



Construction Crew/ Kid Builders!

Where worship and fun collide!

525 Garden Drive, Marysville, Ohio 43040

What's the Big Deal About Love?

-- Or --

Will You Love Me Even When My Feet Stink?

Memory Verse: ... if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. **1 Corinthians 13:2**

Lesson Overview: This lesson teaches students what real, Godly love is all about. Many children develop a wrong impression of love at an early age because they receive input from the wrong sources. Many times their parents do not even know what true love is, and they are the most influential role models they have on this subject. This lesson will begin steering them down a journey of learning what true love is--Jesus love.

Requirements for the lesson: An apple or banana

Object Lessons and Lead-in to the Lesson:

“Stop! You’re Squishing Me!” Bring a piece of fruit to class. You might even want to bring enough for the whole class to eat. Give just one piece out to a student. Now ask him or her to say something that is nice to the fruit. (*Yes, this may seem strange, but it will come to a point at the end of the object lesson.*) You can get them started by saying something like: “You are a beautiful red apple.” Continue this until five or six students have spoken “blessings” or loving things to the fruit. Next, have the students say bad things to the apple like: “I don’t like apples!” Each student, after saying their “bad” thing, is to throw the fruit on the floor. Have them drop it hard enough to bruise the fruit.

After enough students have done this, allow the apple to sit for a short while. Ask the students how they think they would feel inside if someone talked like that to them. Next, peel back some of the apple’s peeling. Explain that the apple still looks fine on the outside even though we talked bad to the it. However, on the inside the apple doesn’t look so good. It’s brown, bruised, and battered. Explain that we do the same thing to others when we say hateful things or do bad actions to others. If we had only said nice things to the apple, then we would still have a healthy apple.

“I love everybody--Just as Long as They’re Me” This skit demonstrates what it looks like to love ourselves more than others. Jerry wants an exclusive club--so exclusive, that no one can get in! This exaggerated point shows children how others think of us when we don’t put them first.

Lesson:

DO THE OBJECT LESSON: “Stop! You’re Squishing Me!”

DO THE OBJECT LESSON: “I love everybody--Just as Long as They’re Me”

1. Love

Today we want to talk about what real love is and what it is all about. I don’t know about you, but I don’t think that Jerry Selfish understood what love is. In fact, lots of people today do not know what love is. They give lots of ideas about what they think love is, but a lot of the time they miss the meaning of love by a mile.

a. What is Love?

QUESTION: What do you think that real love is? (Allow the children to respond)

QUESTION: Help me finish this sentence: To me, love looks like... (what). (*A hug, kiss, playing ball with dad, etc.*)

Let’s see how we did. What’s the Bible has to say about love?

READ: 1 Corinthians 13:4 (Love is patient, love is kind.)

QUESTION: Why do you think God would put into His word that love is patient? (*It’s easy to get mad, but sometimes it’s hard to be patient.*)

God wants us to take our time with others. Many times Jesus’ disciples made blunders. They got mad, messed up, and sometimes just didn’t listen. But Jesus always took time to help them understand the right way to do things. He encouraged them to try again and again until they got it right. That’s how we can be patient. We can keep our cool and help others instead of getting mad. We can see them just like Jesus would see them—like someone who needs help.

QUESTION: What does “kindness” mean to you? If you were to *do* kindness, then what would it look like?

Kindness looks like this to God: Jesus told a story about three men who passed along beside another man who had been badly beaten and robbed. Only one man took the time to stop and help him. He paid for a room that he could stay in and his doctor bills too. Could you imagine paying someone’s doctor bill today? It could be thousands of dollars! Still, this is what God meant in His Bible when He said, “Love is patient.”

God wants us to patient with our friends, brothers and sisters. He wants you to take the time to do things that they want to do, and not just what you want to do.

b. What Love is Not

Sometimes it's easier to see what love is *not*.

QUESTION: What things do you think love is not? (*Let the children make their responses*)

Now let's look at what the Bible says love is not. Love is not a bunch of things! We'll see how these things you have mentioned fit into them.

READ: 1Corinthians 13:4-6 (*Go through the list below with the students, and fit their "not" with the list items.*)

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|---------------------------------------|--|
| (1) It does not envy (Jealousy) | (6) It is not easily angered |
| (2) It does not boast | (7) It keeps no record of wrongs (Un-forgiveness) |
| (3) It is not proud | (8) Love does not delight in evil (Meanness) |
| (4) It is not rude | |
| (5) It is not self-seeking (Pride) | |

c. What Love Does

As you can see, it's easy to see what love is not. But we still have to talk about what love *does* do. You see, it takes a lot of work to love others sometimes, but it is no trouble at all to hate. That's what makes love so valuable to God. It takes some work on our part to make it happen. When you do make the effort, then when you are done, you have something. It's something that no one can take from you because it lasts forever. What you do in love is just like putting it on something with a permanent marker.

