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## Forward

The ***Showing God's Love*** series helps you present biblical principles through objects your students can touch, see, smell, hear, and taste. Kids will experience God's love and learn how to show His love to others. These lessons work great with groups that include multiple age levels! You can also use the hands-on activities as resources to supplement other lessons.

I have designed these lessons to enable you to teach the Bible expositively. The idea is to have the kids read the passages in their own Bibles and the teacher explain the scriptures and give good practical applications that are age-appropriate. My goal is to ensure that children learn that God's Word is exciting and meaningful and that teachers teach sound doctrine!

Even though I've scripted the lessons, I don't expect teachers to read my lesson materials verbatim to the children as they teach. My lessons are meant to provide the details you need to get background information and some suggestions for child-oriented personal application. Once you know and understand the Bible lessons for yourself, you'll be ready to teach your class.

The two-column layout of this book is designed so that you can copy and cut the pages in half to fit into your Bible. When the children observe that you are teaching right out of the Bible, rather than from a curriculum book, it validates God's Word and gives your teaching more authority.

You will discover that there is not always a Craft or Game idea suggested in each lesson. When I've had a good idea that really seems to support the lesson objectives, I've included it. But I have another handbook called *Tips and Tricks — Making Children's Bible Lessons Come to Life* that gives lots of suggestions for activities that will help reinforce your lesson and teach the memory verse. (This is available from my website:

<https://www.freechildrensministrylessons.com/>)

Use the Teaching Schedule to help you organize your teaching rotation.

I pray that you will use these lessons for God's glory by teaching the Bible as an entire plan by a systematic and connected study of the Word.

*Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. (Mark 10:14)*

*Sheila Scroggins*

Sheila has had over 35 years' experience in teaching children and has several other lesson series available. You may contact her by eMail at: [ccuv-ChildrensMinistry@usa.net](mailto:ccuv-ChildrensMinistry@usa.net) for more information.

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## Showing God's Love Curriculum Overview

**Lesson 1:** God's Love is Everywhere – In this lesson we learn that God's love is everywhere and that he wants us to love him, too. We discuss how we can't see God's love, but we still know it's there. We do an activity with ice and boiling water to discover that our air contains drops of water that we can't see. We compared these invisible drops to God's love.

We learn that although God's love is invisible, we can see the effect of it just like we can see the effect of gravity, wind, or a magnet. We learn that 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.

**Lesson 2:** God Knows Me Completely – In this lesson we learn that God loves and knows all about us and that God wants us to show His love to others, too. In class, we do several activities that help us discover that even though other people or even we ourselves don't know everything there is to know about us, God knows us completely. The children draw maps of their towns and mark where their home, church, school, and a friend's house are. They use highlighters to trace the roads. We meditate on Psalm 139:1-3 and discuss how God always knows where we are, what we're doing, and what we're thinking and feeling. Wherever we go, whatever we think or feel, God understands and loves each one of us.

**Lesson 3:** By Taking Care of Planet Earth – In this lesson we learn that because planet earth belongs to God, we can show others that we love God by taking care of our environment properly. We play a litter game that helps us understand the frustration of having your possessions trashed. We talk about ways to care for trees, animals, grass, and oceans. We do an activity that shows the effects of oil spills on ocean, birds, plants, and animals. We also see how hard it is to clean up an oil slick.

**Lesson 4:** By Being A Good Neighbor – In this lesson we learn that one way of showing God's love is by being a good neighbor – that is, by thinking of others first and sharing what we have with them. We put puzzles together and find out that each piece is important to a

complete puzzle. It is easy to think of our friends as important enough to do good things for them, like sharing. But sometimes we find it hard to do good things for people we don't know or don't like. But the good things we do for others helps them feel good about themselves and others. We do an activity to show how sharing brings people together and often brings beautiful things into our lives—we put individual drops of food coloring in a dish of milk. Then when we add drops of dish soap, it causes the food coloring drops to swirl together to make a beautiful rainbow.

**Lesson 5:** By Being Compassionate – In this lesson we learn that we can show God's love by being compassionate to those who are hurting. Sad things happen to people we love. God wants us to help those who are sad, lonely, scared, shy, or feeling rejected. In class we put Band-Aids on a broken heart and talk about ways we can help hurting people. Learning compassion is an important part of living and loving the way Jesus does.

**Lesson 6:** By Forgiving Others – In this lesson we learn that we can show God's love by forgiving others when they do wrong things to us. We discuss how forgiving others can change hurtful situations and unify people. We learn that Jesus told us to forgive others 7 times 70, so we count out 490 bird seeds and put them in a film canister so we can be reminded of how much trouble it is to keep track of how many times we should forgive someone.

**Lesson 7:** By Using Kind Words – In this lesson we learn that we can show God's love by using kind words. We find that the Bible compares kind words to apples and honey; a tongue that uses unkind words is compared to a sword, arrow, and a snake. We do an activity using a ramp covered with aluminum foil. We put a paper clip on the ramp, but it just sits there like unkind words sit on a hearer's heart. But when we pour oil over the clip, it moves down the ramp, just like how kind words can help move sad things out of a person's life.

**Lesson 8:** By Being a Cheerful Giver – In this lesson another way to show God's love is by being a cheerful giver. To do this, the class makes a magnifying lens with a glass filled with items, plastic wrap, a rubber band, and water. When we look at the items through the side of the glass, they are normal size. But when we look at the items

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through the top of the glass, they look larger. We will discuss how this is like giving. When we give, our gifts become “larger” because they not only make the person we are giving the gift to feel special, it makes us feel good, too. We will learn that one of the simplest gifts we can give someone is a compliment.

**Lesson 9:** By Cooperating – In this lesson we learn that we can show God’s love by cooperating with each other to do God’s work. To do this, we form an assembly line to make a pretend submarine sandwich. God wants us to learn how to get along together, helping one another as we work and play with them.

**Lesson 10:** By Helping Missionaries – In this lesson we learn to show God’s love by helping missionaries tell the good news of Jesus’ love around the world. We discuss what a missionary is and what they do. We make foil figures and use them in an interactive activity to discover how we can help them.

**Lesson 11:** By Being a Hero of Faith – In this lesson we learn that we

can show God’s love by being a super hero of faith. We discover the qualities of true heroes and learn that building these qualities into our lives can be exciting and fun, as well as hard work.

**Lesson 12:** By Being Filled with The Holy Spirit – In this lesson we learn that in order to keep on showing God’s love to others, we need the power of the Holy Spirit. To help us understand this idea, we put raisins in a jar filled with water and vinegar. Then we add baking soda to the water. After a few minutes, we see that the raisins are “dancing.” They keep going up and down. We compare this to our attempt to love others. Without God’s love in our lives (like plain vinegar-water), our attempts to love others falls short. Sometimes we get tired of doing loving things for others. But, once we add God’s love (like adding baking soda to the solution), our love can go on working over and over again. We can’t love others on our own. It has to be God’s love and power in our lives that keeps us loving others time after time.

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## Teaching Schedule

Date	Teacher	Lesson	Memory Verse
		God's Love is Everywhere	<i>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)</i>
		God Knows Me Completely	<i>Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it. (Psalm 139:14)</i>
		I Can Show God's Love by Taking Care of Planet Earth	<i>The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him. (Psalm 24:1)</i>
		I Can Show God's Love by Being a Good Neighbor	<i>Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. (Philippians 2:3)</i>
		I Can Show God's Love by Being Compassionate	<i>This is what the Lord of Heaven's Armies says: Judge fairly, and show mercy and kindness to one another. (Zechariah 7:9)</i>
		I Can Show God's Love by Forgiving Others	<i>Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. (Col 3:13-14)</i>
		I Can Show God's Love by Using Kind Words	<i>Worry weighs a person down; an encouraging word cheers a person up. (Proverbs 12:25)</i>
		I Can Show God's Love by Being A Cheerful Giver	<i>You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully." (2 Corinthians 9:7)</i>
		I Can Show God's Love by Being Cooperative	<i>All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is part of it. (1 Corinthians 12:27) This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other. (1 Corinthians 12:25)</i>
		I Can Show God's Love by Helping Missionaries	<i>And then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone. (Mark 16:15)</i>
		I Can Show God's Love by Being a Hero of Faith	<i>The Lord is for me, so I will have no fear. What can mere people do to me? Yes, the Lord is for me; he will help me. I will look in triumph at those who hate me. (Psalm 118:6-7)</i>
		I Can Show God's Love by Being Filled with the Holy Spirit	<i>This is my commandment: Love each in the same way I have loved you. (John 15:12)</i>
		What Does God's Love Look Like?	<i>Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance. (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)</i>



# 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.)



# God Knows Me Completely

(Psalm 139)

**Objective:** The students will learn that God loves and knows all about them and He wants us to love others, too.

**Materials:** Bibles, yardsticks or a tape measure.

**Before Class:** Enlarge the “rectangle” and “Square” charts.

When students arrive, divide them into two groups and sit in a circle.

## Pre-Session Warm Up

- What do you know about God? (He created the whole universe.) Psalm 8 says that He put the sun and the moon and the stars in place with just a flick of His finger! We have an awesome God, don't we?
- Besides God, who knows the most about you? (My parents, my brothers or sisters, my friends.)
- Do they know everything about you? (No! Only God knows everything about you!)
- Have you ever wondered how such a great big powerful God could know and care about you?

Today we're going to learn that even though God is so great and so mighty, He loves you deeply and He cares about every detail of your life.

## Opening Prayer

Father, thank You for loving me so much! Help me to love others with the same kind of love that You love me with. Amen.

## Memory Verse

*Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it. (Psalm 139:14)*

## Lesson Review

We've been learning about how to show God's love to others. In last week's lesson we learned that God's love is everywhere and that he wants us to love Him back with all of our heart, mind, and soul.

## Lesson

Let's see how well the person sitting next to you knows you. Turn and pair up with the person beside you. [Teacher, if you have an odd number of children, pair up with one of the students.]

Now stand back-to-back. I'm going to ask some questions and let's see if you can answer them without looking at the person you are standing back-to-back with.

- What color is your partner's hair?
- What color are your partner's eyes?
- What color are your partner's clothes?
- What kind of shoes does your partner have on?
- What color are your partner's socks?

What questions were easy to answer? (Color of hair; color of shirt.)  
What questions were hard to answer? (Color of socks; color of eyes.)

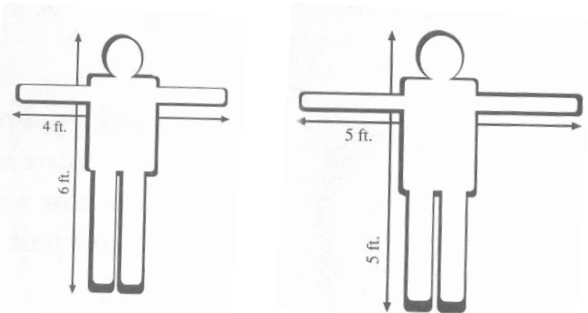
Ok, so we know that other people don't know everything about us. Let's see if we know everything there is to know about ourselves:

### **Square or Rectangle?**

Are you a square or a rectangle? (Most students will be unable to answer this.)

I am talking about how long your arms are compared to the length of your body.

[Show the children an enlargement of the following charts or draw them on the white board to help explain what you mean.]



How many of you think you are a square? How many of you think you are a rectangle?

With a partner you worked with before, measure your arm length and your body height using the measuring stick or tape. If the measurements are the same, you are a square. If they are different, you are a rectangle.

[Give pairs time to measure. When they finish, have them sit back in a circle.]

Some of you may have been surprised at the results. How many squares do we have? How many rectangles?

Even though other people don't know you very well, and you don't even know yourself complete, the Bible tells us that God knows everything about us.

He was not surprised that you are a rectangle or a square. He already knew!

Let's find out some amazing things God knows about you and me:

Psalm 139:1-4

*O LORD, you have examined my heart and know everything about me. (2) You know when I sit down or stand up. You know my thoughts even when I'm far away. (3) You see me when I travel and when I rest at home. You know everything I do. (4) You know what I am going to say even before I say it, LORD.*

That means that God knows your thoughts even before you think them!

Psalm 139:5

*You go before me and follow me. You place your hand of blessing on my head.*

He is all around you on every side protecting you. Isn't it comforting to know that God is protecting you on all sides? He knows where you are at all times.

He knows about every detail of your life. He knows the things you plan to do each day. For example, He knows if you have to go to the doctor's office, He knows if you have to take a test in school; he knows if you have a sports activity to go to.

Day and night, God is aware of everything that happens to you. He knows what is in your heart, so He understands why you do certain things. God knows what words you are going to say before you even say them.

Psalm 139:6

*Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too great for me to understand!*

God has made us so perfectly and wonderfully. We should be thankful for everything about ourselves.

## Psalm 139:14

*Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it.*

God knew all about you before you were even born.

## Psalm 139:16

*You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.*

God not only knows all about you now that you are living, He also knew all about every single day of your life *before He created the universe*. This verse says that He had written everything about your life in His Book of Life before you were even born.

## Psalm 139:17-18

*How precious are your thoughts about me, O God. They cannot be numbered. (18) I can't even count them; they outnumber the grains of sand! And when I wake up, you are still with me!*

God is always thinking about you!

## Luke 12:7

*And the very hairs on your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are more valuable to God than a whole flock of sparrows.*

God knows the number of hairs on your head!

## Psalm 56:8

*You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle. You have recorded each one in your book.*

These verses show us how special we are to God. We should always think of ourselves as special. God has made us just the way we are. We are wonderfully made! Let's give thanks to God for some of the special things about us right now.

Turn to your partner. Take turns thanking God for something special about your partner and then about yourself.

## Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for loving us so much that You made each of us special. We love You. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

## Learning Activities

### Craft Corner

#### Affirmation Activity

(Children write down each other's unique, God-given qualities.)

If an artist made a painting of you, what would other people see? What do you see when you look in a mirror? What does God see when he looks at you?

Give each child a sheet of construction paper and markers. Let them have one minute to draw a self-portrait. Make sure they put their names underneath their picture. When you say, "scooch left" everyone moves their paper to the person on the left. Each child has 30 seconds to write something nice about the person whose self-portrait is in front of them. Then, say, "scooch left" and have the children move the picture again. Keep going until each child's self-portrait is back in front of them. Remind the children to only write positive, nice things.

Close with a prayer, thanking God for each child by name.

