

Let Us Love One Another

1 John 4:7-16

MEMORY VERSE

1 JOHN 4:7

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Bring several gloves (rubber, work or ski) and an old sheet or piece of cloth.

Paper and markers or crayons.

Potting soil, flower seeds and Styrofoam cups.

ATTENTION GETTER!

Hand In Glove

Bring several gloves to class (rubber gloves, work gloves, ski gloves, etc.). Make a theater curtain for this little “play” by cutting a hole in an old sheet or large piece of cloth. Just make the hole large enough for a child’s hand to fit through. Let two children hold the curtain, one on each side, and have them hold it with the hole just above the level of a table on which you have placed some very dramatic items. The table should be in front of your curtain.

Let one child from the audience volunteer to be in the “play.” He will then go behind the curtain, place a glove on either hand, stick that hand through the hole in the curtain and perform one of the dramatic tasks you have placed there. These could include, pouring water from a pitcher into a glass, picking up coins and placing them in a piggy bank, picking up a pencil to write with or some other extraordinary task.

After the show, quiz the class on how they think the task would get done with just a glove by itself. Of course the glove would not act on its own power, what would need to be inside that we couldn’t see? Why, a hand of course! The same is true when we love one another. Verse 12 says that no one has seen God at any time, but His love abides in us. Love is what shows another person “who” is inside of us. We can love others when Jesus lives in our hearts.

LESSON TIME!

There is a song that states, “They will know that we are Christians by our love!” Jesus meant for love to be our motto, what we would be known for. As Christians, love towards others should be the primary thing that marks our lives. People should be able to see God’s love shining through us. **God wants us to love one another.**

What is love? The world thinks of love as a physical attraction to another person. Apart from the love of God, the world thinks of love as being self-satisfying, and expects something in return. We can say that we love pizza or candy and at the same time we can say that we love our mom and dad. Is there a difference?

God’s love is perfect and unchanging. It is deep and very individual. He cares very deeply for us! Did you know that God numbers even the hairs on our heads? In fact, in Psalms 139 it says that His thoughts of us are more than the sand on the beach. That’s a lot! We, as His children, are very special to Him. He touches our hearts with joy, peace and love. He has a very special plan for our lives.

Let’s see what God says about love in His Word.

1 JOHN 4:7

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

We need to love each other with the love that comes from God. Those who are loving and kind show that they are the children of God by their actions. When we are saved we are “born” into God’s family. And when God becomes our “Heavenly Father,” we learn how to become more like Him. Since God is love and because we are His children we, too, will love.

Jesus said one of the ways that people will know that we are His disciples is by our love for one another. As we love each other, it demonstrates God’s love for us. Others will become attracted to God because they see God’s love demonstrated in us. **God wants us to love one another.**

1 JOHN 4:8

He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

If a person doesn't love others, it shows that he doesn't really know God because God is love. One thing about being a child is that we look like our parents. There's nothing we can do to change that. All of us have a mom and a dad and we will take on their appearance in some way.

If we are truly children of God then we will begin to take on His appearance or character. We can't say that we are God's child and hate other people. That is not what God is like, so we would be lying if we hated others and said that we were His children. **God wants us to love one another.**

1 JOHN 4:9

In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.

God showed us how much He loves us by sending His only Son, Jesus, into the world to bring us eternal life and to show us how to live. What is the greatest way that you can think of to demonstrate your love for someone? Jesus said, "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down their life for their friends" (John 15:13).

What better way for God to show us that He loves us! We deserve to die because of our sin and disobedience towards God. Yet, He sent His Son Jesus to die for us so that we can have eternal life and a relationship with God. Now that is love!

1 JOHN 4:10

In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

God has shown us what real love is. It is not our love for God, but the love He showed us when He sent His Son to pay the price for our sins. We didn't first love God. He took the first step. We were separated from God and Jesus came to make a way for us to come back to God.

In Romans, Paul wrote, "God demonstrated His love towards us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). Even while we were in sin and rebellious towards God, He still loved us enough to provide a way of salvation so that we wouldn't have to be separated from Him for eternity.

