

City SG—August 21st, 2022

Today's Bible Story: No Matter What (The Fall) • *Genesis 3 (Genesis 2:15-17; The Gospels)*

Today's Bottom Line: God loves us no matter what.

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)

Monthly Virtue: Love—Showing others how much they matter to you

1. Rollin' Rollin' Rollin' Verse

What You Need: Bible marked at 1 John 4:10, a playground ball (1 per Group)

What You Do:

- Guide the kids to sit together in a circle.
- Invite a volunteer to open the Bible to 1 John 4:10.
- Review the verse together.
- Hand the ball to the kid on your left.
- Ask that kid to roll the ball to a kid across the circle, who will then roll it to another kid, continuing like that as the group repeats the verse together.
- Facilitate this and say the verse aloud with your group since it's a long one.
- Repeat as time and interest allow.

What You Say:

“Whew! That is a pretty long verse, but every bit of it is important! How do we know **[Bottom Line] God loves us no matter what?** Because God sent Jesus to give His life and pay for our sins. By dying on the cross and defeating death, Jesus took on the punishment for sin—all the wrong things we do. He made a way for us to have a friendship with God forever! And because God sent us Jesus, we can know that God loves us with a no-matter-what kind of love! Say it with me one more time. **[Bottom Line] God loves us no matter what.**”

2. A Love That's Never-Ending

What You Need: Pipe cleaners, straws, scissors

What You Do:

- Pass out a pipe cleaner and a straw to each kid.
- Set the scissors in the center of your Small Group area.
- Instruct kids to lay their pipe cleaner in front of them on the floor or table and to hold their straw.
- Review the Bible story using the following key points:
 - God made Adam and Eve and gave them the world to take care of. God created them out of love.
 - God gave them one rule, to not eat the fruit of one tree. Instead of trusting God, Adam and Eve broke that rule. They hid from God.
 - There were several consequences to the choice Adam and Eve made. They were banned from the garden. Growing food would be difficult. Family relationships would now sometimes be hard. And the worst consequence, one day Adam and Eve would die.
 - Even though their choice had broken that relationship, God deeply loved Adam and Eve. God already had a plan to fix that broken relationship once and for all by sending Jesus.
- Instruct the kids to cut their straws in half, then cut each half into three pieces for a total of six pieces.
- Show the kids how to thread their straw pieces onto their pipe cleaners.
- Once they have all six pieces on their pipe cleaners, help each child secure their pipe cleaner around their wrists to make a bracelet.
- The ends of pipe cleaners can be sharp. Make sure you secure them so the metal doesn't poke their wrists.

- Hold up a completed bracelet for the kids to see. Point out how it makes a circle that never ends using the dialogue below.

What You Say:

“What shape does this bracelet make? *(Pause.)* That’s right, it makes a circle. Just like there is no beginning and no end to this circle, there is NO end to God’s love for you. God will always love you. Nothing you do or don’t do, no amount of mess-ups, can change God’s love for you. **[Bottom Line] God loves us no matter what.** I’m so glad God’s love for me isn’t based on what I do! It’s based on how good God is because God IS love.

“You’ll notice there are six straw pieces on these bracelets. As you wear them this week, you can tap each ‘straw bead’ *(tap each piece on your bracelet or a kid’s bracelet as you say each word of the Bottom Line)* as you say, **[Bottom Line] ‘God loves us no matter what!’** Let’s practice that together. Point to each bead on your bracelet and say it with me. **[Bottom Line] God loves us no matter what!”**

[Make it Personal] (Tell your few about a time you messed up and knew for sure, even as you failed, that God loved you. If you can, select a story from your own childhood. If not, remember to keep your story age-appropriate.)

3. Choose Your Own Adventure!

What You Need: “Choose Your Own Adventure Chart” Activity Page (3 per Group, per Service), markers

What You Do:

- Read the different steps out loud and invite the kids to choose which direction they want to go on their adventure.
- Use a marker to mark where the kids want to go on their adventure.
- Read the chosen adventure out loud once it’s completed so kids can hear the entire story!
- If possible and if time allows, use a new print-out of the Activity Page and let kids go on a different adventure!

4. Pray and Dismiss

What You Need: Pipe cleaner bracelets from “A Love That’s Never-Ending”

What You Do:

- Instruct the kids to tap the straw beads on their bracelets one at a time and say, **[Bottom Line] “God loves us no matter what.”**
- Encourage the kids to wear the bracelets all week long to remind them of this important truth.
- Close in prayer.

What You Say:

“God, You are an awesome God. You made us, and You LOVE us. You love us when we do the right thing, and You love us when we mess up, too. Can You help us remember that this week? And when we do mess up, will You help us say we’re sorry to You and the people we’ve hurt? Thanks for the never-ending, no-matter-what way You love us. Help us love You and the people around us, too. In Jesus’ name we pray, amen.”