### God Knows All About Me

Have the children draw a map of their town. Have them mark where their home, church, school, a friend's house. Use a highlighter to trace the roads your family uses. Then read Psalm 139:1-3 out loud. God

always knows where you are, what you're doing, and what you're thinking and feeling. Wherever you go, whatever you think or feel, God understands and loves you.

# Show God's Love by Taking Care of Planet Earth

(Psalm 24:1)

**Objective:** *The students will discover because planet earth belongs to God, we can show others that we love God by taking care of our environment properly.*

**Materials:** *Bibles, cooking oil, four cups, paprika or turmeric, four spoons, four bowls of water, four marbles, four feathers, four small pieces of paper; four paperclips, four spatulas or large tongue depressors, four pieces of cotton or wool, dishwashing detergent, a bowl full of scraps of paper, masking tape, a toy, slips of paper with number 1, 2, 3, or 4 on them in box.*

**Before Class:** *Mark off four squares (4 by 4 feet) with masking tape. Label each square 1, 2, 3, or 4. In different areas of your room, set up four centers with these items in each: cooking oil, cup, small amount of paprika or turmeric, spoon, one bowl of water, marble, feather, small piece of paper, paperclip, spatula or tongue depressor, piece of cotton or wool, and dishwashing detergent.*

*Set the toy, Bibles, bowl of scrap paper, and box of numbers at the front of the room so they will be accessible to you. As students arrive, have them draw a slip with a number on it from the box. Have them sit in the square with their corresponding number.*

## Pre-Session Warm Up

What are some things that you possess or own? (Bike, computer, toys, games, books.) How can you make these things last longer? (Take care of them; put them away when finished; use them gently.)

[Teacher, show the children a toy.] Someone let me borrow this toy. How would they feel if I brought it back broken? (Sad, mad, disappointed.) Do you think they'd lend me another toy? (No, probably not; maybe with some rules.) People expect us to take care of the things they own when we use them.

That's how God feels about His possessions, too! Today we're going to learn how God wants us to take care of the environment around us.

## Opening Prayer

Lord, I marvel at Your beautiful creation. The mountains are so magnificent and the oceans are so big! I love the trees and streams. Thank You for creating this beautiful world that we live in and allowing us to enjoy it so much. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

## Memory Verse

*The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him. (Psalm 24:1)*

## Lesson Review

We've been learning about how to show God's love to others.

1. In our first lesson we learned that God's love is everywhere and that He wants us to love Him back with all of our heart, mind, and soul.
2. In last week's lesson, we learned that God knows all about us. He always knows where we are and what we're doing and what we're thinking and feeling. And, even so, He still loves us completely. In the same way, He wants us to love others, even people who do wrong to us and don't deserve our love. Because that's the way He loves us.

## Lesson

Who owns the earth we live on? (People, everyone, all creatures both plant and animals, God.)

[Introduce the Memory Verse.] God owns the earth and everything on it! That means we are God's guests on earth. When you are a guest in someone's home, how do you treat that person's belongings? (Carefully!)

How should we treat God's possessions? (With respect; care for it; keep it nice.)

What are some ways that people mistreat God's earth? (Throw trash on the ground; dump things in rivers; dirty the air with fumes.)

**Litter, Litter, Everywhere**

Let's do an activity that will help us understand how God must feel when we do these things!

[Distribute the scraps of paper on the floor evenly among the four squares. Have the students stand around the outside of their squares.]

Pretend that your group owns the square you're standing around. Your goal is to keep your area the cleanest. You can only get rid of your scraps by putting them in other squares. At the end of one minute, the group with the cleanest square wins.

[Give students a 15-second warning before you say, "Stop." Have groups clean up their squares and sit down.]

What kind of feelings did you have while trying to keep your square clean? (Excited because our group kept it clean; sad, frustrated because other people kept throwing paper in our square.)

God is probably disappointed too when we mistreat the earth we live on. Let's find out what God says in the Bible about some of the things He owns.

In Psalm 104 David praises God for His mighty power displayed in His creation. David starts his song to God this way:

Psalm 104:1

*Let all that I am praise the Lord. O Lord my God, how great you are! You are robed with honor and majesty.*

Then he goes on to express his appreciation to God for each part of His creation.

I'm going to assign you a verse and I want you to tell me which of God's possessions on earth this verse is telling us about and some ways that we can take care of these things for God.

[Teacher, Give each group a Bible. Assign each group one verse to report on to the class. Have kids think of ways they could help care for this part of God's creation. Give groups a few minutes to work.]

Verse	God's Possession	Ways to Care
Psalm 104:14	Grass and plants	Water them; not pave over all of them; plant more
Psalm 104:16	Trees	Don't waste paper; replant the ones we cut down; set aside forest areas
Psalm 104:17-18	Birds and animals	Don't kill them unnecessarily; provide them areas to live; don't throw trash in rivers or lakes
Psalm 104:25	Ocean and fish	Don't dump things in the water; clean up oil spills; clean up beaches.



## Psalm 104:14

You cause **grass** to grow for the livestock and **plants** for people to use.  
You allow them to produce food from the earth.

## Psalm 104:16

The **trees** of the Lord are well cared for—the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.

## Psalm 104:17-18

There the **birds** make their nests, and the storks make their homes in the cypresses. High in the mountains live the wild **goats**, and the rocks form a refuge for the hyraxes.

[A hyrax, also called a coney, is a rabbit-sized mammal of Africa and South West Asia. It has a squat, furry body, with short slender legs. It looks like a rodent with hoofs.]

## Psalm 104:25

Here is the **ocean**, vast and wide, teeming with life of every kind, both large and small.

**Clean It Up**

Did you know that up to six million tons of oil is dumped in our oceans every year? This oil comes from boats or factories on shore. Oil spills mess up our oceans.

Let's see how hard it is to clean up an oil spill.

[Have the groups follow these step-by-step instructions. Don't go on to the next point until all groups have finished the one you're on.]

1. Put a couple of spoonful's of cooking oil in a cup. Add paprika or turmeric to color it.
2. Pour the colored oil into the bowl of water. This is our oil spill.

3. Drop in the marble, feather, piece of paper, and paperclip one at a time. Then carefully remove them.

The marble is like a smooth fish. The feather is like a bird. The piece of paper is like our beaches that are homes to animals. The paperclip is like a plant.

- What happened to them? (They are all coated with oil)

Birds can be blinded from oil, get waterlogged and poisoned. Fish and other animals are poisoned. The oil also cuts down their supply of oxygen.

Now let's try cleaning up our oil spill.

4. Use your tongue depressor to skim the oil off the top.
5. Now try absorbing the oil with your cloth.
6. Add a spoonful of detergent. Beads will form and make it easier to clean up.

You can see how hard it is to clean oil off water. Imagine if hundreds of miles of water were covered with oil. It can take up to ten years to clean an oil spill from the ocean. It is one of the most serious killers of life in the ocean.

## Colossians 1:15-16

*Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, (16) for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see—such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him.*

The Bible says everything created on earth was created for the pleasure of God. We can show our love to God by caring for His earth. Let's brainstorm some ways we can take care of the earth around our community.

- Plan a community clean-up day
- Plant trees
- Plan an alternative transportation day. (Have everyone walk, bike, or use public transportation that day.)
- Determine ways that you could use less water. (Take shorter showers or baths; turn water off when brushing teeth; watering grass less, etc.)
- Adopt a stream, river, lake, or walking path and help clean it up.
- Cleanup a park, empty lot, or roadside.

Now decide on one way you will care for God's earth this week.

## Closing Prayer

Father, Thank You for allowing us to live and have fun on Your earth. Help us to take good care of it. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

## Learning Activities

### Craft Corner

#### Trash Craft

This activity will recycle six-pack yokes and help our planet, too!

Collect the plastic yokes around soda six-packs so that each child has one. Use a toaster over or regular oven set at 350 degrees F. Twist the six-pack yokes into balls. Place them in a Teflon-coated muffin cup or cookie sheet. Place the pan in the oven for approximately 3 to 4 minutes or until the yokes have melted. Remove the pan. Plastic will cool and harden within 30 seconds. Then use craft paint, beads, and danglers to decorate. Glue a magnet or pin on the back side.

### Pencil Holders

Make a pencil holder out of old tin cans. Have children cut paper to wrap around the can. (Writing the verse on the paper will reinforce it in their minds as they work.) Decorate the space around the words with bright stickers. Wrap around can and glue or tape in place. Provide one or two new pencils to put into the holder.



### Game Center

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

#### Review Questions:

1. How do people expect you to take care of their things?
2. Who owns the earth we live on? (The Lord!)
3. What are ways some people mistreat God's earth? (Throw trash on the ground; dump things in rivers; dirty the air with fumes.)
4. Why should we take good care of the environment around us?
5. What are some ways we can take care of the earth around our community?

# Showing God's Love by Being a Good Neighbor

(Philippians 2:3)

**Objective:** *The students will learn that one way of showing God's love is by being a good neighbor – that is, by thinking of others first and sharing what we have with them.*

**Materials:** *Bibles, four aluminum pie tins, milk, food coloring, dishwashing liquid, envelopes, four copies of handout on different colored paper.*

**Before Class:** *Make a puzzle out of the Memory Verse and copy it on four different sheets of colored paper. Cut the puzzles out and seal each piece in a separate envelope. Keep out the smallest piece of the puzzle for each color. Set them aside so that you can bring them out later.*

*In four different areas of your room, set up stations with the following in each: a pie tin filled with milk, different colors of food coloring, and dishwashing liquid.*

*When students arrive in class, give each a sealed envelope containing the puzzle piece. Make sure each person has at least one. Save any extras to distribute later.*

## Pre-Session Warm Up

- Who can name a famous person in our country? (The president, sports stars, movie stars, wealthy people.)
- Do we treat famous people differently than those of us in this room? (Yes.)
- If a famous basketball star, such as Michael Jordan, came to our class, how would he be treated? (We'd give him the best place to sit. We'd listen to everything he said. We would want to be near him. We might even scream in delight.)

Today we're going to learn that God wants us to treat all people with respect and honor.

## Opening Prayer

Lord, each person You have created is important. Teach us how to treat other people with respect so that they will see Your love more clearly. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

## Memory Verse

*Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. (Philippians 2:3)*

## Lesson Review

We've been learning about how to show God's love to others.

1. In our first lesson we learned that God's love is everywhere and that he wants us to love Him back with all of our heart, mind, and soul.
2. Next, we learned that God knows all about us. He always knows where we are, what we're doing, what we're thinking and feeling. And, even so, He still loves us completely. In the same way, He wants us to love others, even people who do wrong to us and don't deserve our love. Because that's the way He loves us.
3. In last week's lesson, we learned that because planet earth belongs to God, we can show others that we love Him by taking care of our environment properly. We did an activity that showed the effects of an oil spill on the ocean, birds, plants and animals. We talked about ways to care for God's possessions.

## Lesson

The Bible says that we should regard others as more important than ourselves. We are often willing to treat famous people with importance, but sometimes we don't treat the people closest to us,

such as our brothers and sisters or the people here in this room, as important.

### ***Everyone's Important***

Let's do an activity that will help us understand that everyone is important—famous and not famous.

I have given each of you an envelope. It contains a puzzle piece. When I say, "Go," open the envelope and find other kids with the same colored piece as you have. Get together and try to be the first group to put your puzzle together.

[Give the signal to go and let them put the pieces together. If you have extra envelopes, open them and distribute the puzzle pieces to the appropriate groups. When every group has put the puzzle together (except for the missing piece), bring out the missing pieces that you hold.]

I am holding the missing piece to your puzzle. It is the smallest piece, and you may think it is not the most important piece. But you need it to finish. Every piece in a puzzle is important no matter its size or location. It is needed to complete the puzzle. Without just one piece, the puzzle can't be finished.

In the same way each of us is part of God's big puzzle of life. Each of us is an important piece of that puzzle.

1 Corinthians 10:24

*Don't be concerned for your own good but for the good of others.*

The Bible says we can show God's love by always looking to do good to our neighbors.

- Who are our *neighbors*? (Friends, our family, people who live around us, everyone in the world.)

One day a lawyer came and asked Jesus a tricky question.

Luke 10:25

*One day an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus by asking him this question: "Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?"*

The Jews in Jesus' day believed that a person must obey the *Ten Commandments* perfectly in order to go to Heaven after they die. They thought that they could earn eternal life by doing good works like a person can earn money for doing a job.

Jesus came to earth to tell people that it is impossible to *earn* eternal life. You can't pay for it. The good things we do don't make us right in the sight of a holy God. You can't do enough good things to make up for the sin in your life. Jesus wanted people to understand that He came to be our Savior.

When the people heard Jesus teach about God's ways they were thrilled. They loved Jesus and flocked after Him. They hung on every word that came out of His mouth.

The scribes and Pharisees became jealous of Jesus' popularity with the people. So, they tried to trick Jesus into saying something contrary to the Scriptures. Their hope was to bring Him before the high priest and have Him punished.

This lawyer in our story was an expert in explaining God's laws. He, of all people, knew God's laws very well. So, when he asked Jesus, "*What shall I do to inherit eternal life?*" he was just testing Jesus to see what He would say.

Luke 10:26

*Jesus replied, "What does the law of Moses say? How do you read it?"*

Jesus answered the lawyer by asking him another question.

## Luke 10:27

*The man answered, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind." And, "Love your neighbor as yourself."*

The lawyer answered Jesus' question by summing up the *Ten Commandments*. The first four commandments tell us to love God. (Don't have any other gods, don't have any idols, don't take God's name in vain, and keep the Sabbath holy.) The last six commandments tell us to love others. (Honor your parents, don't murder, don't commit adultery, don't steal, don't lie, and don't covet.)

The whole law is summed up with, "*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart ... and your neighbor as yourself.*"

- When it says to *love your neighbor as yourself*, what does it mean? Just as you love and care for your own needs, you are to love others.

When you're hungry, you get yourself something to eat. If a friend of yours came over you wouldn't get yourself something to eat and not give anything to your friend, would you? You wouldn't make a houseguest sleep out in the back yard while you went and slept in a nice warm comfortable cozy place. Treat other people as you would want them to treat you.

## Luke 10:28

*"Right!" Jesus told him. "Do this and you will live!"*

Jesus knew that it is impossible to do this. No one in his own strength could ever love God or his neighbor with all of his heart, soul, strength and mind. And, the lawyer was probably feeling very uneasy at this point, knowing that he didn't love God with all his being and his neighbor as himself. So, he asks Jesus to define the term "*neighbor*."

