

The Bible Barn Unit 5
Chapter 22
Letters About Love

1 Corinthians 13:4-7, John 4:11-12

"Hello, boys and girls! Welcome to the Bible Barn!" Ranger Reggie announced. He looked around at the campers. Several were still searching for a place to sit on the hay-covered floor. Others were staring up at the huge, log beams holding up the ceiling. A few campers were sitting on the hearth of big stone fireplace where a warm fire glowed.

"My name is Ranger Reggie. I'm the head Bible Counselor here at the Bible Barn."

A tall, thin man wearing a khaki shirt and dusty brown pants ran into the room. He pointed at a large mailbox next to the door on the right side of the state.

"Ranger Reggie! Ranger Reggie! The flag is up...we have mail!"

"That's great!" Ranger Reggie smiled and pointed toward the man. "Everybody, this is my assistant counselor, Safari Sam. Say hello, Sam."

Safari Sam waved. "Hello, Sam! I mean, hello kids!"

The campers laughed and yelled together, "Hello, Sam!"

"I just love to get mail! Let's open up the mailbox and see what we have!" Ranger Reggie reached into the box and pulled out a brightly colored postcard. "It's from your pen pal, Sam! Take a look!" Ranger Reggie announced as he handed it to Sam.

Safari Sam beamed as he held the card tightly and read, "Hello Safari Sam, If your campers are looking for letters about love, check out these letters in the Bible."

"Ahhh...letters in the Bible! Let's see what you have there." Ranger Reggie opened his Bible and smiled, "The Bible is just full of love letters from God! Would you like to read one of them, Safari Sam?"

"Sure!" Safari Sam flipped through the pages of Ranger Reggie's Bible to find the verses his pen pal had written on the postcard. "Here's a great letter! It's from Paul. He wrote it to the Corinthians. It says, 'Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.'"

"Why, this is a letter about love!" Ranger Reggie exclaimed.

Safari Sam nodded. "Wow, it sounds like love is really important to God!"

Ranger Reggie looked at the campers. "Love is the most important thing in the world! It's the reason God created us; so He could love us and we could love Him and each other!"

"That gives me an idea about what today's Creature Feature might be," Safari Sam shouted excitedly.

"Thanks for reminding me, Sam!" Ranger Reggie explained, "You see, campers, every day here at Camp Venture, we introduce you to a new and interesting critter. We call it our Creature Feature!" He looked at the door. "Let's ask Wild William to come give us our Camp Critter Clue so we can find out who today's featured creature is!"

"Wild William," Safari Sam called out. "Which critter will be today's featured creature?"

A short, round man with gray wild grey hair and a long gray beard jumped through the door. "Wings of love for all to see, a symbol of perfect unity." He looked around at the campers and then ran back outside.

Safari Sam tapped the cover of the Bible. "Huh? What does that mean?"

"Wings of love for all to see, a symbol of perfect unity." Ranger Reggie repeated while tapping his chin. "I know! I know! It's a love bird!" He pointed up at two twittering birds snuggling together on the wooden beams. The birds swooshed down from the rafters and landed on his head. Ranger Reggie tried desperately to brush them away. "Ah!" He yelled in a panic, spinning in circles. "Get 'em off! Get 'em off!"

Safari Sam leaped across the stage and rescued the birds from Ranger Reggie's wild swings. "I've got them! I've got them!" He held the birds up for everyone to see. "Aren't they beautiful?"

"Oh yeah, beautiful like a rattlesnake!" Ranger Reggie yelled.

"But love birds are a beautiful symbol of love and unity," Safari Sam protested.

Ranger Reggie slowly inched away from Sam with his eye on the two birds, "That's true. They are always found in pairs and once they find their true love they stay together for the rest of their lives." He shot a mistrustful glance at the lovebirds.

"That's because they need each other," Safari Sam explained.

Ranger Reggie snapped his fingers. "They need each other! Of course, that's it!"

Safari Sam gently petted the tops of the birds' heads. "That's what?"

"That's the other thing that love birds remind me of, the fact that God made us to love each other!" Ranger Reggie exclaimed.

Safari Sam smiled. "That's true, the Bible says, 'Love comes from God!'"

"Do you know what, Safari Sam? Just this morning, my friend Orville was showing me a letter that said the same thing." Ranger Reggie shared.

"Well, let's call him," Safari Sam set the birds on the back of a chair and pointed up at the highest wooden beam across the ceiling. "Orville's nest is way up there on that beam, but if we all shout together we can get him to bring us that letter!"

Everyone looked up and shouted, "Hey Orville, come on down!"

Ranger Reggie ducked as a grey bird with shiny green feathers on his neck flew over his head. The carrier pigeon neatly dropped an egg-shaped message container directly into Ranger Reggie's hands. Ranger Reggie held up the container as Orville swept over the campers and then returned to his spot in the tower.

"Orville laid an egg," Ranger Reggie laughed. "Let's see what's inside." He carefully opened the container and unfolded a small piece of paper. "It's the letter Orville was showing me from the Apostle John: 'Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and His love is made complete in us.'"

"I get it, Ranger Reggie!" Safari Sam exclaimed. "Through these letters, God is showing us that love comes from God."

"That's right," Ranger Reggie agreed. "And God's love is the truest form of love!"

"I thought all love was true love," Safari Sam stated.

Ranger Reggie shook his head. "Oh no, sometimes people use the word love in less serious ways. They say things like the 'I love chocolate' or 'I love soccer.'"

"We all love chocolate! But what's the difference between loving things and God's kind of love?" Safari Sam asked.

"The love that comes from God lasts forever and it changes lives in powerful ways," Ranger Reggie explained.

"Hey—that's the kind of love that our Camper's Code is all about." Safari Sam pointed to the code painted on the side wall of the barn. He motioned for the campers to stand up. "Every good camper has to know the Camper's Code so stand to your feet, kids, and we'll teach it to you!"

"We'll make you official Camp Venture Campers! Raise your right hand and say the Code with me!" Ranger Reggie raised his right hand and everyone repeated the Code together: "I will love God with all my heart. I will love my neighbor as myself. I will be a light wherever I go!"

Safari Sam smiled. "Well, campers, looks like we're out of time for today's Bible Barn. Let's head over to the flagpole and learn our Camp Critter Song together!" He waved for the campers to follow, and all of the campers and counselors walked outside into the bright sunlight, ready to begin a great summer of adventure at Camp Venture.