Let's look at what love does.

READ: 1 Corinthians 13:6,7.

(1) Rejoices With The Truth

We're happy for others when things go *their* way. When something good happens for someone else, we don't pout about it. When we love right, we can be happy that something nice happened for them.

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| (2) It Always Protects | What happens when someone starts picking on your little brother or sister? You run to their defense without thinking twice about it, or you go to get help. This also means what we talked about at the beginning of our lesson. We don't say mean things like we did to the fruit, but instead we "protect" someone's feelings by not saying mean things. |
| (3) Always Trusts | Do you have a friend that you can trust no matter what? That's love! Jesus is someone who we can always trust. The Bible says that He will always tell us the truth, and that He will never leave us or disappear in times when we need Him most. That's a promise! |
| (4) Always Hopes | You always want something better for others when you love and not hate. You have hope for them. Did you ever catch yourself thinking things like this when you're in a bad mood: "I wish that would have happened for me." "Good things always happen for others, but not for me." When we show love, we think thoughts like, "I'm glad that happened for him," or "I'm glad she won this time." |
| (5) Always Perseveres | Did you ever have someone you are close to that would never give up on you no matter what? They stuck it out with you even when you made them so mad that you thought they would never make up with you again. That is what we call perseverance. That means that your friend will always be there for you. It means that no matter what your faults are, they will still be there. That's love! |
| 2. Who Should We Love? | <p>We've talked a lot about what love is, what it is not, what it does and does not do, but we still have a very important part to talk about.</p> <p>QUESTION: Just exactly <i>WHO</i> are we supposed to love? (<i>Love your neighbor, love your enemies, [love] honor you father and mother, your God/Jesus/Holy Spirit, your family, and anyone else we haven't mentioned.</i>)</p> <p>(<i>Don't let your class get away with just saying "everyone". Make them tell you who "everyone" is.</i>)</p> |

a. Love your enemies

Loving your enemies is probably one of the hardest things God has asked you to do.

QUESTION: Why in the world would God ask you to love your enemies? *(If you do not love your enemies, then you are no better than they are. YOU are just like them!)*

God does not want us to be like our enemies. In fact, He wants us to try to make friends out of our enemies. God says that people are not our enemies.

QUESTION: If people are not really our enemies, then who is? *(The devil and his band of demon followers)*

QUESTION: Do you know what God wants us to do for people that seem like our enemies? *(Do good to them and pray for them; Matthew 5:44; Luke 6:27)*

QUESTION: What good would it do to pray for your enemies? *(For God to save them; for a change of heart)*

Would you believe that prayer and goodness towards a person who is acting like an enemy can change them? Sometimes they can even become your friend because they see that you liked them first. This isn't always the case. Some people are just not going to like you.

QUESTION: Does God's Word say that you have to LIKE everyone? *(NO)*

Wait a minute! I thought we had to love everyone!? Yes, we do. Confused? Here is the answer. We often get the words "like" and "love" mixed together as the same thing. To like someone means that we want to be their friend—spend time with them. To love someone means that you care about them enough to see them get Jesus in their heart. It's OK not to want to be someone's friend who wants to stomp you into dust! Loving someone like that would be to pray for them that God would save them and change their heart. I bet Jesus didn't like Judas much when he betrayed Him. But I bet in Jesus' heart that He loved Judas enough that He would rather have seen him get saved.

b. Loving Lord, Self,
Neighbors

There is someone we should love more than anyone else.

QUESTION: Who is this person? (*God the Father, Jesus His Son, and the Holy Spirit*)

We love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength! It's OK to love God as much as Jesus, or the Holy Spirit as much as we love God—they all are God. That's kind of hard to understand, but it's true. Each of you is part of your mother and your father. You are them. You are a family—one family. God is like that in a way. Still, they are not three gods, but one God that we know in three different ways.

God says there's one person who's not God that we all love.

QUESTION: Do you know who it is? (*It's ourselves*)

You love *you*. You get yourself food when you need it, and drinks too. You take care not to let yourselves get into dangerous places. You try to keep yourself warm. You watch out for you. This is good, but there is still someone that God wants you to love just as much as yourself.