## Luke 10:29

*The man wanted to justify his actions, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"*

As a Jew, the lawyer probably believed that his neighbor was only his fellow Jew. Jesus told a story to show the lawyer what God's love is like. (A parable is a true-to-life story about common, everyday things that teaches a spiritual truth about God.)

## Luke 10:30-31

*Jesus replied with a story: "A Jewish man was traveling on a trip from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him up, and left him half dead beside the road. (31) By chance a priest came along. But when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by.*

Surely a priest, who served God and lead others in the worship of God, would care about his "neighbor." But he didn't. He glanced at the injured man and passed by, choosing not to dirty himself.

## Luke 10:32

*A Temple assistant walked over and looked at him lying there, but he also passed by on the other side.*

The temple assistants helped the priests in God's work. They spent their lives teaching people about God's law. Surely this guy would have known the law. But he, too, refused to help his neighbor. He stopped and looked at the victim and then passed by.

## Luke 10:33-34

*Then a despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him. (34) Going over to him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with olive oil and wine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him.*

The Jews and the Samaritans had been enemies for years. The Jews despised Samaritans. The lawyer listening to Jesus tell this story would never have considered a Samaritan his neighbor. Yet it was a Samaritan, who usually would not help a Jew, who showed himself "neighbor" to the wounded Jew!

Luke 10:35

*The next day he handed the innkeeper two silver coins, telling him, 'Take care of this man. If his bill runs higher than this, I'll pay you the next time I'm here.'*

The Samaritan paid all costs, left money, and promised more!

Luke 10:36-37

*Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by bandits?" Jesus asked. (37) The man replied, "The one who showed him mercy." Then Jesus said, "Yes, now go and do the same."*

It was probably hard for the lawyer to admit that the Samaritan was the hero in Jesus' story. Yet the Samaritan was a wonderful example of what it means to be a true neighbor. He showed kindness to a man who probably hated him.

The Bible says we should love our enemies.

Matthew 5:44

*But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you!*

Sometimes it's even hard to show love to our friends. It may require sharing, giving in to their way, or letting them be first. It's even harder to reach out and love our enemies. It takes God's love to be kind to someone who has been mean to us. You can't do it in your

own strength, you must ask Jesus into your heart and then you can call upon the Holy Spirit to give you the power you need.

We need to ask God to help us notice people who are in need. Look for practical ways to be of help each day.

[Teacher, lead the children in a discussion using the following questions.]

- How can we help the sick or the old or the poor? (Visit the sick, send cards, be a friend, say a kind word, invite them to church, etc.)
- How can we be good neighbors to people who live on the other side of the world? (Support mission work, write letters, pray, and so on.)
- What are some ways we could show God's love to: The homeless, people overseas, shut-ins, disaster victims, community groups, people in our neighborhood, our school, our church? Some ideas would be collect food for shelters, donate clothes to a homeless shelter, or bring a meal to a shut-in.

[Choose a project to do as a class if you'd like. Plan it together. If not, encourage your students to choose an idea to do with their families or friends at home.]

- So, who is your neighbor? (Anyone you can help.)

Showing love and kindness shows that you truly love God. God loves every person, no matter what church he goes to, or if he's been mean to you, or if his skin is a different color. God wants us to do good to all.

Regardless of who they are, God will give you the power to show His kind of love to them.

### **Swirling Rainbows**

Let's see what happens when we help people we don't know or like.

It is easy to think of our friends as important enough to do good things for them, like sharing. But sometimes we find it hard to do good things for people we don't know or don't like.

[Have the students move to the four areas you've set up. Assign groups according to their puzzle colors. Have their attention focused on you, and then give the following directions. Be sure they have finished the first step before you move on to the next step.]

1. Drop in a drop or two of **red** food coloring close to the edge of the pan of milk. Let's have this represent someone who has just come to our country to live.
2. Now drop in a drop or two of **blue** food coloring by the opposite edge. Let this represent a new boy or girl at school.
3. Drop in a drop or two of **green** food coloring by the edge between the red and blue drops. This will be somebody at school who is always making trouble.
4. Drop in a drop or two of **yellow** food coloring by the empty edge. Let this represent the lady down the street who yells at you when your ball lands on her lawn.
5. Drop a few drops of **dishwashing liquid** right in the middle of the pan of milk. Let's say the dishwashing liquid represents a good thing you do for all of them. It could be inviting them to a party at your house.

[Give the children a few minutes to watch and see what happens.]

- What happened to all of the drops? (They swirled together and made a beautiful rainbow.)

Often the good things we do for others help them feel good about themselves and others. Sharing brings people together and often

brings beautiful things into our lives and their lives just like this rainbow.

### **Ways to Share**

Have the children find and discuss the following verses:

1 John 3:17

*If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion—how can God's love be in that person?*

Proverb 28:27

*Whoever gives to the poor will lack nothing, but those who close their eyes to poverty will be cursed.*

James 2:15-16

*Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, (16) and you say, "Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well" – but then you don't give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do?*

### **Closing Prayer**

Father, thank You for loving us so much. Help us to always be loving and kind to everyone, no matter which church they go to or what color their skin is. We want to be Good Samaritans, helping people in need, no matter what the cost is to us personally. In Jesus' name, Amen.

### **Special Note to the Teacher**

Confronting the needs of others brings out various attitudes in us. Jesus used the story of the good, but despised, Samaritan to make see what attitude was acceptable to Him. If we are honest, we often will find ourselves in the place of the expert in the law, needing to learn again who our neighbor is. Note these different attitudes toward the wounded man:

To the...	The wounded man was...
...expert in the law	...a subject to discuss
...robbers	...someone to use and exploit
...religious men	...a problem to be avoided
...innkeeper	...a customer to serve for a fee
...Samaritan	...a human being worth being cared for and loved

To Jesus, all of them and all of us were worth dying for.

## Learning Activities

### Craft Corner

#### *Silhouettes to Share*

**Materials:** Buttons, yarn (various colors) cardboard circles, glue, ribbon, markers, scissors.

**Procedure:** Give each child one set of items (such as all the buttons). Then ask everyone to make a self-portrait using only the materials they have. After a few minutes, allow each person to share their items with others. They'll find it much easier to be creative.

Read Philippians 2:3 together. Discuss: Just as all the materials we used for our project were important, everyone in our world is important, too. Talk about how God wants us to show love to others by making them feel special and sharing what we have.

### **Good Samaritan Booklet**

Using the storybook pattern, have the children make a Good Samaritan booklet.

### **Game Center**

Use the following questions in a game of your choice:

#### **Review questions:**

1. How did the Jews in Jesus' day believe that a person got eternal life? (By obeying the *Ten Commandments* perfectly and doing good works)
2. What did Jesus teach the people that made the scribes and Pharisees so angry? (That you couldn't keep the *Ten Commandments* perfectly; that's why you need a Savior.)
3. If a lawyer is an expert in explaining God's laws, why did he ask Jesus what to do to inherit eternal life? (He was trying to trick Jesus into saying something contrary to the Word of God.)
4. Why did the religious leaders of Jesus day try to trick Him into saying something contrary to the Scriptures? (They wanted to bring Him before the high priest and have Him punished.)
5. Tell the parable of the Good Samaritan in your own words.
6. Which of the three was the "neighbor" to the guy who was attacked by bandits? (The Samaritan)
7. When Jesus said to *love your neighbor as yourself*, what was he saying? (Just as you love and care for your own needs, you are to love others.)



8. How can we help the sick or the old or the poor? (Visit the sick, send cards, be a friend, say a kind word, invite them to church, etc.)
9. How can we be good neighbors to people who live on the other side of the world? (Support mission work, write letters, pray, etc.)
10. It's impossible to love God with your whole being and your neighbor as yourself. So, what must you do? (Ask Jesus into your heart and call upon the Holy Spirit to give you the power you need to show God's kind of love to others.)



# Showing God's Love by Being Compassionate

(Zechariah 7:9)

**Objective:** *The student will learn that they can show God's love by being compassionate to those who are hurting.*

**Materials:** *Bible, large sheet of newsprint, masking tape, permanent markers or ball-point pens, red marker, large Band-Aids of assorted shapes, two blindfolds, a packet of seeds and a mature plant of the same type as the seeds or a picture of a mature plant or flower of that species.*

**Before Class:** *Cut a sheet of newsprint to about 3 by 5 feet.*

*When class arrives, put the newsprint on the floor. Have one child lie on the newsprint and trace around his shape to make a silhouette.*

## Pre-Session Warm Up

What is “*compassion*?” Compassion is *kindness*. What actions show compassion? What does compassion feel like? What other words are related to compassion?

Have you ever wanted to help a friend who had fallen and scraped a knee or gotten a splinter in his finger? Have you ever ached inside when one of your friends was made fun of at school? Have you ever felt true sorrow when something really bad happened to someone you love? These are feelings of compassion.

Compassion is feeling as if you really know how another person is feeling because of your own personal experiences.

God wants us to be compassionate towards others. We need to notice when people are in need and develop compassionate hearts. When we have compassion for other people it makes us happy.

## Opening Prayer

Father, help us to see others like You see them. Help us to look past ourselves and our own concerns and see the needs of others. Help us to have a heart that is really concerned about others. Help us to be more like You. In Jesus name, Amen!

## Memory Verse

*This is what the Lord of Heaven's Armies says: Judge fairly, and show mercy and kindness to one another. (Zechariah 7:9)*

## Lesson Review

We've been learning about how to show God's love to others.

1. In our first lesson we learned that God's love is everywhere and that he wants us to love Him back with all of our heart, mind, and soul.
2. Next, we learned that God knows all about us. He always knows where we are and what we're doing and what we're thinking and feeling. And, even so, He still loves us completely. In the same way, He wants us to love others, even people who do wrong to us and don't deserve our love. Because that's the way He loves us.
3. Third, we learned that because planet earth belongs to God, we can show others that we love Him by taking care of our environment properly. We did an activity that showed the effects of an oil spill on the ocean, birds, plants and animals. We talked about ways to care for God's possessions.
4. In last week's lesson we learned that one way of showing God's love is by being a good neighbor—that is, by thinking of others first and sharing what we have with them. We did an activity to show how sharing brings people together and often brings beautiful things into our lives—we put individual drops of food coloring in a dish of milk. Then when we added drops of dish

soap it caused the food coloring drops to swirl together to make a beautiful rainbow.

## Lesson

Let's pretend this is a person in our class. We'll call her Jenny. She is a visitor. But there is a big problem. Jenny is very sad. Her life is all mixed up. She doesn't know where to turn.

[Draw a broken heart on the silhouette figure and tape the newsprint to a wall.]

See how Jenny's heart is broken. She hasn't told anyone else about her problems, but sometimes she looks so sad.

- What could you do to help Jenny? (Tell her jokes to cheer her up. Ask her what the matter is.)

We all feel bad at times. It's easy to see when someone has fallen off his bike and scraped his knee. That kind of hurt is on the outside. But we all have hurts on the inside. Those are harder for our friends to see.

God wants us to help those who are sad, lonely, scared, shy, or feeling rejected. The Bible tells us that we must try to help them.

### Zechariah 7:9

*This is what the Lord of Heaven's Armies says: Judge fairly, and show mercy and kindness to one another.*

- What does this verse say we must do when people we know are hurting on the inside? (Show mercy and compassion to them; take care of them.)

Sometimes when we know someone is hurting on the inside, we are afraid to help. Or, maybe we don't know *how* to help.

- Have you ever seen someone who looked really sad and you didn't know quite what to say or do? (For example, my neighbor, who's old, fell down and broke her arm and I didn't know how to cheer her up. My mom was sad one day and I didn't know what to say. My friend's dad moved away and he felt very lonely.)

Sad things happen to people we love. When these sad things happen, God wants us to show compassion for them. He wants us to show love to them in His name.

Jesus is our example of how to be compassionate. Can you think of some of the compassionate things that Jesus did? How did Jesus show compassion for people?

- Healed the sick
- Made the lame to walk and the blind to see
- Feed 5,000

In the last hours of His life, as He hung there on the cross, He showed compassion to His mother, and to the thief that was being crucified with Him.

Let's read one story of how Jesus showed God's love to someone in need.

### Mark 7:31-37

*Jesus left Tyre and went up to Sidon before going back to the Sea of Galilee and the region of the Ten Towns. (32) A deaf man with a speech impediment was brought to him, and the people begged Jesus to lay his hands on the man to heal him. (33) Jesus led him away from the crowd so they could be alone. He put his fingers into the man's ears. Then, spitting on his own fingers, he touched the man's tongue. (34) Looking up to heaven, he sighed and said, "Ephphatha," which means, "Be opened!" (35) Instantly the man could hear perfectly, and his tongue was freed so he could speak plainly! (36) Jesus told the crowd not to tell anyone, but the more he told them not to, the more they spread the news. (37) They were completely amazed and said again and again,*

*“Everything he does is wonderful. He even makes the deaf to hear and gives speech to those who cannot speak.”*

- What did the people think when Jesus healed the man? (They were surprised. They told everyone about what Jesus had done.)

All through the books of Mathew, Mark, Luke, and John, we read about compassionate things Jesus did. He healed people. He held the children. He fed people who had no food. He taught them of God's love.

### ***Band-Aid Bluff***

Today, we want to think about how we can help people who are hurting. To think of new ways to help people, let's play *Band-Aid Bluff*.

[Form two teams. Give each team a blindfold, permanent marker or pen, and enough Band-Aids so that each person has one.]

Let's try to heal Jenny's hurting heart. Which team can do the best job? This is how the game is played. Teams will take turns putting Band-Aids on the heart. The goal is to get your team's Band-Aids in the best places. But you must do it blindfolded.

The first team will think of a way to help someone who is hurting. For example, you might decide to tell that person you love them. Write “I love you” on a Band-Aid. Then choose someone to put the Band-Aid on Jenny while blindfolded. Then the second team will write a saying on their Band-Aid and choose someone to put it on Jenny's heart.

[Help the first team to write a compassionate saying on a Band-Aid. Have the team explain what they would do to use their saying in a situation. Then blindfold the first player and stand her a few feet in front of the silhouette. Uncover half of the tape on the Band-Aid so

the player can grasp the covered part. Then allow the blindfolded person to walk to the silhouette and stick the Band-Aid on it.

Give teams an equal number of chances to play. Some examples of compassionate sayings are:

- Can I help you with something?
- I will pray for you.
- Would you like to tell me about your hurt?
- I am your friend.
- I will spend time with you.
- I am so sorry you are hurting.
- I know an adult who can help.

