

Alley Rundown—August 7th, 2022

Today's Bible Story: L-O-V-E (Greatest Commandment) • Matthew 22:34-40

Today's Bottom Line: Love God by loving others.

Today's Key Question: What do you love?

Monthly Memory Verse: *Here is what love is. It is not that we loved God. It is that he loved us and sent his Son to give his life to pay for our sins.* 1 John 4:10 (NIRV)

Dude Perfect Filler Videos

“Hey, everybody! New month, new stories—and I’m so excited to begin another journey together. Before we begin, though, I’ve got a thought that’s been running through my mind . . . with all of the craziness going on in the world, I keep having the same thought over and over: *What can I do?* What are some things that I can do to help others, to show others a little bit of love? Do you have any ideas? If so, raise your hand and share.

Allow some time for kids to share their answers. If nobody responds, give examples, like “helping with a hard assignment at school,” or “cleaning up at home without being asked,” or “inviting someone to sit with you at break.”

“Wow, great answers! Those are some really practical ideas for how to love and help others. Nicely done! Showing love to others doesn’t always have to be some big, grand gesture. Some of the things you guys came up with are pretty easy, like everyday type of things. Helping others is a great way to show love.

“But what about loving God? If I asked, most of you in this room would probably give a good, church-y answer and say that you ‘love’ God. But . . . what does that mean, exactly? What does that look like to love God? Showing love to people, for example, by inviting someone who doesn’t have many friends to sit with you at lunch, is easy to spot. But loving God? How do we know when we are doing that?

“All good questions. Thankfully, we’ve got a book that can help us find answers (*Hold up Bible.*) right here. The Bible is made up of a lot of different parts. Some of the Bible is about the experiences of people who were friends with Jesus when He was on earth. We can learn a lot about our friendship with God from their interactions with Jesus!”

“Our story comes from the book of Matthew, and I know this will come as a shock to most of you, but it was written by a guy named . . . Matthew. A tax collector. Someone who walked and talked with Jesus Himself. Matthew was a friend of Jesus.

“When Jesus began to teach and travel 2,000 years ago, many people were impressed by His perspective. People were often amazed at the things He said—His interpretations of Scripture, His thoughts on God and His Kingdom, even ways to treat other people . . . He was teaching about things in a way a lot of people had never heard them.

“While many people were drawn to Jesus, there were some who were very suspicious about who He was and the things He was teaching. One such group was the Jewish religious leaders known as the Pharisees. The Pharisees were experts on God’s commandments. They studied God’s Word for years and talked and taught and debated about the meaning. They knew God’s commandments inside and out and saw it as their job to protect God’s Word and keep it pure.

“They started out with really good intentions. But over time, they became incredibly strict about following the rules rather than focusing on God. They were focused so strictly on following God’s law that they weren’t loving people very well. And unfortunately, as what happens with most people in power, they wanted to protect their position and authority from anyone who would challenge it. Let’s find out how Jesus responded to them, with the help of this week’s video!”

CG: Lesson Video (Runtime: 15:00)

“You can’t have one commandment and not the other. Before Jesus came, there were over 600 laws that people had to follow in order to live God’s way. Thankfully, when Jesus came along, He took all those laws and made them very, very simple. Love God . . . love others.

“When you think about what it means to love God and to love others, know first that’s it’s not a choice. It’s not one or the other. It’s both and. Start by loving God. Talk with God through prayer. Worship God through serving others. Read the Bible and discover more about God.

“Those things are great, but here’s a secret. One of the best ways to love God is to love the people God created. It doesn’t mean that the other commands and laws don’t matter. It just means that love is the command that all the rest are built on. It’s a balance.

“When you help your sister with her homework, you’re showing that you love God. When you take some of your tech time to help your mom with cleaning up the kitchen, you’re showing love to God, too!

“There’s all sorts of ways you can love others and show them how much you love God, too. Love God. Love others. As you head to your Small Groups today, think about this question:

SLIDE: Key Question

“**What do you love?** Other than pizza and Netflix and your phone and video games. Think bigger than that. What do you love, and how would you show it? What are some situations where you could show some love to others and, by doing those things, show some love to God? How can you act, what things could you say, or what things could you do to show love? You’ll discuss these questions further in your Small Groups, but right now, let’s pray and ask God to help us see ways, even small ones, to spread a bit of love to those around us! Let’s pray.

Lead group in a prayer related to what they just heard. After prayer, lead offering and dismiss kids to Small Group.

OFFERING:

“As you may know, all this Summer we are raising money to dig water wells in the Country of Malawi. When you bring your offering in, you are helping many people in Malawi to have clean water to drink and cook with. So, if you brought an offering today, you can bring it up now!”

CG: Malawi Wells Pictures