel how the Lord provided housing, food, and other things. He repeats to Israel the importance to “fear the Lord and serve faithfully,” get rid of the other gods that their ancestors had worshiped. Joshua gives them an ultimatum: “This is the day, make your choice of whom you will serve, the gods of your ancestors or the gods of the Amorites, where you have lived.” Then Joshua affirms his choice, “As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”

Joshua 24:21-24 – Joshua addresses them a third time. Israel’s response is to serve the Lord and not the other gods. Joshua reminds them that they are witnesses against themselves. Joshua speaks a fourth time instructing the Israelites to get rid of all the other gods and serve the Lord with their heart. The people affirm, “We will serve the Lord our God and obey God.”

LIFE APPLICATION

Joshua challenges Israel to get rid of the other gods they have served, like their ancestors did, and serve God wholeheartedly. Today, we still create “idol gods.” The dictionary defines an idol as an image or representation of a god used as an object of worship, a person or thing that is greatly admired, loved, or revered. In the U.S., there was a show called “American Idol.”

If Joshua was to speak to Christians today, would it still be necessary to question if Christians are serving God or gods?

We are busy and consumed by so many things pulling for our time and our attention like television, concerts, entertainment, social media, and going out with friends. We struggle to find time for public worship and if we are honest most of us don't have time for personal (private) worship. We want worship services to be shorter, Bible study on demand, and prayer meetings are becoming endangered occurrences. Who/what are we serving, obeying, or worshipping?

If idols are objects of worship, what are some things that we are in danger of making into gods? Do you think we may serve other gods and not the Lord?

Here's a challenge: first thing in the morning, reflect on what you do routinely when you wake. What is the last thing you do at night before going to bed?

SUMMARY

Many people have in their home or probably on some mobile device our memory text, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." The scripture is familiar to many people. Joshua reminds Israel of how much God has done for them even when they and their ancestors chased after other gods. God continued to provide for Israel. Now, the time has come for them to decide are they going to worship, serve, and obey the Lord or are they going to continue with the other gods? They must make the choice. We must make the choice.

Joshua makes a bold statement, indicating there really isn't an option, "We serve the Lord" (v. 15).

John Wesley, the co-founder of Methodism, worried that Methodists were in danger of filling their lives with idle time. He encouraged Christians to journal their day, each day. At the end of the day, they were to go over their journal and find the

times in which they were idle. If they found idle time, they were encouraged to ensure that the next day was fully productive and pleasing to God.

If you journal every day, would you find idle time like hours of social media searching? Would you find hours of sitting in front of the television bingeing on a popular show or game? Would you find hours of idle conversation, gossiping, judging, or engaging in unproductive conversation?

CLOSING DEVOTIONS

Imagine if everyone took time to see how he or she were spending his or her time. Do you think we would become more intentional to make time for God, to create space to worship, study, pray, and be still to hear from God?

Let us pray:

Lord, help us to keep you first in our life. Keep us mindful of those times when we place other things before you. Help us become true worshippers, open our hearts, and make our home a place where God is worshipped.

Activity Sheet

Silent Auction: WHAT IS IT WORTH TO YOU?

You have \$50 to bid on the items below; remember, the more you bid on the item the more likely you are to secure it. Some items are more valuable to you than others so take your time and consider which items are most valuable to you.

- _____ Two free round trip airline tickets
- _____ Five new outfits, your selection from your favorite stores
- _____ A one-week vacation for you and your family

- _____ Two weeks of cleaning services for your home
- _____ One month of unlimited limo rides
- _____ Brand new Smartphone and all the accessories
- _____ Full scholarship to the college of your choice - no strings attached
- _____ A new tablet/iPhone (your choice) with 128GB
- _____ A \$500 USD Visa Card
- _____ One year paid subscription to the channel of your choice
- _____ Free Google /iTunes credits for one year

THE VALUE OF TIME

You have 24 hours in a day. Eight hours are designated to sleeping, which leaves 16 hours. Below are a few activities to indicate how many hours you would spend doing the different activities. You are free to place zero (0) on those items on which you do not intend to spend time.

ACTIVITIES	HOURS
Watch television	
Exercise	
Play video games	
Study or do homework	
Play with friends	
Write social media post	
Create/design something	
Pray to God	

<p>How can I bring joy to someone or my church?</p>	<p>How can I demonstrate love to someone or my church?</p>
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Reflect:

How did it feel to help to bring hope, peace, joy, and love to your church?

Was it difficult to identify ways to demonstrate those principles?

What feedback did you receive from the individual or group

who were recipients of your actions?