When the game is over have kids sit in a circle.]

- What does it feel like when someone helps you when you are hurting? (I feel calmer. I get happy.)
- What does it feel like to help someone who is hurting? (I feel good about myself. I feel like I did something God wants me to do.)

God planned for us to show His love to others by helping them when they are hurting. Not only does the hurting person feel better, others will see how much we love through our actions. Then we can explain to everyone that we are acting with love because we love God. We are showing God's love.

If Jenny was a real person, I'm sure she would be happier right now. Each of us would also feel happier because we had shown God's love.

### ***Developing Compassion***

Phillip was a thirteen-year-old retarded boy whose family just started coming to church. His mother was concerned about how well Phillip would be accepted.

On his first Sunday in Sunday school, Phillip entered his new class. From the back of the room came a question, "*Hey, who's the guy with the thick glasses and the weird eyes?*"

Phillip had a breathing problem which meant that often he had to stick his tongue out in order to get enough air. Seeing Phillip, one of the boys in the class turned to his friend, stuck out his tongue and said, "*Look guys. Guess who I am?*"

Later that day at home, Phillip told his mother that he did not want to ever go back to church.

- What wrong things did the kids in the class do?
- How would you feel if you were Phillip?
- If you were in this class, what would you do?
- If the class made fun of you, what would you do?
- If Phillip were a friend of yours, how would you feel?

*Continue the story...*

Phillip's mother decided to ask to speak to the class the next Sunday, without Phillip being present. The teacher allowed Phillip's mother to explain: "*When Phillip was born, the doctors did not think he would live. He was born with an imperfect body that does not allow him to do as much as some of you are able to do. He may not look like you, but he has the same kinds of feelings you do. He feels alone. He is a little afraid to be here, because he doesn't think he has any friends. I am concerned that without your help, he will never want to come back to church.*"

During the next few weeks there was a decided change in the attitude and actions of the class. One of the girls in the class was sick on a Sunday morning and was told by her mother that she would not be able to go to church. The girl protested, "*But Phillip needs me.*"

- Tell about a time that you really *felt* for another person who was hurting or angry?
- Have you ever felt as if you were feeling another person's embarrassment?
- Has anyone ever treated you with compassion?
- How do we become compassionate?

[Show the children a packet of seeds and a mature plant (or a picture) of the same type of plant as the seeds.]

When we become children of God, He plants the seeds of the fruit of the Spirit within our hearts—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. In order for us to become truly compassionate, we must take care of and work with these seeds, just as we have to water and tend vegetable or flower seeds for them to mature.

### ***Brainstorming Idea***

- Who are some people that need compassion? [Teacher, let the children identify a family or a group of people in the community who might feel comforted by the student's expression of kindness.]
- How might we show compassion toward other people, animals, the earth, and oneself? [Have students write letters, make greeting cards, or do some other kind gesture for them.]

[If time permits, develop plans for a future class project related to compassion—for example, a food drive, a collection of old towels for an animal shelter, litter removal, or a fund raiser for a local cause.]

Wouldn't it be fun to do one, small, individual "*random act of kindness*" for someone and keep it a secret? You can practice compassion that way!

Colossians 3:12

*Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.*

## **Closing Prayer**

Father, I'm so glad that You love me. Help me to show Your love to others who are hurting. Help me know what to say and do to make them feel better. And help me to tell them about You and Your love. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

## **Learning Activities**

### **Craft Corner**

Draw a picture of someone who is hurting inside and give the children Band-Aids to put on them. Then have the children turn their paper over and write a story about their picture.





# Show God's Love by Forgiving Others

(Colossians 3:13-14)

**Objective:** *The students will learn that they can show God's love by forgiving others.*

**Materials:** *Bibles, paper plate for each child, colorful markers, clear plastic film canister for each child, white glue, bowl of birdseed.*

**Before Class:** *Write 70 X 7 on the sides of the film canisters. Then write, "Forgive as the Lord forgave you!" Colossians 3:13, on each paper plate. Put the birdseed into a bowl from which the children can scoop out the seed. You can also glue 7 seeds to the lid of the film canister before class so that it has time to dry. Complete one craft beforehand to use during class time.*

## Pre-Session Warm Up

Have you ever been wronged? [Let the children respond.] How does that feel? Should you forgive people when they do wrong things to you? Why? [Don't give the answer to the kids, let them tell you why they think they should. In this lesson they will discover that we should forgive others because that pleases God.]

We have been learning that God wants us to show His kind of love to others, even when they don't deserve it.

1. In our first lesson we learned that God's love is everywhere and that he wants us to love Him back with all of our heart, mind, and soul. The best way to do that is by showing God's kind of love to others.
2. Next, we learned that God knows all about us. He always knows where we are and what we're doing and what we're thinking and feeling. And, even so, He still loves us completely. In the same way, He wants us to love others, even people who do wrong to us and don't deserve our love. Because that's the way He loves us.

3. Third, we learned that because planet earth belongs to God, we can show others that we love Him by taking care of our environment properly. We did an activity that showed the effects of an oil spill on the ocean, birds, plants and animals. We talked about ways to care for God's possessions.
4. Next, we learned that one way of showing God's love is by being a good neighbor—that is, by thinking of others first and sharing what we have with them. We did an activity to show how sharing brings people together and often brings beautiful things into our lives—we put individual drops of food coloring in a dish of milk. Then when we added drops of dish soap it caused the food coloring drops to swirl together to make a beautiful rainbow.
5. In last week's lesson we learned that we can show God's love by being compassionate to those who are hurting—people who are sad, lonely, scared, shy, or feeling rejected. We put Band-Aids on a broken heart and talked about ways we can help people with hurts on the inside.

Today we're going to learn that we can show God's love to others **by forgiving them** when they do wrong things to us. It isn't easy, but with the power of God's Holy Spirit, all things are possible.

## Opening Prayer

Lord, I want to learn how to love others with Your kind of love—a love that keeps on loving even when the other person doesn't deserve it. Father, I know that takes the power of the Holy Spirit, so I ask You now to fill each of us to overflowing with Your love for others. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

## Memory Verse

*Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.  
(Colossians 3:13-14)*

## Lesson

I'm going to tell you a little story.

Danny and Jimmy were best friends. Every morning Danny went over to Jimmy's house so they could walk to school together. Then, almost every day after school, Jimmy came over to Danny's house to play basketball in Danny's driveway.

One day, Danny went to Jimmy's house, but Jimmy had already left for school. He was walking with Chad. Chad was the most popular boy in school. Then, for the next week, Jimmy played with Chad after school and didn't play with Danny. Danny felt very hurt and he was angry at Jimmy.

On Saturday, Jimmy came over to Danny's house with his basketball and said he was sorry that he ignored Danny all week. After Jimmy apologized, he asked if Jimmy would still play basketball with him?

- What should Danny do?
  - Should Danny say "no" because Jimmy didn't act nice?
  - Should Danny find someone else to play with because Jimmy didn't act like a friend?
- What will happen if Danny forgives Jimmy? (They might be friends just like before. They would have fun playing basketball.)
- What will happen if Danny doesn't forgive Jimmy? (Jimmy would figure out that it isn't nice to treat your friends like that. Danny could find a better friend)

Let's see what Jesus said about forgiveness:

Matthew 6:14-15

*If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. (15) But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.*

How many of you have had a hard time forgiving others? Forgiving others is one of the most important things we can do.

Matthew 18:21

*Then Peter came to him and asked, "Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?"*

Peter thought he was really going all out. He thought seven times would be extravagant!

Matthew 18:22

*"No, not seven times," Jesus replied, "but seventy times seven!"*

- Why does God think forgiving others is so important? (He wants us to get along with other people; He wants us to show other people His kind of love.)

Jesus paid for our sins when he died on the cross. God forgave us of all our sins because of what Jesus did for us. If God sent his only Son to earth to die so we could be forgiven, God must consider forgiving others very important. We are to forgive others as God forgives us.

John 15:13

*There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends.*

It's easier to forgive others when we remember how much God has forgiven us.

Our Memory Verse shows us what will happen when we forgive others. [Review the Memory Verse for today.]

*"Make allowance for each other's faults"* means to not get mad when someone does something to us that we don't like.

Why should you forgive others? (Because the Lord has forgiven you. You should do the same kind of forgiving that God does. Jesus

forgave all my sins so I should forgive everyone who does something against me.)

Forgiving others is showing God's kind of love to them. We show them that God loves people and forgives them. Forgiveness helps put people together. Anger and un-forgiveness pulls people apart.

## Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for forgiving my sins. Help me to be a forgiver like You. Help me to forgive those who have hurt me. Help me put people together instead of getting angry and pulling people apart. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

## Learning Activities

### Craft Corner

#### *Seventy Times Seven*

##### Materials:

- Bowl of birdseed
- Colorful Markers
- Paper plate for each child
- White glue
- See-through film canister for each child

##### Procedure:

Give each child a paper plate to work on. If you didn't do this before class, have each child glue 7 seeds to the lid of their film canister. Then have them count out 490 pieces of bird seed to put in their film canister. Explain to the kids how this represents how many times we are to forgive a person who sins against us. We are not to just forgive someone only 7 times like the number of seeds on the lid. No! We are to forgive someone 70 times 7. [Don't let the children get frustrated by this exercise, encourage them to stick with the counting as long as they can, then help them to understand that we are to keep on forgiving people who are mean to us an innumerable number of times.]

If the children weary of counting seeds, have them color pictures on their paper plates to show how it feels to be forgiven and/or how it feels to forgive someone else.

### Game Center

#### *Forgiveness Relay*

With chalk or masking tape draw a big heart on the floor. Place objects, such as large blocks, in the heart with labels indicating hurtful things children do to others such as lying, calling someone a mean name, not sharing, cheating in a game, and so forth. [You can have the children help you make the labels and tape them onto the blocks.]

Form 2 teams. Have each team line up. First person in the line must run to the heart, pick up a hurtful thing bring it to their team's trash can, say "*I forgive you,*" throw it into the trash, and tag the next team member to "*go.*" When the heart has been cleaned of all sins, the team that removed the most sins gets the Clean Heart Award.



# Showing God's Love By Using Kind Words

(Proverbs 12:25)

**Objective:** *The students will learn that they can show God's love by using kind words.*

**Materials:** *Bibles, books, four 5x8" boards or pieces of cardboard, aluminum foil, cooking oil, four paper cups, four aluminum foil pie pans, four dimes, four paper clips, apple, toy sword or arrow, honey, toy snake.*

**Before Class:** *Set up four centers around the room with the following items in each: two or three books, one small board or cardboard covered with aluminum foil, a small cup of cooking oil labeled "kind words," paper clip, aluminum foil pie pan.*

*Stack the books. (The height of the books should be around 3 inches.) Make a ramp by propping up the top of the foil-covered board against the top of the books. Put the lower end of the board inside the pie plate to catch excess oil.*

*Set the other items (toy snake, toy sword or arrow, honey, and apple) on a tray in the front of your room. (You can also use pictures of each item if these items are unavailable.)*

## Pre-Session Warm Up

- What are some of the strongest wild animals you can think of? (Lion, bear, gorilla, elephant.)
- What is the difference between a wild animal and a tame one? (A wild animal can't be controlled. A wild animal won't listen to people.)

In today's lesson we're going to talk about a part of our body that is even stronger than a wild animal.

## Opening Prayer

Lord, thank You for being such a kind and loving God. I pray that today we will learn how powerful kind words can be. Amen.

## Memory Verse

*Worry weighs a person down; an encouraging word cheers a person up. (Proverbs 12:25)*

## Lesson Review

We've been learning about how to show God's love to others.

1. In our first lesson we learned that God's love is everywhere and that he wants us to love Him back with all of our heart, mind, and soul.
2. Next, we learned that God knows all about us. He always knows where we are, what we're doing, what we're thinking and feeling. And, even so, He still loves us completely. In the same way, He wants us to love others, even people who do wrong to us and don't deserve our love. Because that's the way He loves us.
3. Third, we learned that because planet earth belongs to God, we can show others that we love Him by taking care of our environment properly. We did an activity that showed the effects of an oil spill on the ocean, birds, plants and animals. We talked about ways to care for God's possessions.
4. Next, we learned that one way of showing God's love is by being a good neighbor—that is, by thinking of others first and sharing what we have with them. We did an activity to show how sharing brings people together and often brings beautiful things into our lives—we put individual drops of food coloring in a dish of milk. Then when we added drops of dish soap it caused the food coloring drops to swirl together to make a beautiful rainbow.
5. Then we learned that we can show God's love by being compassionate to those who are hurting. God wants us to help those who are sad, lonely, scared, shy, or feeling rejected. We put Band-Aids on a broken heart and talked about ways we can help people with hurts on the inside.
6. In last week's lesson we learned that we can show God's love by forgiving others when they do wrong things to us. We counted out

490 bird seed to show just how many times 7 times 70 is – that's the number of times God tells us to forgive others!

## Lesson

[Teacher, for a hands-on demonstration of the unruliness of the tongue, purchase a cow tongue at the butcher shop. Let the children look at it. They are gross and the kids won't soon forget this lesson!]

The Bible talks about a part of our body that is even stronger than a wild animal. Can you guess what part of your body that is?

James 3:5-6

*In the same way, the tongue is a small thing that makes grand speeches. But a tiny spark can set a great forest on fire. (6) And among all the parts of the body, **the tongue is a flame of fire**. It is a whole world of wickedness, corrupting your entire body. It can set your whole life on fire, for it is set on fire by hell itself.*

James compares the tongue to a small spark that can set an entire forest on fire.

A person can set a whole forest on fire by letting one spark carelessly jump out of a fire pit, or by thoughtlessly flicking a cigarette out the car window. And, just as a little spark can cause a huge, uncontrollable fire, just a few words can cause a lot of trouble!

Words can be used to encourage people to do good things *and* they can be used to encourage others to do bad things. There have been times when people have done some extremely bad things because someone told them it was OK to do it. Words spoken out of turn can lead to anger, hurt feelings, and even murder and war.

James 3:8-10

*but no one can tame the tongue. It is restless and evil, full of deadly poison. (9) Sometimes it praises our Lord and Father, and sometimes it curses those who have been made in the image of God. (10) And so*

*blessing and cursing come pouring out of the same mouth. Surely, my brothers and sisters, this is not right!*

- What do you think the Bible is telling us about our tongues? (We have a hard time controlling the things we say.)

Our tongues can do good things but sometimes they can get out of control and do harmful things. We should use our tongue only to say good things.

