

Lesson 2: THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- If you aren't focused on loving God with all you've got, start there or you'll be hypocritical.
- Witness all the time by "living out-loud" (letting your love-relationship with God show). Living out loud doesn't mean you will be thoughtless about your professional identity (if you're a missionary or pastor) but it means being openly spiritual.
- Being openly spiritual REQUIRES speaking. You cannot do this "by lifestyle" alone. You need both.
- If you love God, you'll obey Him. This is the essence of spirituality not religiosity.

1) Review Memory verses. Then **Pray** together around tables asking God to do what is described in John 6:44-45 among the lost people you are praying for and serving.

2) Review Lesson 1

- **In pairs** – ask them to share with each other:
 - the **Top 3 Lessons** from last time.
 - how they **obeyed** Scripture (concepts / principles).
 - what happened when they did their **Mt 9:38 Prayer Walks**.
- **In the large group**
 - Ask each of these questions and get response from a good number of people.
 - Write responses up on the whiteboard or a flipchart – after you have written all/most of the key lessons ask if there are any key lessons still not listed.
 - Ask if people have questions.
 - Review next meeting time and expectations for attending this work-shop.

3) Review the Training Invitation & discuss the 6 expectations:

1. **Put aside** extra-Biblical traditions (Christian, denominational, cultural). These are not necessarily wrong but we want to make Scripture our foundation first.
2. **Focus** only on God's Word – what can we learn about principles and practice?
3. **Pray** more (more deeply, more time, more desperately)
4. **Go** out among the lost and try to live-out these principles in your context. How will you gain access? The best way is through loving others and then discussing.
5. **Visioncast** to other believers about making multiplying disciples
6. **Train** believers – train others with these lessons and model doing it
7. **Stay connected** – pray for each other, learn from each other & stay accountable

4) **Ask:** What's the core of your faith? Ask participants to write down how they'd answer if they were asked to sum-up the core of their faith. What is the most important thing people need to know? If they don't end-up referencing the Greatest Commandment (or a part of it), ask them: What did Jesus say was the most important commandment?

Read Mark 12:28-31, then ask if they know where Jesus was quoting from? Tell participants this section in Deuteronomy is called the "*Shema*". It is considered the most important idea in the Jewish faith (and it is where the Muslim idea of *shahadah* came from). *Shema* is the first Hebrew word in Deut. 6:4 which is translated "hear". To the Jews, however, it isn't merely to hear, but "**to listen in order to obey.**"

5) DBS: DEUTERONOMY 6:4-9 (Shema)

Use the CPO (Copy-Put in your own words-Obey – see “Trainer Notes.doc”) written method, then discuss in small groups and then review as a larger group. Use key questions below if they are not covered in the group discussion.

- Is there a difference between loving our religion and loving God? If so, what?
- How can we love God with all our heart, soul and strength?
- How can we impress these commands on our children?
- Can this be applied to our “spiritual children”? How?
- Can this be obeyed without speaking? Why/not?
- How would you need to change your daily routine in order to impress these commands on your children?
- Roughly what is the meaning of “Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads”? Who sees things that are tied to your hands? Who sees things that are tied to your forehead?
- What does it mean to “Write them on the doorframes and gates”? What is the difference between those two places? Who sees these two places?
- What might you have to stop doing to live like this?
- Who was called to obey these commands?
- What significance does all of this have for making disciples?

In discussion with the whole group, use John 14:15 to stress that loving the Lord means obeying Him. Compare this with John 15:10, which says that obedience keeps us in the love of the Lord. *(You can talk about love and obedience being two sides of the same coin. Take a coin and ask if there is any realistic way to separate the two sides. Discuss how each side of a coin looks different, but it’s just one coin.)*

6) Exercise: Shema Lifestyle (words and deeds)

Such statements and actions show our love for and obedience to God, and become a witness to other people. “Shema actions” show that we care about people and live-out the command to love our neighbors in practical ways. Such actions, however have to be done with corresponding “Shema statements” that clearly express the motive for our love: we are spiritual people who love God, not merely religious people. (Take a minute to discuss the difference of living like this versus doing proclamational “evangelism”).

Around the world, the number #1 way DMMers find those interested in God is by serving them (healing prayer, kind deed, community service) while consistently, simultaneously, and culturally appropriately pointing to God as the source of our life.

Have each person write 5 Shema actions (and explanations) that can meet needs.

Examples: Do something unusual for someone and when they thank you, saying “I am blessed by God and want to bless others.” Pray for someone in need (sick, unhappy, unemployed, etc) and talk about how God can answer prayers.

Have each person write 5 “Shema” statements related to normal situations they are in.

Examples: “Isn’t this a beautiful day God has given us?” This tells people you believe in God, that God gives us good gifts, and that you have a grateful heart. Saying “I’m learning something very interesting about God...”

Do this in small groups first and then do it in the large group (don’t forget to compile a list).

Transition – the following practice and exercise is to prepare people for their fieldwork this week.

Practice: In pairs/small groups, role play a conversation or an act of service and resulting conversation between you and a lost person. This should be based on a typical conversation you often have (e.g. with a work colleague over lunch, with an acquaintance you meet while on a morning walk, visiting a sick friend/colleague etc). Try to include a shema statement naturally into the conversation. Then change roles. Finally, have a brief time of feedback to the larger group on how it went.

Explanation to tell the group: Using “Shema” statements and actions can help us stay close to God by living “out loud”. Also, people who are tuned in might be interested to learn more. We see in Deuteronomy 6 and other passages that God wants us to have a Shema lifestyle. Saying Shema statements without Shema actions is hypocritical. But doing Shema actions without explaining that you do them out of love for God will not point people to God. Living a Shema lifestyle is foundational and an important first step in learning to reach the lost.

Some work until the next training session:

Memorize: Mark 12:29-31

Fieldwork:

- USE at least one Shema statement/action each day before the next meeting. Try doing this during your normal life AND on intentional Matt 9:38 walks.
- Keep a record of what you said and what response you got (14 total if meeting once every two weeks). Next meeting you will share this with the group.
- You made ‘I Will’ statements from the Deut passage -- remember to do them!
- Pass it on – Can you explain the “Shema lifestyle” to some believers before the next meeting?

Prayer work: Find a partner and commit to pray for each other to know how to live out the Greatest Commandment in new ways, in both word and speech. Pray for boldness to establish new habits.

Bible Reading: Bible Reading: Read John 14 & 15. What does this teach about love? About obedience? About how love obedience relates to obedience? What promises are given related to obedience?

Hand Gesture: Ask how could you summarize the main teaching of this lesson with a body movement or hand gesture? Have all participants stand up and do the gesture together. (Example for Lesson 2: Move from squatted position of crouching in fear to standing up right with arms open wide to signify living your love for God being open and “out loud”.) Now do all the gestures in order for all the lessons so far starting with lesson 1.