QUESTION: Who is it? (*Your neighbor*)

QUESTION: Who did Jesus say was your neighbor? (*Anyone who needs you—someone that you should help*)

Jesus didn't say love the people you like only. We must love them even if they are dirty, mean, sinners, stealers, and people from other religions, race, color, or country.

3. Loving Things

There's just one more thing left to discuss: what we can't love.

QUESTION: What do you think it is that God does not want us to love? (*Material things and important jobs*)

God does not want us to love things. He has a name for this. He calls it idolatry. That is what the Israelites did when they made the golden calf and worshiped it instead of God. Sometimes it is very easy to make an idol out of something. Say you wanted a new bike. That's OK. But what if you begin to want it more than anything. What if you quit going to church so that you can make money to get it? That is what idolatry for us would look like. The Bible says that loving money more than God is the root of evil.

4. Greatest Love

Jesus said that one kind of love was greater than any other kind of love.

QUESTION: Do you know what this love was? (*A man that would lay down his life for his friends*)

That's exactly what Jesus did. He gave up His life for His friends—US. He loved everyone so much that He allowed himself to be killed on a cross so that no one would have to go to hell for their sins anymore. Of course, we know the good part of the story. Jesus rose from the grave three days later—just like He said He would. Always remember this: Jesus died just for you. If you were the only one left in the whole world, Jesus would have died on the cross just for you. HE LOVES YOU.

5. Conclusion

Perhaps there are some in your class that are not saved. Now would be the time to have your class bow their heads and give time for salvations.

Remind the students of this scripture: 1 John 3:16. "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters."

This means that we should put our church brothers and sisters ahead of ourselves. We should love them this much.

After this, ask if there is anyone who is having trouble loving someone the way that Jesus wants them to love. Pray for those who raise their hand.

After class, talk with the students that raised their hands. Make sure to tell them how proud Jesus is that they raised their hands today.

“I Love Everybody--Just as Long as They’re Me”

Characters: **Jerry Selfish**--Jerry is the president of a kid’s club that has become very exclusive. Jerry also has a warped idea of what love is.

Sammy Go Along--Sammy is the club’s only existing member besides Jerry, and since he doesn’t stand up to Jerry, the club’s membership is not likely to grow.

The story begins as the two characters prepare to have a club meeting.

Jerry Selfish: Hear ye, hear ye! This meeting is called to order. Sammy, what’s our first order of business?

Sammy Go Along: New membership applications to join our club Mr. President.

Jerry Selfish: Who’s our first new candidate?

Sammy Go Along: Jimmy Horndoggle, Mr. President.

Jerry Selfish: Jimmy Horndoggle! We can’t let him in our club! How would that look to hang out with somebody named Horndoggle. Besides, he’s bad at sports and wears those funny pop bottle glasses. No, he’s not club material. NEXT.

Sammy Go Along: Well then, there’s Fred Brown.

Jerry Selfish: *(Thoughtful)* Fred Brown, Fred Brown--humm... Isn’t he that real brainy kid?

Sammy Go Along: Well, he is very smart.

Jerry Selfish: No--I don’t think so. We don’t need to be accused of hanging out with nerds. Besides, isn’t he one of those churchy kids?

Sammy Go Along: *(With excitement)* Oh YES! Why just the other day he was telling me about Jesus and... *(Jerry interrupts)*

Jerry Selfish: *(Interrupt Sammy)* OK! Next person please!

Sammy Go Along: *(Start sounding a bit disinterested)* The last applicant is--Sally Right.

Jerry Selfish: Sally Right! Come on Sammy! She’s a, well, you know--A GIRL! How’s that going to look to have a girl in our fabulous club?

Sammy Go Along: *(In disgust)* Yeh, fabulous! You know what Jerry? Why did you let me into your wonderful club? I'm nobody special.

Jerry Selfish: You're OK Sammy. Besides, how would it look for me--the club president--to do all the work?

Sammy Go Along: Augh! Jerry, this meeting's adjourned! You can have your stinking club! See ya.

Jerry Selfish: Where are you going?

Sammy Go Along: To start my own club with Jimmy Horndoggle, Fred Brown, and Sally Right. You know what else?

Jerry Selfish: What?

Sammy Go Along: We'll even let misfits like you join. *(Turn and leave)*

Jerry Selfish: I don't get it!?!

THE END

Memory Verse: ... if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 1 Corinthians 13:2

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