- What good things can our tongues do? (Say kind words; give compliments; tell others about Jesus.)
- What ways do our tongues get out of control? (When we say bad words; when we make fun of others; when we tell lies.)

The Bible compares kind words to certain objects. It also compares the tongue that uses mean or bad words to certain objects. Let's find out what these objects are.

[Have the children look up and read the following verses. After someone has read the verse, have them come up and choose the object that the verse is talking about:]

Proverbs 25:11

*Timely advice is lovely, like golden apples in a silver basket.*

What are kind words compared to here? (Apples)

Proverbs 16:24

*Kind words are like honey—sweet to the soul and healthy for the body.*

What are kind words compared to here? (Honey or a honeycomb.)

Kind words are compared to sweet tasting foods. When we give compliments and say kind things to people, it makes them feel good just like we feel when we eat sweet treats.

## Psalm 64:3

*They sharpen their tongues like swords and aim their bitter words like arrows.*

What is the tongue that uses unkind or bad words compared to here? (A sword or an arrow.)

## Psalm 140: 3

*Their tongues sting like a snake; the venom of a viper drips from their lips.*

What is the tongue that uses unkind or bad words compared to here? (A snake.)

Unkind words are compared to things that hurt us. When we gossip, talk about others, or say bad words, we make people feel sad. Our words hurt them

## Proverbs 12:25

*Worry weighs a person down; an encouraging word cheers a person up.*

The Bible says when people feel sad, their hearts feel heavy. But kind words can make that heaviness go away.

**Oil of Kindness**

Let's do an activity that helps us understand this. Each group can use one work area that I have set up.

[Help groups find a work area then direct their attention to you.]

Let the ramp represent someone you know. Perhaps it could be your mom or dad, a neighbor, or a friend. The paper clip will represent something like hearing bad news or being made fun of at school. When bad things happen, they just sit on our hearts and won't go away. To show how this happens, set your paper clip on the ramp.

- What is the paper clip doing? (It is just sitting there.)
- What sad thing could this paper clip represent? In your group, make up a pretend situation that makes a person feel sad. Perhaps a friend's pet died or your sister broke her arm and can't roller blade anymore.

Just as the Bible says, people we know often have things that make their hearts sad or heavy. They want the sadness to go away. Our kind words can show them God's love and help their sadness go away—even if for just a little while.

We can let the oil represent kind words. Pour oil on the paper clip.

- What happened to the paper clip? (It moved and slid off the ramp.)

Just like the oil helped the paper clip move, our kind words can help people who have heavy hearts move their sadness away. The more kind words we say, the more we help a sad person feel better.

Kindness takes practice. Let's practice saying kind words to each other. Turn to your neighbor on the left and give that person a compliment.

Now give the person on your right a compliment.

God wants us to show His love by using kind words, but it's not always easy to do that. Let's ask Him to help us do that this week.

**Closing Prayer**

Father, thank You for Your example of kindness. Help us use kind words this week. Especially with friends whose hearts are heavy. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

## Learning Activities

### Craft Corner

#### *Apple Star Prints*

Did you know that there is a star hidden in an apple? Can you guess where the star is? If you cut an apple in half horizontally, you will see it! Our kind words make someone feel good on the inside. We may not always see these good feelings in our friends, but the feelings are still there, just like the hidden star in the apple.

Make apple star prints on a sheet of paper by placing apple halves in paint and pressing them on paper. Write kind words on the paper by each star print.

Hang your apple star print posters on the refrigerator to remind you to speak kind words to the members of your family.

Serve caramel for dipping and eating apple pieces.



# Showing God's Love

## By Being a Cheerful Giver

(2 Corinthians 9:7)

**Objective:** The students will learn that by giving, they will show God's love to others.

**Materials:** Bible; four clear plastic cups; four rubber bands; plastic wrap; water; coins; small construction paper hearts of red and pink; small 1-inch toys such as a ball, tiny teddy bear, marbles, little doll; small pieces of food such as a few grapes, peas, green beans, miniature marshmallows; small treats such as pieces of fruit candy; napkins.

**Before Class:** Separate coins, hearts, toys, and pieces of food into piles. As children arrive, have them sit around a table.

### Pre-Session Warm Up

Have you ever received a gift that you really like? [Teacher, let the children respond.]

How did it make you feel to get that gift?

How do you think that person felt when he gave you the gift? Why? (Really good because I got so excited about my gift; happy because my grandma loves to give me things; great because I said that the ten dollars was the best gift I got for my birthday.)

Have you ever given someone a special gift? How did that make you feel?

Today we're going to learn that God loves a cheerful giver.

### Opening Prayer

Lord, You are pleased when we give to others with a cheerful heart. I pray that you would help us all to learn how to be generous givers. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

### Memory Verse

*You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully." (2 Corinthians 9:7)*

### Lesson Review

We've been learning about how to show God's love to others.

1. In our first lesson we learned that God's love is everywhere and that he wants us to love Him back with all of our heart, mind, and soul.
2. Next, we learned that God knows all about us. He always knows where we are and what we're doing and what we're thinking and feeling. And, even so, He still loves us completely. In the same way, He wants us to love others, even people who do wrong to us and don't deserve our love. Because that's the way He loves us.
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6. Next, we learned that we can show God's love by forgiving others when they do wrong things to us. We counted out 490 bird seed to

show just how many times 7 times 70 is – that's the number of times God tells us to forgive others!

7. In last week's lesson we learned that we can show God's love by using kind words. We put a paper clip on a ramp, but it just sat there like unkind words sit on a hearer's heart. But when we poured oil over the clip, it moved down the ramp, just like how kind words can help move sad things out of a person's life.

## Lesson

The Bible tells us that giving to others pleases God.

2 Corinthians 9:7

*You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully."*

The Bible gives us a wonderful example of a little boy who gives cheerfully. One day after Jesus had been teaching and ministering to the people for a long time, the disciples tried to encourage Jesus to send the crowd away to buy food. They knew how tired and hungry everyone must be.

Mark 6:35-36

*Late in the afternoon his disciples came to him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. (36) Send the crowds away so they can go to the nearby farms and villages and buy something to eat."*

In those days, there were no convenience stores on the corner or huge grocery stores that sold food. The people had walked a long way. It was a long way back. How could they get something to eat? How could their children get something to eat?

Mark 6:37

*But Jesus said, "You feed them." "With what?" they asked. "We'd have to work for months to earn enough money to buy food for all these people!"*

How do you think the disciples felt when Jesus told them to feed all those people? [Teacher, let the children respond.] Have you ever seen people in great need? Have you seen homeless people on the side of the road with signs that say, "Will work for food?" Perhaps you've felt bad when you've seen the needs of others and wondered what you could do.

When Jesus asked the disciples to provide food for over 5,000 people, they asked in amazement if they should go and spend eight month's wages on bread. They probably thought it was hopeless.

Jesus wanted to use the disciples in this impossible situation to meet the needs of others. And, Jesus can use you to meet the needs of others, too. But, what would they do? Jesus asked them to search for food among the crowd.

Mark 6:38

*"How much bread do you have?" he asked. "Go and find out." They came back and reported, "We have five loaves of bread and two fish."*

They returned to Jesus with a little boy who had five loaves and two fish. Maybe this little boy wondered how the Lord Jesus could use so little to feed so many. But he was willing to give the little bit he had. And, he did it with a cheerful heart.

Mark 6:39-40

*Then Jesus told the disciples to have the people sit down in groups on the green grass. (40) So they sat down in groups of fifty or a hundred.*

Then Jesus thanked God the Father for the food.

## Mark 6:41

*Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, looked up toward heaven, and blessed them. Then, breaking the loaves into pieces, he kept giving the bread to the disciples so they could distribute it to the people. He also divided the fish for everyone to share.*

Why is it important to let Jesus use you to meet the needs of others? When you are sharing with someone else, no matter who it is, it's like sharing it with Jesus! You get the biggest blessing! It's not how much you have to give, but how willing you are to give it. As you share the little bit you have with others, Jesus will use you in a mighty way! The little boy must have watched in amazement as Jesus commanded the disciples to pass out his little bit of lunch to that huge crowd.

## Mark 6:42

*They all ate as much as they wanted.*

The disciples did everything they could by gathering the available food and organizing the people into groups. Then, in answer to prayer, God did the impossible. When you face an impossible task, do what you can and ask God to do the rest. He may see fit to make the impossible happen!

## Mark 6:43

*And afterward, the disciples picked up twelve baskets of leftover bread and fish.*

The disciples gathered twelve baskets full of leftovers (one for each disciple!)

## Mark 6:44

*A total of 5,000 men and their families were fed from those loaves!*

There were probably 15,000 or 20,000 people in all counting the women and children.

One little boy offered his lunch to Jesus to feed as many people as he could. Jesus appreciated that little boy's gift. He took the few loaves of bread and fish the little boy had given and turned them into baskets and baskets full of bread and fish. Everyone had enough to eat, including all the adults and the children, too. When the food was collected, there were twelve baskets left over! Think how much more that was than the little lunch the boy had given in the first place. Jesus had performed a miracle with the boy's gift.

[Review today's Memory Verse.] What does this verse say about the attitude we should have when we give to others? (We should be cheerful. We should *want* to give, not feel like we *have* to give.)

Have you ever given something to someone when you really didn't want to? How did that feel? (I felt bad inside and pouted afterwards. It's no fun to give.)

Of course, that's not the kind of giving that God wants. He wants us to show His love by being a cheerful giver.

When we give with a cheerful attitude, it is fun. It's as if the things we give become bigger because God uses them in special ways to bless other people and to make us feel good, too. Plus, God is pleased when we cheerfully give what we have to help others out of pure kindness.

**Magnified Gifts**

Let's do an experiment to show how what we have becomes "bigger" when we give it away rather than when we keep it all to ourselves. You have all seen a magnifying glass. Just like this magnifying glass seems to make an object look bigger than it actually is, when you give a gift with a cheerful heart, it becomes bigger because you are not only blessing others, you are pleasing God, as well.

[Hold the magnifying glass over an item and allow children to look through the glass.]

Let's demonstrate this idea.

Today we're going to make a magnifying glass out of a jar and cellophane. [Divide the class into four groups. Give each group one jar, one set of items, and one rubber band. Have groups arrange their items in the jar, then help them put plastic wrap loosely over the top. Secure the wrap by placing the rubber band around the top of the jar. Have groups make a dip in their plastic wrap to hold water. Then carefully pour water into the plastic wrap dip. The curved water in the wrap will act like a lens. When students look at the items through the side of the jar, the items will appear normal size. When they look through the water "lens" by peering down through the water into the jar, the items will look larger.]

Our jars represent giving. Each group has items in their jar that represent different things we can give to others. With your group, take a minute to decide what kind of giving your items represent and ways a person could cheerfully give these things away.

[Let each group make up a scenario of what their items could represent and how to give those items away. The **coins** could represent giving money to needy people through your church or other organizations or to friends in need. The paper **hearts** could represent giving love to others through things like listening, playing with them, helping them. The **toys** could represent giving good used toys or new ones to children who don't have many toys, perhaps at Christmas time or at other times of the year. The pieces of **food** represent giving people food, such as at a homeless shelter, in a gift basket, or cookies to friends to show them you care.]

When we looked at our gifts through the sides of the jar, they are regular size. But when we looked at the gifts through the magnifying lens we made, they seemed bigger.

How does what we have, seem to get "bigger" when we give it to others? (It becomes bigger because you are not only blessing someone else, you are pleasing God, as well.) The giver's heart makes the gift more valuable to God.

God does not ask us to give away everything we have. He wants us to give away part of what we have. In fact, our verse says that God wants us to have a plan to give to others. That helps us learn to love others.

What do you have that you can give to others? (I get an allowance so I could give part of it to my church. I have baby toys that I never play with so I could give them to my church nursery. My neighbor doesn't have a Big Wheels but I have two, so I could give him one.)

Of course, before you give something away, you should always get an OK from your parents. They are in charge of you and your belongings, so it is important to tell them what you are doing. But I'm sure they will be excited to see that you are a giving person.

Right now, let's ask God to help us show His love by being cheerful givers.

## Closing Prayer

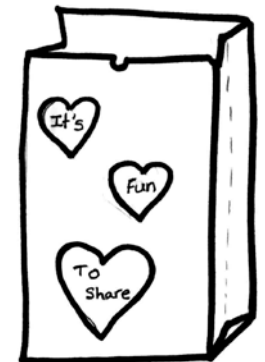
Father, thank You for giving me so many wonderful things. I want to be a generous giver like You. Please help me be a cheerful giver. Show me what I can give to others and to my church. Thank You for loving me so much. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

## Learning Activities

### Craft Corner

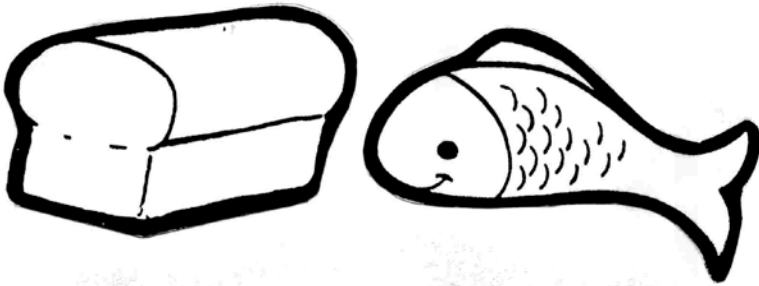
#### *It's Fun To Share Lunch Sacks*

Have each child decorate a lunch bag with hearts, ribbons, and so forth. Write on the hearts "It's fun to share." In each sack put 2 cheese fish crackers and 5 soda crackers. Let each child give their sack to someone special.



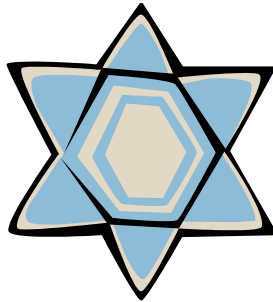
**Take Home Paper**

Using the patterns below, draw five loaves and two fishes on take-home papers. Encourage children to record in one loaf or fish each day a way Jesus used them to meet a need.

**Star Search**

One of the simplest gifts we can give others is a compliment. Giving compliments to others helps us get along with them better and it makes the other person feel better about himself.

Cut out star patterns and write ways to compliment others. Have them plan to give these stars to their family members.

