



Love – Lesson I

4K and 5K

Divine Attribute: God is Love

Heart Response: Love him

Memory Verse: 1 John 4:19

“We LOVE because God first loved us.”

Points of Emphasis:

1. God loves us.
2. We should love God as he loves us.
3. We should love the Lord with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind
4. We need to show God’s love to others.
5. When our neighbors need help, we should help them.

Personal Preparation:

Love is a funny thing. We love ice cream, movies, sports teams, and music groups. All of us love using the word love. But what does it really mean to love? Does saying you love someone truly mean that you do?

As you prepare to share with your class that God is love and that he loves us, take some time to reflect on what this means in your own life with God and with others. Think about the people you love in your life. How often do we tell others how much we love them? How often do we show our love to them? Both are important. God says, “I love you,” and showed us his love by sending his Son so we might live and love through him.

Open your mind and heart—your entire being—to receive his love in full measure. It can be overwhelming how vast his love is for us. So many people are starved for love because they haven’t learned the art of receiving. This is essentially an act of faith—believing that he loves us with boundless, everlasting love. The art of receiving is also a discipline—training your mind to trust him and moving closer to him with confidence. **Nothing** can separate us from his love. He never abandons any of his children, not even temporarily.

He will never leave us or forsake us. His presence watches over us continually.

You have an incredible opportunity now to participate in God’s amazing love story and share with his children the greatness of his love. *He loves us so much.* As you prepare to teach these lessons, seek God and ask him how he wants to use your own changed life. Ask God to show you areas of your life that still need to be transformed so you can better trust, love, and bring glory to him. Pray for the strength that only God can give as you pass on what you have received from him to each child in your class.

CENTER TIME

10-20 minutes as the kids begin to arrive

To help the children transition into class, please use a center format at the beginning of each service. Set up three centers in your classroom to allow children options of activities. Ideas include, but are not limited to:

1. Read books on the floor.
2. Color at the table.
3. Play with blocks on the floor.
4. Play with puzzles at the table.
5. Play with Play-Doh at the table.

OPENING ACTIVITY

10 minutes at the start of service

The following activity is provided to begin engaging the children for the upcoming lesson. As the teacher of your class, you have an important opportunity to come alongside the parents of these children to teach them about God.

Memory Verse

Supplies:

Memory verse poster (one per bin)

Piece of paper – already in room (one per child)

Hang the verse poster on the board. You can give each child a piece of paper to color as you go over the memory verse with them a few times. You may want to give them some direction on what to draw, based on the attribute/lesson.

(While they are decorating their cards, talk with them about the new verse.) **This week, we have a new memory verse.** (Teachers, open the Bible to 1 John 4:19.) **Our verse comes from 1 John 4:19.** The Bible says, “We LOVE because God first loved us.” Listen to the first part of the verse, and then repeat it with me: “We LOVE.” Say that part with me: “We LOVE.” Great! Now listen to the second part of the verse: “because God first loved us.” Say that part with me: “because God first loved us.” Great!

Now let's say the whole verse together. “We LOVE because God first loved us.” This verse tells us that God loves us SO much! He loves us SO much that he sent Jesus to rescue us from the punishment of sin so he could have a relationship with us. Because of God's gift of Jesus and his love for us, we are able to love God and others too.

BIG GROUP TIME

please check your classroom schedule

Please talk to your class about the purpose of this time—to have fun worshiping God together. Give your class practical ideas of what this means (obey the teachers up on the stage, sing and praise God with a happy heart, keep your hands to yourself, etc.). Teachers, you are crucial in helping create a peaceful, orderly environment to worship God during this time. Thank you for your help!

SMALL GROUP TIME

25-30 minutes

Bible Story

Supplies

Bible (Luke 10:25-27)

I'm going to open my Bible to the verses our lesson comes from. (Open your Bible to Luke 10:25-27.) **The Bible is God's Word and we know it is true.**

In our lesson today, a man wants to meet Jesus and ask him a question. The man who wants to ask Jesus a question is a very smart man. This smart man wants to trick Jesus and see if he is a good teacher or not. We know that Jesus cannot be tricked because he is the Son of God. We know that God is all-knowing and Jesus knows everything. He knows the answer to every question we could have.

The smart man asks Jesus, “Teacher, what should I do so I can go to heaven and live forever?” Jesus replies, “What is written in the Bible? What do you think?” The smart man answers Jesus and says, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.”

The smart man is a lawyer and thinks his answer is smart. Jesus knows that this man is far short of following these commands. Jesus replies, “That is right!” and “Do this and you will live forever in Heaven.”

What are the five ways the smart man said that we need to love the Lord and others in order to live forever in heaven? (Let the kids respond.) Yes! We need to love the Lord with all of our heart, soul, strength, and mind. Also, we need to love others as ourselves.

Does anyone know how to love the Lord with our hearts, souls, strength, or mind? (Allow for responses.) (Examples: We can love him in everything we do, with everything we think, and in how we live our lives.) Good job! Does anyone know of how we can love others as ourselves? How can you love your brothers or sisters? How can you love your friends or your parents? (Allow for responses.) Great job!

