

UNIT 20 | SESSION 3

GOD LOVES ALL PEOPLE

1 CORINTHIANS 13

KEY PASSAGE:

Romans 5:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

How do we know God loves us? We can know that God loves us because He gave us Jesus to forgive the sins of the world.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. God is love, and God loves all people. He calls everyone who trusts in Jesus to love Him and love others.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

God is loving. God is love. What’s the difference between these two statements? If God is simply loving, then He fits a particular definition of love; however, if God is love, then He Himself is the definition. For God to be loving does not necessitate that He is love, but if God is love, then He most certainly is loving.

Why does this matter? Well, a simple observation of culture demonstrates that there are multiple definitions of love. Some may suggest that love is a feeling or an action. Some may suggest that love is a noun or a verb. But if God is love, then we ought to look no further than Him and His Word to discover what love truly is.

In light of this, where Scripture describes God, we find imagery of what love is. And when Scripture describes love, we discover more of who God is. First Corinthians 13 utilizes a litany of adjectives to describe love, ultimately describing God Himself.

In this text, we find how God loves and, in particular, how He loves us. God loves us with patience, kindness, satisfaction, humility, thoughtfulness, sacrifice, truthfulness, and hope. This description ought to stir our hearts toward the worship of the God of love and move us in the direction of this type of love toward others.

The ultimate example of God’s love is Jesus, who said, “Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you are also to love one another” (John 13:34). First John 4:16 says, “And we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and the one who remains in love remains in God, and God remains in him.”

God is love and God is loving; therefore, to know God is to know love. As we grow in this understanding, we can begin to demonstrate the type of love that we see in Him. And, Lord willing, others will see Him through our reflection of His love.

TERMS TO KNOW

Love: unselfish, loyal, and benevolent intention and commitment toward another. Biblical love has God as its object, true motivator, and source. Love is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. (Gal. 5:22)



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WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “ Can you think of at least five things you love? What are they and why do you love them? ”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “What Is Love?” on the activity page.

| **SAY** “ Sometimes our world does not have the right understanding of love. Many times people think love is just a feeling. In our Bible story, we will learn the real meaning of love. ”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: SERVE OUT OF LOVE



Provide each kid with a piece of paper. Ask kids to draw a heart on one side of the paper and a sad face on the other side. Then read the examples below and ask kids if they show someone serving out of love. If they do, direct kids to hold up the heart. If they do not, direct kids to hold up the sad face.

- Cooking a meal for someone while complaining about it
- Lending someone some money but being irritable about it
- Carrying in the groceries with a joyful attitude
- Helping out at church but being rude to others while doing it
- Helping someone with her math homework patiently and kindly

| **SAY** “ God calls us to serve one another, but sometimes we can be unloving when asked to serve or even when we are serving. We are not showing others what God is like when we live or serve without love. Let’s read our Bible story to learn why love is so important. ”

OPTION 2: STICKY LOVE

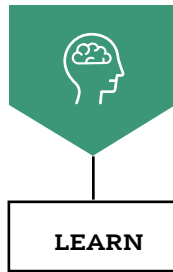
Draw a large heart on a dry erase board and give each kid a sticky note. Ask kids to think of people who love them and write how these people show their love to them on the sticky note. Lead kids to place their sticky notes on the heart.

Invite volunteers to share what they wrote. Provide an example of your own and encourage kids to think about how they can show their love to others.

| **SAY** “ You all have a lot of people that love you. They show they love you by what they say and do. God loves each of you as well. He says He loves you in His Word and then He showed that He loves you by sending His Son to die for your sins. In our Bible story, we will learn more about God’s love and how He calls us to show love to others. ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ It is so good to see you all today! My name is [your name], and we are going to learn that God loves all people. Did you know that you do not have to do anything to make God love you? He loves you just by the very fact that He made you and you exist! Not only does God love all people, but God is love! We can only know what love is when we know God.

Today, we will learn more about love and how God calls us to love others as we read from the book of 1 Corinthians. If you have your Bible, please take it out. [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] Let's find 1 Corinthians 13 together. [Guide kids to turn to 1 Corinthians 13.] ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

SAY “ We have been learning about God's love for us. **How do we know God loves us?** [Allow responses.] **We can know that God loves us because He gave us Jesus to forgive the sins of the world.**

Our Bible story today teaches that God loves all people. It also reminds us that God is love. Everything that we learn about love, we see in God. God shows us love when He is patient with us even when we sin. He shows us love when He is kind when we are unkind. He shows us love when He never quits on us and is faithful. And **we can know that God loves us because He gave us Jesus to forgive the sins of the world.** ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ As we have been learning about the life of Jesus, we have seen God's love. Not only did God prove His love by sending His Son into the world, but while Jesus was on earth He showed God's love to people and to His Father. Jesus proved He loved God more than anything when He obeyed the command to be baptized and resisted the devil's temptations.