**Game Center**

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

**Review Questions:**

1. Why did the disciples tell Jesus to send the crowds away? (Jesus had been teaching a long time and everyone was tired and hungry.)

2. What did Jesus tell the disciples to do about the hungry crowd? (He told them, "You give them something to eat.")
3. How do you think the disciples felt when Jesus told them to feed all those people? (Overwhelmed with the impossible task.)
4. How much money would it have taken to feed all those people? (About 8 month's wages.)
5. How did Jesus tell His disciples to meet the needs of the people? (Go and see how much food was among the people.)
6. Who was the only one who offered to share his food? (A little boy had 5 loaves and 2 fish!)
7. What did Jesus do before He broke the loaves? (He thanked God the Father for the food.)
8. Why is it important to let Jesus use you to meet the needs of others? (You get to be used by the Lord to bless others!)
9. Did people get enough to eat, or only enough to tide them over until they could get home? (They were all filled!)
10. How much leftovers were there? (12 baskets full.)
11. Why didn't Jesus simply make food appear by His power? (He wanted the disciples and the little boy to be part of the miracle; to share in the joy of meeting the needs of so many.)
12. What are some ways you can be used by God to be a blessing to others?



# Showing God's Love By Being Cooperative

(1 Corinthians 3:9)

**Objective:** The students will learn that they can show God's love by cooperating with each other to do God's work.

**Materials:** Bible; dark and medium brown, red, green, dark green, white, black, yellow construction and tissue paper scraps; pencils; something to drink such as juice; submarine sandwiches (optional).

**Before Class:** The paper scraps will be used to tear meat and vegetable shapes such as ham slices (dark brown or dark red tissue paper), lettuce (green tissue paper), tomatoes (red construction paper), pickles (dark green construction paper), onions (white construction paper), olives (black construction paper), cheese (yellow tissue paper). Use your imagination and the scraps of paper you have available to determine what to put on your "sandwiches". Cut two oblong shapes out of medium brown paper to make paper "buns". Make sesame seed spots on half the buns. Make enough bun halves so that each student will have one set.

Arrange two tables end to end on which to have an assembly line in your classroom. Start by having all the scrapes of paper randomly piled in the center of a large table.

## Pre-Session Warm Up

Today we're going to learn that we can show God's love by cooperating with each other to do God's work. Do you know what it means to *cooperate* with someone? (To work together with someone to accomplish a goal.)

How do carpenters, electricians, bricklayers, roofers, and plumbers cooperate to build a building? (They each do their part. They all make everything fit with everything else.)

What would happen if these workers didn't cooperate? (Their building wouldn't get done; nothing would fit together right.)

That can happen in the church, too. When church members don't cooperate with each other, nothing gets done right in God's work.

## Opening Prayer

Lord, one of the wonderful things about being in the family of God is that we are there to help one another. We are never left alone to do something for You. Thank You, Lord, for giving each of us spiritual gifts to use to bless one another. Teach us that we can show Your love to others by cooperating with them. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

## Memory Verse

*All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is part of it. (1 Corinthians 12:27) This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other. (1 Corinthians 12:25)*

## Lesson Review

We've been learning about how to show God's love to others.

1. In our first lesson we learned that God's love is everywhere and that he wants us to love Him back with all of our heart, mind, and soul.
2. Next, we learned that God knows all about us. He always knows where we are, what we're doing, what we're thinking and feeling. And, even so, He still loves us completely. In the same way, He wants us to love others, even people who do wrong to us and don't deserve our love. Because that's the way He loves us.
3. Third, we learned that because planet earth belongs to God, we can show others that we love Him by taking care of our environment properly. We did an activity that showed the effects of an oil spill on the ocean, birds, plants, and animals. We talked about ways to care for God's possessions.
4. Next, we learned that one way of showing God's love is by being a good neighbor—that is, by thinking of others first and sharing what we have with them. We did an activity to show how sharing brings

people together and often brings beautiful things into our lives—we put individual drops of food coloring in a dish of milk. Then when we added drops of dish soap it caused the food coloring drops to swirl together to make a beautiful rainbow.

5. Then we learned that we can show God's love by being compassionate to those who are hurting. God wants us to help those who are sad, lonely, scared, shy, or feeling rejected. We put Band-Aids on a broken heart and talked about ways we can help people with hurts on the inside.
6. Next, we learned that we can show God's love by forgiving others when they do wrong things to us. We counted out 490 bird seeds to show just how many times 7 times 70 is – that's the number of times God tells us to forgive others!
7. Next, we learned that we can show God's love by using kind words. We put a paper clip on a ramp, but it just sat there like unkind words sit on a hearer's heart. But when we poured oil over the clip, it moved down the ramp, just like how kind words can help move sad things out of a person's life.
8. In last week's lesson we learned another way to show God's love is by being a cheerful giver. We learned that when we give people gifts, it makes our gifts become "larger" like seeing them under a magnifying glass. That's because they not only make the person we are giving the gift to feel special, it makes us feel good, too.

## Lesson

Before we start our Bible lesson, let's do something fun.

Do you all know what a Submarine sandwich is? Sub sandwiches are usually made on long loaves of bread that look like submarines. And, they can have many different things on them. Some have layers of meat, cheese, lettuce, tomato, onion, or pickles.

Today we're going to set up the "Super Assembly Line Café." Let's pretend that in our café, we are supposed to make Submarine sandwiches for hundreds of people.

Let's decide what to put on our submarine sandwiches. [One by one, hold up the colors of scrap paper and decide what they could represent: brown paper could be ham, red paper could be tomatoes, etc.]

What do you think the best way would be to make lots of sandwiches fast and efficiently? Do you think it would be best to have each one of us make a sandwich at the same time? Would that be the fastest way to make lots of sandwiches? Or, do you think there might be a better way?

What do you think if we assigned each person to add a single kind of item? We could work together like an assembly line. We could start out with the buns at one end of the line and then assign each person a different thing to put on the sandwich as the bun gets passed down the line. That way each item could be put on in order. For example, perhaps you will decide to put on meat first, then lettuce, then tomato, and so forth. The very last student will put on the bun top with the sesame seed markings. [If you have too many students, you could provide yellow and red crayons for students to add mustard and catsup to the bun by coloring it in or a marker to make sesame seeds on the top bun half. These students should be last in line.]

We call that *cooperation* or teamwork—working together as a team.

[Let the students decide how to divide up the tasks and to prepare their ingredient (i.e., tear their colored paper how they think it should be). The lettuce person may want to tear shreds; the tomato person may want to tear circles; the pickle person may want to tear long spears or circles; and so on.]

We'll put the bottom bun halves at the beginning of the assembly line. When I say, "Go," the first "cook" will tear and add his item to the bun half and pass it on to the next student. The first student will then take



the second bun bottom. Each bun will go along the assembly line until the last student puts on the bun top and sets aside the sandwich.

[When the assembly line has assembled all sandwiches, have students sit in a circle away from the table.]

Did you see how much better it was to have a plan and cooperate with each other? The Bible tells us we need to cooperate with other Christians to do God's work. God calls us fellow workers.

For example, the people of the early Christian church worked together to help one another:

Romans 15:23-28 [Teacher, read about Paul's Travel Plans...]

*But now I have finished my work in these regions, and after all these long years of waiting, I am eager to visit you. (24) I am planning to go to Spain, and when I do, I will stop off in Rome. And after I have enjoyed your fellowship for a little while, you can provide for my journey. (25) But before I come, I must go to Jerusalem to take a gift to the believers there. (26) For you see, the believers in Macedonia and Achaia have eagerly taken up an offering for the poor among the believers in Jerusalem. (27) They were glad to do this because they feel they owe a real debt to them. Since the Gentiles received the spiritual blessings of the Good News from the believers in Jerusalem, they feel the least they can do in return is to help them financially. (28) As soon as I have delivered this money and completed this good deed of theirs, I will come to see you on my way to Spain.*

How did the church work together to help one another? (The church gathered money and probably food and other supplies to send to other believers. And, surely, they prayed for them, as well.)

God does not want any of us to work alone. We are to help each other.

Does anyone know how the following partners helped each other in the work of God? [Teacher, let the children tell you what they remember about these Bible stories.]

- Barnabas helped Paul
- Joseph helped his brothers
- Ruth helped Naomi
- Jonathan helped David
- Elijah helped Elisha
- Jesus helped Lazarus

God wants us to cooperate to build up the family of God. We must all do our part.

What sorts of ways can you cooperate or participate with others to do God's work? (You can pray for missionaries that are living overseas; you can send money or other needed supplies to them. You could work in a soup kitchen to help feed the homeless. You could do fund raisers to help raise money to help send kids to Youth Camp.)

What sorts of ways can you help God's work at church? Perhaps your job could be to pick up litter on the church parking lot or be friendly to a visitor to our class. We can all cooperate by praying for each other. You can pray for me so that I can be an even better teacher. I can pray for you, too.

You've heard the expression, "*Many hands make work light.*" Cooperating is more fun than doing things alone. It breaks a big job down into small parts.

## Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for helping us be fellow workers in our church. Help us cooperate with each other so we can do more for You. Thank You for giving us fun things to do and also hard things to do so we can grow to be more like You. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

## Learning Activities

### Snack Idea

Bring a long Submarine sandwich and cut it into pieces to share with the children.

### Craft Corner

### Game Center

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

#### ***Review Questions:***

1. What was the best way to make lots of sandwiches in our pretend café? (By working together like an assembly line.)
2. In what ways does God want us to cooperate with other Christians? (To do God's work; to further the Gospel.)
3. How did the whole church work together to send out Barnabas and Saul? (They all prayed together seeking God's guidance. I'm sure the church gathered money and food and other supplies to send with them on their journey. And surely they prayed for Barnabas and Saul while they were gone.)
4. How can you cooperate or participate with others to do God's work? (You can pray for missionaries that are living overseas; you can send money or other needed supplies to them. You could work in a soup kitchen to help feed the homeless. You could do fund raisers to help raise money to send kids to Youth Camp.)

# Showing God's Love

## By Helping Missionaries

(Mark 16:15)

**Objective:** Students learn that they can show God's love by helping missionaries tell the good news of Jesus' love around the world.

**Materials:** Bible, aluminum foil, small Styrofoam balls, scissors, scraps of construction paper, pictures of missionaries your church supports (preferably some with families who have children); a globe or world map; some dolls or action figures.

**Before Class:** Become familiar with the ministries of one or more missionaries you will present during the class time. If possible, have a short story or facts that will interest children about each person or family. If you have enough prayer cards or pictures for each child in your class, plan to let them take the card home.

Precut aluminum foil into about 12-inch squares and make foil figures for younger children.

As children arrive, have them sit around a table.

### Pre-Session Warm Up

Who knows what a missionary is? (A missionary is a messenger. It's someone that tells other people the Good News about what Jesus came to do for us.)

Most often we think of missionaries as people that go to live in foreign countries far from home to tell people of other cultures about Jesus. But, really, each and every one of us has been called to be a missionary or a messenger of God's Good News. You can tell the others kids in your class at school or in your neighborhood about how good and wonderful our Lord is.

But today we are going to learn more about how we can help missionaries that are in other countries, far away from home, preaching the gospel in foreign lands.

### Opening Prayer

Lord, You have called each of us to be Your messenger. Give us hearts to tell others about Your love and ways. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

### Memory Verse

*And then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone. (Mark 16:15)*

### Lesson Review

We've been learning about how to show God's love to others.

1. In our first lesson we learned that God's love is everywhere and that he wants us to love Him back with all of our heart, mind, and soul.
2. Next, we learned that God knows all about us. He always knows where we are, what we're doing, what we're thinking and feeling. And, even so, He still loves us completely. In the same way, He wants us to love others, even people who do wrong to us and don't deserve our love. Because that's the way He loves us.
3. Third, we learned that because planet earth belongs to God, we can show others that we love Him by taking care of our environment properly. We did an activity that showed the effects of an oil spill on the ocean, birds, plants and animals. We talked about ways to care for God's possessions.
4. Next, we learned that one way of showing God's love is by being a good neighbor—that is, by thinking of others first and sharing what we have with them. We did an activity to show how sharing brings people together and often brings beautiful things into our lives—we put individual drops of food coloring in a dish of milk. Then when we added drops of dish soap it caused the food coloring drops to swirl together to make a beautiful rainbow.
5. Then we learned that we can show God's love by being compassionate to those who are hurting. God wants us to help

those who are sad, lonely, scared, shy, or feeling rejected. We put Band-Aids on a broken heart and talked about ways we can help people with hurts on the inside.

6. Next, we learned that we can show God's love by forgiving others when they do wrong things to us. We counted out 490 bird seeds to show just how many times 7 times 70 is – that's the number of times God tells us to forgive others!
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8. In the next lesson we learned another way to show God's love is by being a cheerful giver. We learned that when we give people gifts, it makes our gifts become "larger" like seeing them under a magnifying glass. That's because they not only make the person we are giving the gift to feel special, it makes us feel good, too.
9. In last week's lesson we learned another way to show God's love is by cooperating with each other. During that lesson we formed an assembly line to make pretend submarine sandwiches. God wants us to learn how to get along together—helping one another as we work and play with them.

## Lesson

After Jesus' death on the cross, He was buried in the tomb. But three days later he rose from the dead. For the next 50 days he met with the believers and gave them some last minute instructions before He went back up to heaven to prepare the place for us. One of the last things He told His followers has been written down for us in the book of Matthew.

## Matthew 28:18-20

*Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

So, Jesus gave us a big job to do. That job is to tell every person on Earth the Good News that Jesus died for them so that they could go to heaven.

But, many still have not heard the Good News. That's why some people want to leave home to go out all over the world to tell everyone.

Missionaries have many jobs. It takes many different kinds of people who have many different kinds of knowledge and abilities to do mission work. Some are pilots who use their planes to fly other missionaries from one place to another. Some are language specialists that work on translating the Bible into other languages so that other people can understand the words of God. Some are school teachers that teach other missionary's children. Each missionary uses the skills and abilities God has given them to help spread the Good News about Jesus all over the world.

Right after Jesus went to Heaven, the new churches that the disciples started had missionaries, too. Some were named Paul, Barnabas, Peter, and Timothy. These men went on missionary journeys over land and across the sea. The people who stayed at home became part of Jesus' command to tell everyone in the world about Jesus. They helped these missionaries in many ways.

