

LESSON 76

Loving One Another

1 JOHN 3:11-18



BIBLE TRUTH

THE GOSPEL IS OUR MOTIVE TO LOVE

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION 5 MIN

SUPPLIES: puppet; blocks or other building toy

2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

SUPPLIES: *The Gospel Story Bible* (story 154)

3. BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION 5 MIN

Where Is the Gospel?

SUPPLIES: Bible (ESV preferred); Review “Where Is the Gospel?” to prepare

4. SNACK QUESTIONS 10 MIN

SUPPLIES: snack food and beverage

5. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5–10 MIN

6. ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS (CHOOSE ONE OR MORE) 20–30 MIN

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES: coloring page for NT Lesson 76—one for each child; markers or crayons

Love Serves

SUPPLIES: a small blanket

The Heart behind the Words

SUPPLIES: five sheets of heavy white paper or card stock; markers

7. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

TOTAL 60–75 MIN

THE LESSON

OPENING ACTIVITY AND INTRODUCTION 5 MIN

In today's lesson the children will learn how we need to follow Jesus' example of love.

Bring to class a puppet and some blocks or other building toy.

Use this skit to help the children see that it is not enough to say we love someone; we need to show by our actions that we love them.

Skit opens with the puppet playing with blocks.

TEACHER: Hi, Puppet. What are you doing?

PUPPET: I'm playing with blocks.

TEACHER: Can I play?

PUPPET: Sure, you can play.

TEACHER: Would you share your blocks with me?

PUPPET: Sure. I think you are a great teacher, and I would be glad to share my blocks. (*Puppet goes right back to playing, ignoring the teacher.*)

TEACHER: (*looking confused*) Puppet, are you going to share?

PUPPET: Oh yes, of course; I told you I would share with you.

TEACHER: I know you *said* you would share, but so far you have not given me any blocks.

PUPPET: (*talking to the class*) I am so glad that I decided to share with the teacher. I once had someone tell me that they would not share with me and it made me sad.

Ask the class, "Can any of you help Puppet out? It is good that Puppet said he would share, but what is Puppet missing? (He is not sharing.) Can any of you show Puppet what he should be doing?" (Have one of the children come up and give you a few of the blocks to play with.) Draw out the children and help them see that it is good to say you will do something loving like sharing, but it is far better to actually do what you say. Tell the children that in today's story you are going to talk about loving one another.

Take time to pray and ask God to help you love with what you do, not just what you say. Pray for the remainder of the class time before moving forward with the lesson.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read story 154, "Loving One Another," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

BIBLE STORY DISCUSSION **5 MIN**

After reading the story, use the following questions to involve the children in a discussion:

- **Who can remember the story of Cain?**
(Recap the story of Cain and Abel. [See story 4 in the Gospel Story Bible.])
- **Did Cain love his brother?**
(no)
- **What did Cain do wrong?**
(Cain murdered his brother.)

SNACK QUESTIONS **10 MIN**

While the children are eating the snack, engage them by asking the following questions:

- **What do you think God might want you to share to show that you love your brothers or sisters?**
(The children might share their toys or candy or just hold the door for others when they go in and out of the house.)

Where Is the Gospel? _____

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Both John 3:16 and 1 John 3:16 tell us that God's plan of salvation was motivated by his love for us. Out of his great love Jesus laid down his life and took on himself the wrath of God that we deserved for our sins.

Understanding the gospel, then, is the foundational reason why we should love one another. We don't love people because they love us, or because they have done nice things for us, or because we want to try to get them to love us back. If we love like that, then when they stop loving us, or stop giving to us, or refuse our love, we will stop trying to love them. But if our motive for love is centered in what Jesus did on the cross, then we can love them in spite of their rejection and even if we receive nothing in return. That is gospel love.

- **Why is loving others by giving things up for them so special to God?**
(Each time we give something of our own up for another we are following the example of Jesus who gave up his life for us.)

- **Should we only give things to people we like or should we serve our enemies too?**
(Jesus tells us that we should love our enemies. Jesus died for sinners who hung him on the cross and killed him—his enemies. Jesus wants us to reach out in love to our friends and our enemies too.)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY **5-10 MIN**

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult.

ACTIVITIES AND OBJECT LESSONS **20-30 MIN**

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 76—one for each child
- ✓ markers or crayons

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

- **What do you think the person in the picture is doing?**
(giving the other person a coat)

- **Why do you think he is doing this?**
(The other person is cold and has no coat.)

- **How does this demonstrate love?**
(Jesus tells us that love is about giving up what we have for others. We learn this from Jesus' example.)

- **What did Jesus do that stands as our example?**
(If the children do not answer, point to the cross and use that as a hint.)

Love Serves

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ a small blanket

This skit illustrates the point that love involves more than just talk. Have two teachers pretend to be in a very cold place. They should really shiver. Have one teacher pull a blanket out and put it around himself while the other teacher continues to shiver and hop to keep warm. Have the teacher with the blanket try and encourage the freezing person, offer to pray for him, give him advice about ways to keep warm, but not give up his blanket.

Then ask the children the following questions:

- Did the person with the blanket love the person without the blanket?
- What could the person with the blanket have done to show love to the person who did not have a blanket?
- How can we show love to those around us?

Point out 1 John 3:16: “By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.” The best example of love is what Jesus did for us.

The Heart behind the Words

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ five sheets of heavy white paper or card stock
- ✓ markers

To prepare: Cut the card stock in half to make ten half-sheet sized cards. On the back of each card draw a large outline of a heart. In the middle of five hearts draw a cross and in the middle of the other five draw a mean or angry face (a frown will do if you are not the best artist). On the front of the cards with crosses write the following words (one per card): love, peace, kindness, helpfulness, and sacrifice. On the front of the cards with angry faces write the following words: anger, meanness, murder, hate, and selfishness.

In class, shuffle the cards and explain to the children that you are going to read them a word and they need to guess what is behind that word in the heart. Ask the children what they think is in the heart behind the words: sin (the angry face) or the grace of God (the cross). Act out the words by altering the tone of your voice to match the particular word. Point out to the class that the same sin is behind the words anger, meanness, murder, hate, and selfishness. Saying mean things to people is the same sin as physically hurting them.

Explain to the children that Jesus died on the cross to change our hearts. We all have sin in our hearts. Ask them if they are ever mean. Then ask them what kind of heart is behind their meanness. Finally, take a moment in class to pray that God would help you all turn away from sin and trust in Jesus.

CLOSING PRAYER **5 MIN**

Take time at the end of class to thank God for what you learned today. Include parts of your Bible lesson in your prayer as a way for the children to remember today's lesson.

LESSON 76 - LOVING ONE ANOTHER