Then Jesus showed love by inviting the 12 men to become His disciples and follow Him. Jesus also showed love to Nicodemus by being patient with him and his questions. Even the woman at the well experienced God's love when Jesus was kind to her and sought what was best for her. Today, we will continue to learn about God's love and how we can show His love to all people. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to 1 Corinthians 13. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “God Loves All People.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

GOD LOVES ALL PEOPLE

“What is love? People have different ideas about what love is. The Bible says God is love. He loves people—all people! And because God loves us, we can love others.

Paul, a follower of Jesus, wrote a letter to the church in Corinth. Paul told the Corinthians that God gives believers spiritual gifts—special abilities to help people and build up the church. Paul said that the greatest spiritual gift is love.

This is what Paul wrote about love:

“If I speak different languages but don’t have love, what good is it? I’m just making noise, like a loud gong or clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and speak God’s truth, or if I understand and know all things, or if I have great faith but do not have love, then I am nothing. If I am generous and give away all my possessions but do not have love, I gain nothing.”

Then Paul described what love is like. He wrote, “Love is patient, and love is kind. Love does not envy. It is not boastful or arrogant. Love is not rude or self-seeking. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of wrongs. Love finds no joy in unrighteousness; it rejoices in the truth. Love does not give up, is always trusting, is always hoping, and never quits.

“God’s gift of love is unlike other spiritual gifts because it never ends. Gifts like prophecies and speaking in tongues and knowledge will one day end. Love never ends. One day, we will see God face to face and we will know Him perfectly. These gifts will remain: faith, hope, and love—but the greatest of these is love.”

Christ Connection: God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. God is love, and God loves all people. He calls everyone who trusts in Jesus to love Him and love others. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Create a chart: Use a dry erase board to create a chart with two columns. Label one column *Love Is* and the other *Love Is Not*. Invite kids to help you fill out the chart as you tell the story.

Give an example: Provide each kid with a piece of paper and pencil. Ask kids to listen to what love is like in the story, pick an example, and write one way they can show love in that way. For example: *I can be kind even when someone is not kind to me.*



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2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ If we want to know what love is then we must look to God. We can only love God and others because He first loved us. Because God proved His love for us by sending Jesus to die for our sins, through faith in Him we are gifted new hearts that seek to love all people.

What did Paul say was the greatest spiritual gift? Look at 1 Corinthians 13:13. **[Choose a volunteer to read aloud 1 Corinthians 13:13.]** The greatest spiritual gift is love because it always seeks what is best for someone else, it will never end, and it is how we display what God is like to those around us.

Did Paul say we can do good things without showing love? Look at 1 Corinthians 13:1-3. **[Choose a volunteer to read aloud 1 Corinthians 13:1-3.]** Yes, we can speak truth, share wisdom, give generously, but if we do these things without love then we are not showing others what God is like. Our actions become empty.

Does anyone love perfectly right now? **[Allow responses.]** While knowing the love of God helps us to love others rightly, no one loves perfectly all of the time. Because we still sin, we do not love others perfectly. But Paul writes some good news. What did he write in 1 Corinthians 13:12? **[Choose a volunteer to read 1 Corinthians 13:12.]** Paul tells us that God knows us completely, and He still loves us. One day, we will know God fully and be like Him. Then we will love perfectly. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. God is love, and God loves all people. He calls everyone who trusts in Jesus to love Him and love others. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 20, Session 3” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Does it really matter if we love everyone? Why?
2. What are some ways you can show love to others, even when it is hard?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display a world map and point to Uganda. Tell kids that Hector Cabrera is a Cuban man who works with Sudanese refugees living in Uganda. Tell kids that the missions team wants to help meet the needs of the people from South Sudan, North Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Explain that some of these refugees are Christians, but many of them follow traditional African religions and some of them are Muslims.

Share that the missionary team works with the Sudanese to help the people with their needs and to tell them about Jesus. Tell kids that some ways the missionary team is helping include working on water wells, building houses for the people who are disabled or unable to



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

work, and delivering food to kids in schools.

SAY “ One way Hector has been helpful to the team is through his background in sports ministry. He has a love for young people, and he decided to teach kids in the refugee camps Bible stories using sports. Hector says he is willing to jump in and serve wherever he is needed. He says that he can repair wells and houses with others on the mission team, but his favorite thing to do is to play sports with the kids. ”

Pray that more churches will be involved in sending out missionaries and supporting them to help meet the needs of the missionaries, their families, and the people they are serving.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Romans 5:8 together.

SAY “ God’s love for us will never end! God showed His love by sending Jesus to die for our sins, and everyone who trusts in Jesus will experience God’s love forever and ever! We can tell others the good news of God’s never ending love. ”

Tape two pieces of paper to a wall. Form kids into two teams and direct the teams to line up. Give the first kid in each line a marker. Direct them to race to the paper, write the first word of the key passage, and then run back to their team. Lead the next group of kids to race and write the second word. Continue directing kids to write the words of the key passage until it is complete.

Lead kids to sing “His Own Love for Us (Romans 5:8).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

SAY “ Father, thank You for loving us and sending Jesus to die for our sins. Help us love others as You have loved us so they see You. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**