## 3 John 5-8

*Dear friend, you are being faithful to God when you care for the traveling teachers who pass through, even though they are strangers to you. (6) They have told the church here of your loving friendship. Please continue providing for such teachers in a manner that pleases*

*God. (7) For they are traveling for the Lord, and they accept nothing from people who are not believers. (8) So we ourselves should support them so that we can be their partners as they teach the truth.*

How did this friend of Paul's care for the traveling teachers who passed through his town? It says he provided for them. What do you think they provided? (They probably gathered money and food and other supplies to help them on their journey. And, surely they prayed for them, as well.) He did whatever he could to help the missionaries.

This is true today. Missionaries count on people who stay at home to help them get their job done.

What do you think children can do to help missionaries? (Give part of their allowance as an offering; write letters to the children of missionaries to encourage them; pray for missionaries; send them clothing and other things they might need.)

### **Foil Figures**

Let's act out ways we can help missionaries. We can do this by making foil figures [or, you can use action figures.]

[Form groups of three or four. Hand out foil squares. Pass out scissors and a Styrofoam ball to each student.]

With your foil and ball, make a figure of yourself.

[Instruct children to place the Styrofoam ball in the center of the foil square and smoothly wrap the foil around the ball, bring all ends of the foil together. This will make a head for your figure. The remaining foil ends will be the body. Fan out the ends of the foil. Cut half to three-quarters up the middle to two ends. Make smaller cuts between the middle section and the two outside ends. The outside ends will become the arms, the inside ends will be the legs. By crumpling the foil, make arms and legs.]

Now with your group, make a scene that shows how you can help missionaries. For example, you could have your figures all fold their

hands in prayer or have them all standing up giving an offering to send to the missionaries.

[Make available scraps of construction paper so students can draw and cut out small items to use in their scenes, such as tiny white squares for letters to mail, circles for coins, shapes for clothing such as shirts, pants, and skirts. Let the children use their imaginations. When groups complete their scenes, gather around the table as a large group and have each group share their scene. Have others groups guess what the foil figures are doing.]

Although all of us have different abilities, we can all pray. Put your figure in a praying position.

### **Closing Prayer**

Father, thank You so much for our missionaries. Help them do the hard things they must do every day. Also help us to do our part to help them tell others about You. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

### **Learning Activities**

#### **Activity Corner**

Copy a map of the Holy Land and have the children trace Paul's journeys. Talk about the aspects of traveling in his day: how far and difficult the journeys were; how many countries he went to; etc.

Paul was a missionary in the Roman Empire. He started churches in many cities. Paul went on three missionary journeys. He usually started his journeys from **Antioch** in Syria. Paul also went to Rome.

Travel was difficult in Paul's time. There were no planes, trains, cars, or buses. On land, Paul would have walked or ridden a donkey to cities like **Derbe**, **Lystra**, and **Colosse**. Can you find those cities on the map? [Teacher, have the children find and highlight the city names as you mention them.] After visiting these towns and setting up

churches, he wrote letters of encouragement to the believers there that would instruct them in the way they should live their lives. Can you think of what book in the New Testament that Paul wrote to the people in **Ephesus**?

Travel was dangerous. Robbers often hid by a road to rob travelers. Storms made life on a ship very dangerous. One time Paul's ship crashed on the south side of the Island of **Crete** and everyone on it barely made it to shore.

Paul was thrown into prison in **Philippi**. He was also beaten in **Thessalonica**, mocked in **Corinth**, and forced out of many other towns. But many people accepted Paul. They saw that what he said about Jesus was true. We should be thankful for missionaries like Paul.

Have the children write letters to the missionaries that your church supports. Have them draw pictures of themselves and then spend some time praying for these families.

### **Game Center**

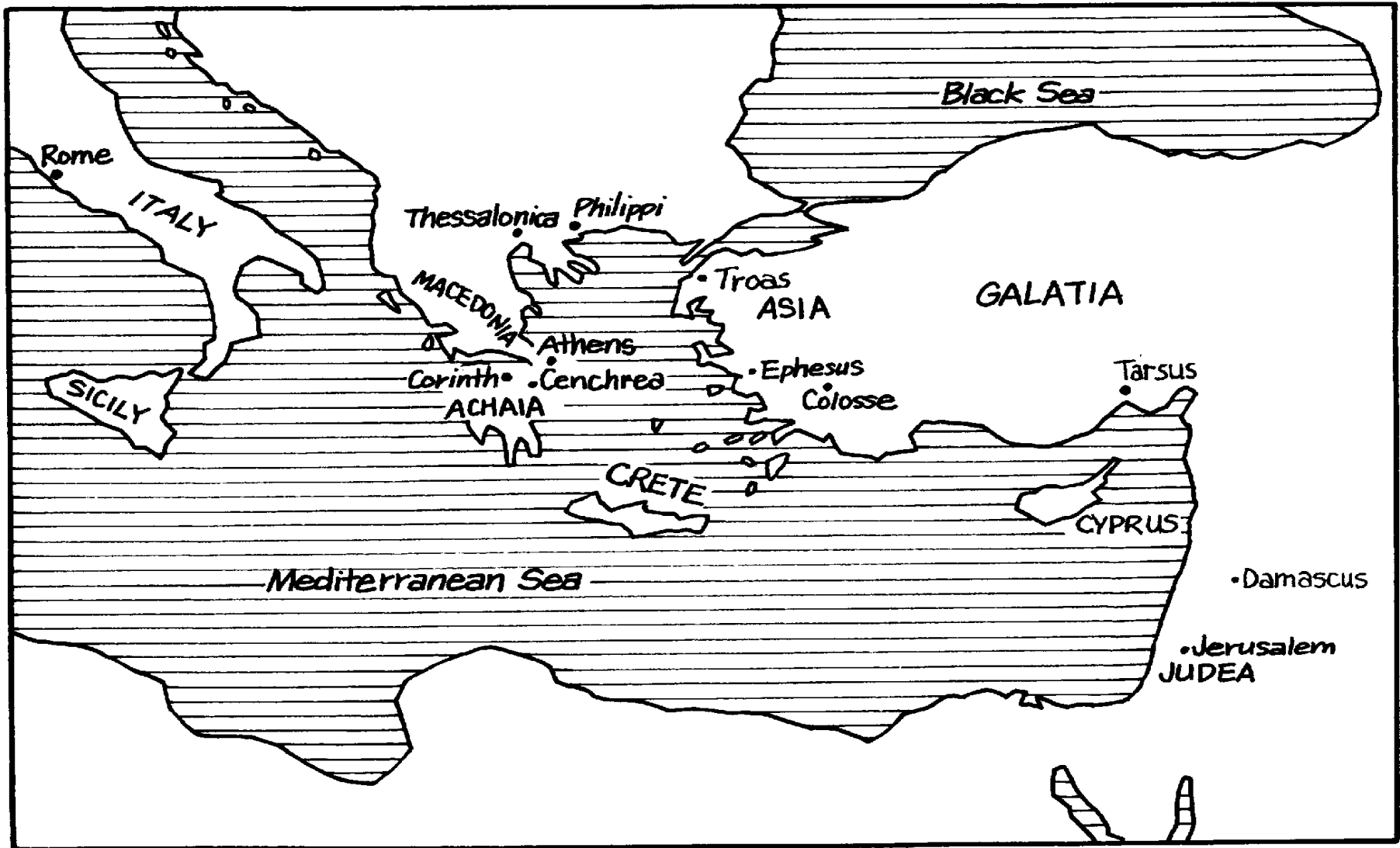
Use the following review questions in a game of your choice:

#### ***Review Questions:***

1. What is a missionary? (A messenger; someone that tells people about the Good News of Jesus Christ.)
2. Where do missionaries live? (Some live in foreign countries; but God wants each one of us to tell everyone the Good News about Jesus, no matter where we live.)
3. What are some jobs that missionaries have? (Pilots, language specialists, teachers, preachers.)
4. Who are some of the missionaries that we can learn about in the New Testament? (Paul, Barnabas, Peter, and Timothy.)

5. How did the believers in Antioch help the believers in Jerusalem? (They gathered an offering and sent it with Paul and Barnabas to the believers in Jerusalem.)
6. How do you think the people who stay at home can help missionaries who live in faraway countries? (By giving money, sending clothes and other items they need; by praying for them or writing them letters of encouragement.)
7. What can children do to help missionaries? (Give part of their allowance as an offering; write letters to children of missionaries; pray; send clothes and other things to help.)
8. What is the most important thing we can do for missionaries? (Pray.)

WHERE IT ALL HAPPENED (James, 1 and 2 Peter)



WHERE IT ALL HAPPENED (1,2 and 3 John: Use Asia Minor section of map for Acts.)

WHERE IT ALL HAPPENED (Jude: This letter was passed from church to church. Use map for Acts.)





# Showing God's Love

## By Being Heroes of Faith

(Psalm 118:6-7)

**Objective:** The students will learn that they can show God's love by being heroes of faith.

**Materials:** Bible; an action figure or a picture of one.

### Pre-Session Warm Up

When you think of a hero, who comes to mind? (Superman, Michelle Kwan, Michael Jordan, my dad.) There are many kinds of heroes today.

What are some of your favorite Super heroes?

What does this person do that makes him a hero to you? (He is very strong; she's not afraid; he saves people; she skates the best; my dad helps me when I need help.)

Heroes are people we admire. But sometimes kids get mixed up about who a hero really is. Sometimes they have heroes who are not really heroes. I know of kids who think heroes are people who shoot guns or use their fists to hit others. Those people are not true heroes.

Today, we are going to learn about real heroes.

### Opening Prayer

Lord, please help us to consider who it is that we look up to and want to be like. Give us a desire in our hearts to want to be more like You, Jesus. Amen.

### Memory Verse

*The Lord is for me, so I will have no fear. What can mere people do to me? Yes, the Lord is for me; he will help me. I will look in triumph at those who hate me. (Psalm 118:6-7)*

### Lesson Review

We've been learning about how to show God's love to others.

1. First, we learned that God's love is everywhere and that he wants us to love Him back with all of our heart, mind, and soul.
2. Next, we learned that God knows all about us. He always knows where we are and what we're doing and what we're thinking and feeling. And, even so, He still loves us completely. In the same way, He wants us to love others, even people who do wrong to us and don't deserve our love because that's how He loves us.
3. Third, we learned that because planet earth belongs to God, we can show others that we love Him by taking care of our environment properly. We did an activity that showed the effects of an oil spill on the ocean, birds, plants and animals. We talked about ways to care for God's possessions.
4. Next, we learned that one way of showing God's love is by being a good neighbor—that is, by thinking of others first and sharing what we have with them. We did an activity to show how sharing brings people together and often brings beautiful things into our lives—we put individual drops of food coloring in a dish of milk. Then when we added drops of dish soap it caused the food coloring drops to swirl together to make a beautiful rainbow.
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6. Next, we learned that we can show God's love by forgiving others when they do wrong things to us. We counted out 490 bird seeds to show just how many times 7 times 70 is – that the number of times God tells us to forgive others!
7. Next, we learned that we can show God's love by using kind words. We put a paper clip on a ramp, but it just sat there like unkind words sit on a hearer's heart. But when we poured oil over the clip, it moved down the ramp, just like how kind words can help move sad things out of a person's life.
8. In the next lesson we learned another way to show God's love is by being a cheerful giver. We learned that when we give people gifts, it makes our gifts become "larger" like seeing them under a magnifying glass. That's because they not only make the person we are giving the gift to feel special, it make us feel good, too.
9. Next, we learned another way to show God's love is by cooperating with each other. During that lesson we formed an assembly line to make a pretend submarine sandwich. God wants us to learn how to get along together—helping one another as we work and play with them.
10. Last time we learned that we can show God's love by helping missionaries tell the Good News about Jesus' love around the world. We discussed what a missionary is. We made foil figures and used them in an activity to discover how we can help them.

## Lesson

The Bible is full of stories of real super heroes. Let's see what some people who lived in the Bible did to become heroes.

[Teacher, spilt your class into groups of 3 or 4 children each. Have them read Acts 16:22-34 as a group and answer the following questions. Then meet back as a class and discuss each group's answers.]

1. Who do you think acted with courage in this story? (Paul, Silas, the jailer.)
2. How did Paul and Silas act like heroes? (They weren't scared even when they were beaten. They sang when they were in jail. They told the jailer and others about Jesus even when it was dangerous to do that.)
3. How did the jailer act like a hero? (He helped Paul and Silas after the earthquake. He took Paul and Silas home even when it was dangerous for him to do that.)

Being a hero doesn't mean that you aren't afraid. I'm sure that Paul and Silas were afraid before they were beaten by the mob. But they stood up for what they believed anyway. They went to jail because they preached about Jesus. Then when they were in jail they sang about God and prayed. They weren't just heroes, they were super heroes.

How do you think they became so brave? (Maybe they didn't think about danger; maybe they encouraged each other. They prayed to God.)

Let's read a verse that tells us how we can become super heroes like Paul and Silas. [Review today's Memory Verse.]

What does this verse tell us about how to have courage? (We can have courage because God is with us and helps us. We aren't afraid because God is with us.)

Let's look in the Bible for ways we can become super heroes. Each of the verses we will look up will have one or more characteristics of God's super hero. As we decide on each way we can become a hero, let's write it on our work sheet.

[One by one, read each of the following verses. As a class, decide on what characteristic it talks about. For example, you might decide that *trust* is one characteristic of a hero. Use as many of the following

verses as you need. Also, you can look up additional verses if you have more students.]

- Isaiah 12:2 – Trust in God
- Matthew 5:43-44 – Love your enemies
- 1 Corinthians 15:58 – Stand firm in the Lord's work.
- 2 Corinthians 1:4 – Comfort others.
- Palm 44:8 – Boast in the Lord.
- Matthew 19:21 – Give to the poor.
- Ephesians 4:32 – Forgive others
- Matthew 5:9 – Make peace with others.
- 1 Timothy 6:11 – Work for righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness.
- Galatians 5:22-23 – the Fruit of the Spirit.

You can be true heroes by asking God to help you build these qualities into your lives.

## Closing Prayer

Father, I want to be a super hero. Please help me trust You. Keep me strong and true to Your Word, the Bible. Help me to build all the qualities of a hero that we talked about. Thank You for being with me all the time, helping me to be a super hero. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

## Learning Activities

### Craft Corner

#### *Super Hero of Faith Quilt*

Cut out 4-inch squares of cotton material or colored construction paper. Write a quality of a Super Hero of Faith on a square and paste it onto a piece of card stock or construction paper making a colorful and beautiful a collage. As the children work, talk about these heroic qualities.

