

God's Love is Everywhere

(1 John 4:7-8)

Objective: *The students will learn that God's love is great and that he wants us to show our love to Him.*

Materials: *Bibles; wide-mouth, heat-resistant jar such as a canning jar; flashlight; hot water; aluminum pie pan; ice cubes; pot holder; eight wooden blocks of two sizes (four large and four small).*

Before Class: *Bring boiling water to church in a thermos or meet in a room with a microwave or hot plate and heat the water in class. Keep your ice cubes in a small cooler until you need them. Plan to darken your room.*

Pre-Session Warm Up

Who can name something on earth we know is there but we can't see? (Air, gravity, wind, noise, and germs.)

Let me list some things we can't see, and you tell me how you know each one is there even if we can't see it.

- **Wind** (blows things around, trees move.)
- **Noise** (We can hear it; sometimes noise vibrates things.)
- **Germs** (we get sick; they kill plants and animals.)
- **Gravity** (Keeps you on earth; I can't jump very high; apples fall when dropped.)
- **Magnetic force** [Teacher, using a magnet, show the effects of this invisible force.]

[There are many legends that tell us about the discovery of magnets. Stories of magnetism date back to the first century B.C. For many years following its discovery, magnetite was surrounded in superstition and was considered to possess magical powers, such as the ability to heal the sick, frighten away evil spirits and attract and dissolve ships made of iron!]

There is something else on earth we know is there but we can't see it. That is our feelings. You know your mom loves you, but love isn't a thing that you can set on the table and look at, is it?

How do you know it's there? (By the things she says and does.)

Today we're going to learn about something that is very real but you have to have spiritual eyes to see – God's love.

Opening Prayer

Lord, thank You for loving us with an everlasting love. Help us to receive Your love and learn how to give it away to others. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love. (1 John 4:7-8)

Lesson

Can we see God's love? (No.) How do we know that God's love is there?

1 John 4:16

We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in his love. God is love, and all who live in love, live in God and God lives in them.

This verse is saying that a person who is full of love for God and others is full of God, because God *is* love; where such love is, there is God, for he is the creator and the source of love.

To help us understand this, let's do an activity that will show something we can't normally see.

Feel the air around you. Can you feel water in it? (No.)

Our air is made up of tiny droplets of water that are too small for us to see. This activity will help us see these drops. [Teacher, heat water to a rolling boil.]

1. Fill a pie tin with ice cubes.
2. Pour an inch of boiling water into a wide-mouth canning jar.
3. Place the pie tin filled with ice cubes on top of the jar.
4. Turn out the classroom lights and turn on flashlights.
5. Observe what's happening in the jar.

Look closely into the jar. Do you see a cloud forming? (Yes.) The cloud is made by the drops of water in the air.

Look on the sides of the jar. What do you see? (Drops of water.)

These drops of water are coming from the air. Because of the temperature change from the outside to the inside of the jar, the drops in the air outside leave the air and cling to the jar.

These drops of water remind us of God's love. We can't see God's love, but it's everywhere. We can feel it and know it's there.

[Turn on the lights. Give each child one small wooden block and one large wooden block. Assign them a verse from each of the lists below. Have students find one way God has shown love to us in the first verse. In the second verse, have them find a way we can show love to God. Then have them determine who shows greater love, God or us.]

<u>God's Love to Us</u>	<u>Our Love to God</u>
John 3:16	John 15:12
Romans 5:8	1 John 3:17, 18
Psalms 66:5	John 14:15
John 14:1-3	Hebrews 10:24

[Read each verse and discuss either how God shows His love to us or how we show our love to God. Have the children build two towers using the blocks. Have students choose the big block to represent the greater love, the smaller block for the lesser love. After each verse is read and discussed ask a child to place a block on one of the towers. Once you go through all the verses, compare the piles of blocks. Determine which side is taller. That one will show God's love and the other our love to God.]

We can see that God's love is greater for us.

1 John 4:19

We love each other because he loved us first.

God loved us first. What do you suppose that means?

Romans 5:8

But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.

Before you and I even knew that God existed, He came and died a horrible death on the cross for us. Before we were born; before we had a chance to commit our first sin; he took the punishment for that sin and not only our first sin, but all the sins that we have committed or ever will commit. He didn't wait until you cleaned up your act.

Someone asked me recently if Jesus already took the punishment for my sin, why do I need to worry about whether I sin or not? Think of it this way: each time we sin, it's like driving another nail into His hands and feet.

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.

We deserve to be cast into outer darkness and be forever separated from our wonderful Lord Jesus. But, He came and gave us a free gift of eternal life in heaven. It didn't cost us anything, now we should be

so thankful for what He did for us, we wouldn't want to do anything that would displease Him.

And what does He desire?

Matthew 22:37-39

Jesus replied, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind." (38) This is the first and greatest commandment. (39) A second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

God loves us and He wants us to love Him back with all of our heart, mind, and soul. And He wants us to love each other in the same way He loves us.

What are some ways that you can show God's kind of love to others? (Pray for them; be nice to them; do kind things.)

What can you do this week to show love to your Mom or Dad? (Do the dishes without being asked; keep your room clean; do your homework without whining or complaining.)

Closing Prayer

Father, help us to love each other with the same kind of love that You have for us. You came and died for our sins. Teach us what it means to love others that way. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

- Cut a cloud shape out of colored construction paper.
- Mount it on a slightly bigger piece of white construction paper.
- Cut out several large drop shapes out of blue construction paper for each child.

- Have the children write ways God has shown His love for us on the water drops, cut them out and paste them on the cloud.
- Write the words of 1 John 4:7-8 around the cloud.

Game Center

Use the following review questions in a game of your choice:

Review Questions:

1. What are some things in this world that we know are there but we can't see? (Air, gravity, wind, noise, germs.)
2. How do you know that someone loves you? (By what they say and do.)
3. How do we know that God's love is there? (When you see someone full of love for God and for others, God is there because God is love.)
4. What does it mean that God loved us first? (While we were yet a sinner, He died for us.)
5. What is the free gift Jesus gave us? (Eternal life with Him in heaven.)
6. What does God want from us in return? (He wants us to love Him and to love others.)
7. What are some ways that you can show God's kind of love to others? (Pray for them; be nice to them; do kind things.)
8. What can you do this week to show love to your Mom or Dad? (Do the dishes without being asked; keep your room clean; do your homework without whining or complaining.)

