

## 9 I Choose to Love God

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.”

Luke 10:27


We learned that God the Father gave His people the Ten Commandments. Jesus gave us the Two Great Commandments. He told us that if we obey them, we would be obeying all the other Commandments at the same time.

The Two Great Commandments are:

- 1. Love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.*
- 2. Love your neighbor as yourself.*

How do we love God? We love our Heavenly Father by praying to Him. Prayer means talking and listening to God. We show our love by going to Mass on Sunday. At church we worship God with the other members of God’s family. And we should talk about God with respect and love.

How do we love our neighbor? We love our neighbor by being kind and helpful to everyone we



meet. We should love our parents and obey them cheerfully. We should share things with other children, and always tell the truth. We should pray for people who need God's help: the poor, the sick, people who are unhappy, and people who don't love God.

God gave you the power to choose to love Him. You can choose to do what you know is right or what you know is wrong. When you do wrong, it isn't because you "have to." No one makes you do wrong. Only you can choose. At times it is hard to be good, but that is when you show God that you really love Him.

If we do something bad on purpose, we commit a sin. We do not love God when we sin. Each sin that we commit weakens His grace in our souls. With each sin we turn away from God. It is not a sin if we hurt someone by accident. It is not a sin if we forget to do something. But if we are tempted to do something wrong, and we think, "Yes, I will do it, even though I know it's wrong," then we commit a sin, and turn away from God.

There are two kinds of sin. There are **mortal sins** and **venial sins**. Mortal sins are very big, very bad sins. Mortal sin kills the life of God in us. We cannot

go to Heaven if there is a mortal sin on our souls. Venial sins are little sins, but they still make God sad. Most sins are venial sins.

It is sad but true that we all sin sometimes. Because of Original Sin we aren't always strong enough to say no to sin and yes to God. But God loves us very much and is always ready to forgive us.

***“You, O Lord, are good and forgiving.”***

*Psalm 86:5*

**Q. 23** *What is mortal sin?*

Mortal sin is a serious act of disobedience against the Law of God. A mortal sin has three parts, all of which must be present: 1. the sin must be serious; 2. you must know it is wrong and serious; 3. you must freely choose to do it (CCC 1857).

**Q. 24** *What is venial sin?*

Venial sin is a little act of disobedience against the Law of God (CCC 1863).

Every night think about the day you had. Did you do anything that was wrong? Were there times you did not do what was good? Look at the chart on page 44 to help you remember. Then tell God you are sorry. Ask Him to make you stronger next time. God will be glad to give you the grace to say no to sin.

**Words to Know:**

mortal sin    venial sin

## 10 Preparing for Our Savior

“A voice cries:  
‘In the wilderness prepare the way of the  
LORD,  
make straight in the desert a highway for  
our God.’”

Isaiah 40:3

God wants all of His people to be happy with Him forever. But because of Adam’s sin, everyone lost the chance to go to Heaven. God promised Adam and Eve that He would send a Savior to make up for their sin and all the sins that were ever committed. The Savior would be Jesus Christ, God the Son!

It was a long time before the Savior came. All that time, God spoke to His Chosen People through holy men called **prophets**. Moses was a prophet. There were many others. They told people to stop sinning and to get ready for the coming of the Savior.

At last it was time for the Savior to come. God chose **Mary** to be His Mother. Mary did not have

Original Sin. God made her that way. Mary's soul was always full of God's life. She was beautiful and good. Mary always did what God wanted her to do. She never said no to God and she kept all His Commandments. She loved God very much and everyone else, too. God was very pleased with Mary.

One day God sent the angel **Gabriel** to Mary's house. He asked her to be the Mother of God's Son. She was surprised that God had picked her to be the Mother of the Savior, but she was happy, too. "Oh, yes," Mary said. "Let it be done to me as you say." Mary wanted to do whatever God asked of her.

God's people had to wait and get ready for many years before the Savior came. Each year, before Christmas, we spend time getting ready for Jesus, too. We call this time **Advent**.

One way we prepare to celebrate the coming of Jesus is by making an Advent wreath. It is a wreath of evergreen branches with four candles—three purple candles and one pink one. Each candle stands for one of the four weeks in which we prepare for Christmas. We have Advent wreaths in our churches and in our homes.