### Game Center

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

#### *Review Questions:*

1. What are heroes? (People we admire.)
2. How did Paul and Silas act like heroes? (They weren't scared even when they were beaten. They sang when they were in jail. They told the jailer and others about Jesus even when it was dangerous to do that.)
3. How did the jailer act like a hero? (He helped Paul and Silas after the earthquake. He took Paul and Silas home even when it was dangerous for him to do that.)
4. Does being a hero mean that you're never afraid? (No)
5. How did Paul and Silas become so brave? (They trusted God.)
6. What are some qualities of a real hero of faith? (They trust God, they work for righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness; they have the fruit of the Spirit.)

Read Acts 16:22–34 as a group and answer the following:

1. Who do you think acted with courage in this story?

➤ Isaiah 12:2:

➤ Matthew 5:43–44:

➤ 1 Corinthians 15:58 :

➤ 2 Corinthians 1:4 :

2. How did Paul and Silas act like heroes?

➤ Palm 44:8:

➤ Matthew 19:21:

➤ Ephesians 4:32:

3. How did the jailer act like a hero?

➤ Matthew 5:9:

➤ 1 Timothy 6:11:

➤ Galatians 5:22–23:

# Showing God's Love by Being Filled with The Holy Spirit

(John 15:12)

**Objective:** *The students will learn that in order to keep on showing God's love to others, we need to be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit.*

**Materials:** *Bibles, pint-sized clear jars, raisins, baking soda, vinegar, tablespoons, and four dry towels.*

**Before Class:** *In different areas of your room, set up four centers with these items in each: Bible, a pint-sized jar filled  $\frac{3}{4}$  full of water and 2 or 3 tablespoons of vinegar; baking soda; a tablespoon. Put a dry towel under the jar of water and vinegar solution.*

*When students arrive, form four groups. Then have groups sit in a circle on the floor.*

## Pre-Session Warm Up

What are some things people have done for you that make you feel good? (Given me a gift; helped me up when I've fallen; shared their toys; hugged me.)

These are all ways people have shown love to you. How does it feel to be shown love?

Today we're going to learn that God wants us to show love to others.

## Opening Prayer

Lord, You loved us before we even knew You. Teach us how to love others in that same way. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

## Memory Verse

*This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. (John 15:12)*

## Lesson Review

We've been learning about how to show God's love to others.

1. First, we learned that God's love is everywhere and that he wants us to love Him back with all of our heart, mind, and soul.
2. Next, we learned that God knows all about us. He always knows where we are and what we're doing and what we're thinking and feeling. And, even so, He still loves us completely. In the same way, He wants us to love others, even people who do wrong to us and don't deserve our love. Because that's the way He loves us.
3. Third, we learned that because planet earth belongs to God, we can show others that we love Him by taking care of our environment properly. We did an activity that showed the effects of an oil spill on the ocean, birds, plants and animals. We talked about ways to care for God's possessions.
4. Next, we learned that one way of showing God's love is by being a good neighbor—that is, by thinking of others first and sharing what we have with them. We did an activity to show how sharing brings people together and often brings beautiful things into our lives—we put individual drops of food coloring in a dish of milk. Then when we added drops of dish soap it caused the food coloring drops to swirl together to make a beautiful rainbow.
5. Then we learned that we can show God's love by being compassionate to those who are hurting. God wants us to help those who are sad, lonely, scared, shy, or feeling rejected. We put Band-Aids on a broken heart and talked about ways we can help people with hurts on the inside.
6. Next, we learned that we can show God's love by forgiving others when they do wrong things to us. We counted out 490 bird seeds to show just how many times 7 times 70 is – that the number of times God tells us to forgive others!

7. Next, we learned that we can show God's love by using kind words. We put a paper clip on a ramp, but it just sat there like unkind words sit on a hearer's heart. But when we poured oil over the clip, it moved down the ramp, just like how kind words can help move sad things out of a person's life.
8. In the next lesson we learned another way to show God's love is by being a cheerful giver. We learned that when we give people gifts, it makes our gifts become "larger" like seeing them under a magnifying glass. That's because they not only make the person we are giving the gift to feel special, it make us feel good, too.
9. Next, we learned another way to show God's love is by cooperating with each other. During that lesson we formed an assembly line to make a pretend submarine sandwich. God want us to learn how to get along together—helping one another was we work and play with them.
10. Next, we learned that we can show God's love by helping missionaries tell the good news about Jesus' love around the world. We discussed what a missionary is. We made foil figures and used them in an activity to discover how we can help them.
11. In last week's lesson we learned that we can show God's love by being a super hero of Faith. We discovered the qualities of true heroes and we're encouraged to build those characteristics into our own lives.

This week we're going to learn what it takes to do that!

## Lesson

Think about what you did this week. Can you share some ways you showed love this week? [Let the children give examples.]

Let's do an activity that will help us understand how we can love others even more. Each group can use one work area that I have set up. [Have students move to their assigned area.]

Let's say the **jar of water and vinegar** represents **us**. The **raisins** represent the **acts of love** we show to others. Drop four or five raisins into your glass one at a time. Let a different person in your group drop in each raisin as he tells one act of love he's shown to someone.

Did you notice that your raisins sank to the bottom and are just sitting there? That's a lot like our acts of love. We might help our friend clean her room once or twice, but after a while we grow tired of doing loving things over and over.

Why do you think this happens? (We want to do our own things. It gets too hard for us. We don't love the person enough.)

The Bible tells us how we can keep that love going even when we get tired.

1 John 4:7

*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.*

Where does the Bible say love comes from? (From God.)

Love for others only comes from knowing God and His love for us. Let's add the baking soda to our jars. The baking soda represents God's love. Do not stir the water when you add the baking soda.

[*Teacher Tip:* The reaction may cause the liquid to overflow the jar. Caution the children and tell them that is what the dry towel is for.]

Now let's give the baking soda some time to work. While we are waiting, let's find ways the Bible tells us to love others.

I'm going to assign you a verse and I want you to tell me what this verse tells us to do to show love to others.

[Teacher, have the children come away from their work area to look up the verse listed below so the experiment doesn't distract them. Assign each group one verse to report on to the class.]

Verse	Ways to show love
Galatians 6:10	<i>Do good things.</i> People can see God’s love in us when we do good things for them.
1 John 5:2	<i>Keep His commands.</i> God gave us many commandments. Some of them tell us not to lie or steal, and to honor our parents. These are all ways we can show love to others.
Romans 12:10	<i>Honor one another.</i> People will know we love them if we think of them first and let them have first choice.
Romans 13:10	<i>Do them no harm.</i> If we always make sure we are doing what is right for others, they will see that we love them.

Galatians 6:10

*Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should **do good** to everyone—especially to those in the family of faith.*

1 John 5:2

*We know we love God’s children if we love God and **obey his commandments.***

Romans 12:10

*Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in **honoring each other.***

Romans 13:10

*Love **does no wrong** to each other, so love fulfills the requirements of God’s law.*

**Additional verses:**

Leviticus 19:18

***Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge** against a fellow Israelite, but love your neighbor as yourself, I am the Lord.*

Proverbs 17:9

*Love prospers when a fault is **forgiven**, but dwelling on it separates close friends.*

Proverbs 17:17

*A friend is always **loyal**, and a brother is born to **help** in time of need.*

Hebrews 13:1-2

*Keep on loving each other as brothers and sisters. Don’t forget to **show hospitality** to strangers, for some who have done this have entertained angels without even realizing it!*

Now let’s go back and look at our jars. [The raisins should be going up and down.]

What made the raisins dance up and down? (We added baking soda.)

If you keep watching the raisins, they keep going up and down over and over. Without God’s love in our lives (like plain vinegar-water), our attempts to love others falls short. Once we add God’s love (like adding baking soda to the solution), our love can go on working over and over again. We can’t love others on our own. It has to be God’s love and power in our lives that keeps us loving others time after time. Just like the dancing raisins, we can keep showing love over and over to others if we allow God’s love to work through us.

Bow your heads for a moment. Think to yourself: “*Am I tired of loving others? Have I been trying to show love on my own? Am I getting tired of loving someone I know?*” If you are, you need to ask God to allow His love to work in your life.

Jesus wants us to love others. Let's pray and ask Him to help us love others more.

## Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for loving us first. Help us to show love to others more this week. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

## Learning Activities

### Snack Idea:

#### *Ants on a log*

Put peanut butter on celery sticks. Line the peanut butter with raisins.

#### *Amazin' Raisin' Cake*

1 cup mayonnaise	1 ½ teaspoons cinnamon
2 eggs	2 teaspoons baking soda
2 cups sugar	½ teaspoon nutmeg
3 cups flour	¼ teaspoon cloves
3 cups chopped, peeled apples	
1/3 cup milk	1 cup raisins
½ cup chopped nuts	

Mix mayonnaise, eggs, and sugar. Add dry ingredients and mix well. Add milk and mix again. Add raisins, apples, and nuts. Pour into three greased and floured cake tins. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes. Frost with cream cheese frosting.

## Craft Corner

### *Heart "Paper Doll" Banner*

Cut strips of paper and fold them accordion style. With a heart pattern, draw a heart shape that is slightly wider than the width of the paper. When you cut it out and unfold the paper, it will be like paper dolls—hearts all linked together. The children can make several sections and paste them together. They can decorate their "banners" as they wish.



# What Does God's Love Look Like?

(1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

## Pre-Session Warm Up

You all know what a dictionary is for, right? It gives you definitions of words. Well, there's a cool definition in the Bible for "love"!

Today we're going to look that up and learn how God wants us to show love to others.

## Opening Prayer

Lord, You have commanded us to love one another. You even ask us to love our enemies. But, sometimes we get selfish and forget to be loving towards others. Teach us how to love others in the same way that You describe in 1 Corinthians 13. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

## Memory Verse

*Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance. (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)*

## Lesson

This is our last lesson in the Showing God's Love series that we've been doing for the past 12 weeks. Tell me what you have learned? What does it mean to love others? [Teacher, let the children share their ideas.] We show God's love by being compassionate, forgiving others, using kind words, being a cheerful giver, by cooperating with others.

But maybe you've heard songs on the radio or seen movies on TV that give you the idea that love is just a warm, exciting feeling. Perhaps you have read stories about people who love somebody until

they get tired of loving that person; then they find somebody else to love. Is this what real love is? No!

The world is giving all of us a distorted view of what real, true love is. As you listen to music, watch TV, read some magazines, or watch some people, you may very well be getting the wrong idea of what it means to love people with God's kind of love.

Many people think that love is just a feeling: "*That person makes me feel special; it must be love!*" Or, they think that love is based on performance: "*If I just do something nice for that person, then they'll like me and want to be my friend.*"

But true love is not conditional like that. Your parents love you all the time, even when you're naughty, don't they? Oh, you may disappoint them or hurt their feelings, but they never stop loving you. True love is not a temporary thing that you can easily turn *on* and *off*.

If you want to learn what love really is, you need to look at God. The Bible says, "*God is love*" (1 John 4:8). God's love for you is a picture of perfect love.

God's love for you is not just a warm feeling. God's love for you does not depend on your love for Him or what you can *do* for Him. God doesn't love you because you are so loveable, for in many ways you are not!

God loves you because He chooses to love you; it is a decision He has made. None of us deserves God's love; still He chooses to love you and me. And God has done something to show His love. He gave the most precious gift He could give—His own life! The Lord Jesus Christ died for you to take away your punishment for sin forever. The Bible says, "*But God demonstrates His own love towards us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*" (Romans 5:8). Believing this wonderful truth allows you to become part of God's family.

Once we are members of God's family, God wants us to love others. We are to *choose* to love others—not because of how we feel about them or because they love us. Rather, we are to choose to love them because of God's love for us. When we choose to love others, we show that love by our actions.

First Corinthians 13 tells us what it means to know and to show God's kind of love.

#### 1 Corinthians 13:4-8

*Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud (5) or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged. (6) It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. (7) Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance. (8) Prophecy and speaking in unknown languages and special knowledge will become useless. But love will last forever!*

[Teacher, have the children brainstorm with you what each one of these love qualities means. Write their ideas on the board.]

God's kind of love...

- is willing to wait patiently and kindly for others
- doesn't get jealous of others because of who they are or what they have
- is not rude to others
- puts others people first—not me first
- doesn't get angry easily and want to get even
- doesn't keep track of wrong things others do
- doesn't look for and think about the bad in others; it looks for and thinks about the good in them
- protects and defends others
- trusts and has confidence in others
- expects good things for others

- keeps on loving without complaining or quitting
- never lets down – never stops loving

Jesus came to earth to show us God's kind of love.

- Jesus is patient and kind.
- His actions toward you are always right.
- He delights in who you are.
- He takes pleasure in meeting your needs.
- He wants to forgive, not get even.
- He chooses not to remember the wrongs that you do.
- He sees your potential – the good that can develop in you.
- He has confidence in what He can do through you.
- He never lets anything get in the way of His love for you.
- He protects and defends you.
- His love for you never disappoints; it is forever.

How about you? If you know the Lord Jesus as your Savior, do you love others with God's kind of love? Try putting your own name in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8. Are these qualities true in your life? [Teacher, use Student Worksheet.]

- Your Name     takes turns patiently without getting upset.
- Your Name     doesn't get jealous of a friend's new clothes.
- Your Name     doesn't show off or act as if others don't matter.
- Your Name     is polite and respectful to parents and teachers.
- Your Name     lets someone else have the biggest piece.
- Your Name     doesn't call someone names to get back at him.
- Your Name     doesn't stay angry at someone for what he did.
- Your Name     looks for good in someone others say is bad.
- Your Name     stands up for someone whom others pick on.
- Your Name     believes that God can change difficult people.
- Your Name     encourages others to do and be their best.
- Your Name     chooses to love others even when they disappoint.
- Your Name     refuses to give up on someone, no matter what.

Jesus wants us to love others. Let's pray and ask Him to help us love others more.

## Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for your great love that You have shown towards us. Help us to let Your kind of love show through our lives this week towards others. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

## Learning Activities

### Craft Corner

### Game Center

To help you remember everything that love is, make this rolling reminder:

1. Read 1 Corinthians 13 and make a list of the words that the Bible uses to describe love.
2. Write each word in a different section of a soccer ball or print them on address stickers and adhere them to the ball.
3. Have the children form a circle and bounce the ball to each other.
4. Whatever words the catcher's right thumb lands on when he catches the ball, have him say: "[myname] is patient," or "[myname] is kind," and so forth.

