

GOD IS LOVE

This lesson includes a variety of activities you can do with the children in your Growth Group. Feel free to use all or pick and choose some.

Supplies Needed: Bible (actual book, not phone app), paper, crayons or markers.

1. Worship

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NocNKrD2UOc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bV5usNv4WEo>

2. Opening Activity

Start out by asking the kids to define the word **love** for you. Talk about all of the things that they would say that they **love**.... who loves pizza, who loves football, etc. Then, say, "Today we're talking about the truth that God is love. The word love is very confusing in today's world. People think they know what love is, but sadly many are very mistaken. Later we'll take some time to look at the Biblical definition of love.

GAME: Act it Out

Call kids up one or two at a time and ask them to show you (act out) how they would show love in this scenario. More scenarios can be added.

1. How you show love to your pet.
2. How you show love to a baby.
3. How you show love to your mom or dad.
4. How you might show love to a friend.
5. How you show love while watching a sports game.

Explain that everyone in the world thinks they know what **love** is. (In fact, according to one list, it's the 387th most commonly used English word). We all use the word every day, but do we really know what it means. Tell the kids that you want to share with them a familiar passage from the Bible that talks about love to help us all understand what love is.

3. Bible Story

Talk through **1 Corinthians 13** in your own words. You might want to read the text and elaborate on it. Some points to include are:

1. Paul wrote **1 Corinthians 13** to explain to the church in Corinth that **love** was the most important of the spiritual gifts that God had given His people.
2. Paul wanted the people to know that God gave His people gifts in order for them to encourage other people and not to puff themselves up. Paul explained this by saying things like *if I speak in the tongues of men and angels but have not love I am like a clanging cymbal*. No matter what the people did, they needed to do it with love.
3. Paul then gave them a list describing what love is like. As we read through this list, we should realize that no one can love like that. The only one who can love perfectly...patiently, selflessly, kindly, etc. is God Himself.
4. Finally, love is the one thing that will last forever. One day everything else will fade away...there will be no more prophecy or teaching or anything else because God's people will be in God's presence forever...but there will always be love.

4. GAME: Love Charades

Supplies: Index cards or pieces of paper (10-20) with prompts, Timer, Whiteboard or scoreboard

Write prompts on each index card (each prompt should be an example of how the children can show God's love to others). If desired, you may use some or all of the following prompts:

1. Pray for a friend.
2. Sweep the floor.
3. Feed the hungry.
4. Give money to the poor.
5. Write thank-you letters.
6. Hug someone.
7. Read the Bible to someone.
8. Hold the door open.
9. Set the table for dinner.
10. Rake your neighbor's leaves.

How to Play: Split the children into two groups. Explain to them that this game involves acting out the clues on the cards to their teams (one at a time) without making any sounds. Tell the children that each clue is an example of a loving action. Each person will have one minute to act out his or her chosen card. However, the other team will receive a chance to guess the clue if the actor's team is unsuccessful. Each correctly guessed clue receives one point. Allow each child to have at least one turn acting out a clue.

Conclude by emphasizing that showing God's love to others is extremely important if we want them to have a relationship with Jesus Christ. Serving others in love isn't necessarily difficult, but we must ask God to help us become more humble, kind-hearted, and sacrificial so others will be drawn to Him through our actions.

5. DEFINE AND REMEMBER

To help the kids remember this truth about God, take a few minutes to define the attribute.

LOVE= TENDER AND CARING AFFECTION FOR ANOTHER

EXPLAIN: Look up and read the following verses and talk about how they help us understand this truth about Jesus:

~ John 3:16

~ Romans 5:8

~ Psalm 36:5

Since motions & actions help kids remember, choose an action for LOVE. A good motion might be to cross your arms across your chest like you're giving yourself a hug.

6. GAME: Would You Rather Love...

Label one side of room A and the other B, as you read each scenario have children walk to the appropriate side they choose.

Would you rather have someone you love: A. Bake you something special to eat? B. Take you for a walk in the park – Just the two of you?	Would you rather have someone you love: A. Wrestle or cuddle with you? B. Bring you a treat when they come home?
Would you rather have someone you love: A. Tell you, “I Love You?” B. Play a game with you?	Would you rather have someone you love: A. Tell you how well you are doing at School and/or sports? B. Help you figure out a tough Homework problem?
Would you rather have someone you love: A. Help you clean your room? B. Frame a poem that tells you how much they love you?	Would you rather have someone you love: A. Take you to an amusement park – Just the two of you? B. Buy you a present?
For your birthday, would you rather have someone you love: A. Give you a new bike? B. Take you someplace new - Just the two of you?	When you are sad, would you rather have someone you love: A. Hug you? B. Sit with you and listen?
Would you rather have someone you love: A. Fix something for you – Computer, bike, toy? B. Play basketball or any game you like with you?	Would you rather have someone you love: A. Rub your shoulders? B. Make your favorite dessert?
Would you rather have someone you love give you: A. A card that tells you all the things they love about you? B. A small gift from the dollar store?	When you are sick, which of the following would you want someone you love to do for you? A. Give you a small gift to make you feel better? B. Sit with you and read you a story?

7. MEMORY VERSE

Read the **memory verse** – 1 John 4:9 in context (1 John 4:7-21) and then have the kids read/ say the memory verse after you a couple of times.

8. CROSS CONNECTION

Remind kids of the description of love that you just talked through and how that description describes God's love and points to His greatest display of love ever. Ask one of the kids to tell you what they think that display of love was. Remind them that several of the verses you read earlier point to the truth that God sent Jesus in love or because of love. Jesus didn't selfishly keep Himself away, but He sacrificed Himself and put our need for salvation above everything else. **Jesus coming to earth and dying on the cross is the greatest example of love ever.**

9. PRAYER

Pray that the kids in the group would come to know the love of God more and more each week through this study and that they would remember that all of us are sinners who need to be saved and that they would turn to this good God for salvation. Pray that they would remember the greatest act of love ever and thank God that Jesus laid down His life for His people to save us from our sin.

10. REVIEW

Give each child a blank piece of paper and provide markers or colored pencils. Encourage them to write the word *love* somewhere on the paper and then write or draw something to help them remember this attribute of God. You may want to encourage them to illustrate the memory verse or draw a heart and then draw a picture illustrating how God showed love to His people inside the heart. After a few minutes, bring the group back together and give kids time to share what they have drawn or written.