Jesus knows that we can never love the Lord or others perfectly enough to enter Heaven on our own. He knows we will fail. That is why he died on the cross. He showed his love for us by paying for our sins. Even though we can't be perfect, we should still try each day to love God and others just as he loves us.

Remember our memory verse today? (Allow for responses.) **1 John 4:19** says, “We love because God first loved us.” Because of God’s love for us and his gift of Jesus, we are able to love God and others too. We can always count on him to help us love.

Prayer

Prayer time may not be appropriate immediately following story time. If this is the case, we ask that you be intentional about praying spontaneously or formally with the children at other times during class.

God, thank you for loving us so much that you sent your Son to die for our sins. We want to love you and everyone around us just like you love us. Please help us love others in our lives and help us show how much we love you in everything we do, think, and say. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

God Loves Us, So We Can Love

Supplies:

Heart with Luke verse (Luke 10:27) (one per child)
Bag of red tissue paper scraps (one per bin)
Bag of yellow tissue paper scraps (one per bin)
Bag of blue tissue paper scraps (one per bin)
Bag of green tissue paper scraps (one per bin)
Glue sticks

Give each child a white heart cutout. Remember how Jesus says we are to love him from today’s lesson? That’s right, with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind. This heart is blank. We learned today from our memory verse that “We love because God first loved us.” Say that with me, “We love because God first loved us.” **1 John 4:19.** Without God’s love, our heart stays empty. As we accept and grow in his love for us, we can love him more with our heart, soul, strength, and mind. We are going to put tissue paper on the heart to show how we can love God.

Give each child a few small scraps of the red tissue paper. As they glue the pieces to their hearts, talk about how they can love God with all of their HEART. Next, give them some yellow scraps and remind them that they can love God with all of their SOUL. Then give them blue and tell

them they can love God with all their STRENGTH. Finally pass out the green and discuss loving God with their entire MIND. Discuss specific examples of how we can love God in each of these ways as you glue. After their hearts are covered with the four different colors of tissue paper, go over the verse with them a couple times. Remind them again that our love for God is all because of his love for us.

***Have fun and let them do the crafts themselves, as much as possible. This is a hands-on way for them to learn who God is and remember what they learn. It doesn’t matter if they place the label or stickers in the wrong spot. What matters is teaching them who God is. ***

SNACK & ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

last 30 minutes

Please wash the children’s hands before snack time and say a prayer thanking God for the food. As they are eating their snack, please take time to go over the review questions.

Review Questions

1. **What did the smart man want to do to Jesus?** (Trick him.)
2. **Was Jesus able to be tricked? (NO!) Why?** (He is the Son of God; he is all-knowing.)
3. **How should we love the Lord?** (With our heart, soul, strength, and mind.)
4. **How did Jesus say we are to love our neighbors?** (As ourselves.)
5. **How are we able to love God and others?** (Because God loved us first.)

Hide-and-Seek Hearts [must prepare before children arrive]

Supplies

Set of love verse hearts (printed on varying colors) (one set per bin)

Before your class arrives, hide the Scripture hearts (save one to show as an example) around the room. **Every day, people show their love for others with cards, treats, and kindness. But there is someone very special who shows us his love every day. Can anyone guess who I'm talking about? (Yes! God!) God tells us he loves us in the Bible. The Bible is God's love letter to us. It teaches us what love looks like, sounds like, and acts like. Today, I have hidden God's love letters to you all around the room. These love letters are written on our hearts. Do you think you can find them? It's time for Hide-and-Seek Hearts.**

Show the students an example of what they are looking for. Have the students search for the hearts on the count of three. Monitor the search and make sure that each child finds at least one heart. Tell them that they can each find one heart then come back to the table. If a child is having trouble finding their heart, allow other children to help. Gather children after they find all the hearts. **Each of these hearts has a letter from God. I'm going to read the letter while you listen carefully. Your job is to listen for two words. When you hear the word GOD, you need to point up. When you hear the word LOVE, you need to cross your arms over your chest.** Collect and read each verse. Help children identify the words GOD and LOVE. Explain each verse very briefly, in your own words.

God's Love Pours Out

Supplies

Clear cup labeled "God's Love" filled with water (one per bin)

Clear cup labeled "Others" (one per bin)

Small cup (can use the paper cups in the rooms) (one per child)

Bottle of water (one per bin)

Give each child an empty small cup. **Do you see that your cup is empty but this "God's Love" cup is full? God IS love and always loves us. His love fills our hearts and lives so that we can love. Remember our verse today, "We love because God first loved us." Jesus tells us in our lesson today to love him and love others. Can anyone pour anything out of your own cup into the "God's Love" cup or the "Others" cup? (No, because we don't have any water in our cup, our cups are empty.) That's right! We need God and his love to fill us first so that we can love him and others. So I'm going to give some of God's love to each of you.** After each of the children's cups has some water, you can discuss how now they are able to pour "love" out to God and others. Remind them that God continues to fill us with his love as we seek him. He IS love!