1 JOHN 4:11

Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

Since God loves us this much, we should also love one another. How should we love one another? In the same way that God loves us through Jesus. We should be willing to serve others just as Jesus is a servant. We should forgive others, just as Jesus is forgiving. We should also be willing to lay down our lives for the sake of others if necessary, as Jesus did for us. **God wants us to love one another.**

God doesn't just tell us to do something that He first was not already willing to do. Not only that, but He did demonstrate His love for us in Jesus.

Pass It On

Give each child a sheet of paper. You can allow them to draw a large circle on the sheet of paper, or you can have the "funny man" faces (circles) pre-drawn. Let them draw a facial expression on their "man." The different expressions can be surprised, angry, happy, sleepy, sad, etc.

When he is drawn, they must sit in a circle with their "man" hidden, then go around the circle and one at a time show it to the person on their right. That person turns to the one on his right and must properly portray the expression to that neighbor. The neighbor should then guess the facial expression. Then he may show his "man" to that same neighbor and go on around the circle.

What does God always shows us? (Love). He wants us to show love to our neighbors. **God wants us to love one another.**

1 JOHN 4:12

No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.

Even though we have never seen God, if we show love for one another we will be showing how God lives in our hearts. As we do this, His love within us grows stronger and becomes more evident. No one has ever "physically" seen God. How do we see God today? In the lives of His children...us! God uses us to preach His love all over the world, and not only to proclaim His love through our mouths, but through our actions and our lives. **God wants us to love one another.**

1 JOHN 4:13

By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.

God has put His Holy Spirit in our hearts as a witness that we are living with Him and belong to Him. How do we love others? Do we roll up our sleeves and just decide to be more loving? No! God has given us His Holy Spirit to give us the power to love. We can't do it with a right heart all by ourselves.

If you read in Galatians chapter 5, you will see a description of the fruit of the Spirit. These qualities are the result of a life under submission to the Holy Spirit. The fruit is love. All of the other qualities of the spirit flow out of love. We don't have to produce the fruit of love within ourselves. God will produce love in our lives through the Holy Spirit. **God wants us to love one another.**

1 JOHN 4:14, 15

And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

Paul and the disciples saw with their own eyes and told the world that God the Father sent His Son, Jesus, to be their Savior. Anyone who believes and says that Jesus is the Son of God has God living in him. He belongs to God's family.

1 JOHN 4:16

And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

We know how much God loves us because we have experienced His love in our lives. And we believe Him when He tells us that He loves us dearly, because we know first hand how much He has done in our lives. God is love and anyone who lives in love is living with God and God is living in Him.

What then does the word "love" mean? Love is not a passive word where you just say, "I love you" and do nothing. Love is a word of action. His Spirit motivates us to love others.

God loved us so much that He sent His Son to save us. Jesus loved us so much that He gave His life on the cross to pay for our sins and to bring us into the family of God. What should we do to show our love?

First we need to respond to God's call and accept Jesus into our hearts as our Savior and Lord. Then we need to respond to others in the love of God. But how do we do this? How can we show the world that we are Christians? We show our love by the way that we live.

We can show our love by obeying God's commands, sharing God's love with others, giving of ourselves to others, through acts of kindness, truly caring about others and their needs. All this is accomplished as we abide in Christ and are filled with the Holy Spirit.

Ask the class, "What can we do to show love?" Write the answers on the board. Possible answers could include the following: helping the less fortunate (a glass of water in Christ's name), helping our parents without being asked, being there for our friends when they are hurting, praying for one another, being kind to each other and not fighting with brothers and sisters. **God wants us to love one another.**

Abiding

Let the kids in your class plant a flower seed in potting soil in a Styrofoam cup (or small clay pot). Before they plant, read 1 John 4:16. As the potting soil abides in the pot, so we should abide in God, and as the seed abides in the potting soil, God will abide in us.

This abiding will bring forth evidence; a plant will grow! If God abides in us and we in Him, it will also bring forth evidence, real love, agape love!

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to love others. We should pray for the Lord to help us to love our families, friends, other Christians and even our enemies, as Jesus did. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.