

Alley SG—August 7th, 2022

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

Today's Key Question: What do you love?

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

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)

1. Verses to Take with You

What You Need: "Verse Words" (1 set of words per Group), bowl, Bibles

What You Do:

- Pass out Bibles and ask kids to turn to 1 John 4:10.

Finding verses with 4th and 5th graders: Guide kids to open their Bibles to the front and find the table of contents. Hold up a Bible opened to the table of contents to show the kids what the page looks like. Ask your group to tell you if 1 John is in the Old Testament or New Testament. Instruct kids to start flipping from the back half of their Bible, slowly going forward to find the book they're looking for. Help the kids find the page. When they find 1 John, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 4. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 10 in chapter 4.

- Place prepared "Verse Words" Activity Pages in a bowl and mix them up.
- Allow kids to take turns drawing a word from the bowl until every word has been claimed.
- Tell kids to go ahead and look at the papers they chose and then explain that as a group they will work together to read the entire verse. Each person will say the words they drew when those particular words come up next in the verse. Kids can use their Bibles for reference, or you can write the verse on a white board if you prefer.
- Go through the verse again, but this time instruct kids to pass their papers to the person on their left so everyone has different words to say.
- Continue with any additional rounds as time and interest allow.
- Ask the following questions:
 - What is love?
 - What does sending God's own Son have to do with love?
- Encourage kids to learn and memorize 1 John 4:10 this month.

2. Take a Snapshot

What You Need: Plastic drinking cups (enough for each pair of kids to have one)

What You Do:

- Ask kids to pair up.
- Groups should spread out with partners facing each other. Place a cup on the floor in between each set of partners.
- Tell kids that you're going to play a game of "Head, Shoulders, Knees, Cup."
- As you call out "head," "shoulders," or "knees," kids will place their hands on those areas accordingly.
- Continue calling the various parts quickly and in varying order. (Such as: "Head. Knees. Head. Shoulders. Knees. Knees. Shoulders. Etc.)
- At some point, say "CUP!"
- The first person to grab the cup between them and their partner is the winner of that round.
- All the winners advance to the next round, while everyone else sits down.
- Ask those who are left to pair up again and repeat the game.
- Continue playing rounds until there are only two final players.
- Play another couple rounds if you have time and interest.
- Start a conversation about different ways kids can show love to God or people.

- Let them list different ways to show love and, for an extra challenge, to talk about how their way to love people is related to loving God, and vice versa.
- ***[Make it Personal] (Tell kids who you love and how you show love to that person.)***

3. Discussion Questions

- What are some things or who are some people you love?
- What are some ways you can show love to God?
- What are some practical ways you can show love to others around you?
- When you show love to others, what does that show them about God?

4. Make it Personal with Prayer

What You Need: Index cards, pens

What You Do:

- Give each kid two index cards and a pen.
- Instruct kids to write, “Love God” at the top of one of their index cards.
- Then ask them to write, “Love Others” at the top of their other index card.
- Explain that you are going to give them some time to think quietly for a bit about things going on in their own lives.
- Encourage them to think of with two prayer requests for themselves: one that falls under the category of “Love God” and one that falls under “Love Others.”
- They can ask for God’s help when it comes to loving others; they can pray about a specific person who has been hard for them to love or ask to feel God’s presence as they grow in their faith.
 - ***[Make it Personal] (Make sure to share with the group examples of ways that you’re going to be praying for yourself when it comes to these two things.)***
- After everyone has had a chance to write something down on each card, encourage them to take their cards home with them and keep them somewhere they will see them every day.
- Challenge them to pray for those specific requests each day over the next week.
- Ask if there are any specific requests anyone would like to share with the group.
- Close by praying aloud for the group.

What You Say:

“Dear God, thank You so much for sending Your Son, Jesus, to make a way for us to connect with You and have a relationship with You. Thank You for showing us what love looks like. We know it sounds simple to love You and to love others, but in reality it can be hard to do. Give us opportunities to show Your love to those around us and to keep growing in our faith by loving You. It’s in Jesus’ name we pray, amen.”