

Letters about Love

Lesson Aim: To know what true love is as explained in the letters in the Bible.

PROPHETS AND PROMISES PART 1

THE WORSHIP, THE WORD, & THE WAY

THE WORSHIP

Who God is: The Spirit Who Teaches Us

THE WORD

New Testament Letters: 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, 1 John 4:11-12

GOT TIME? Letter: 1 Peter 4:8-11

What He has done: God gave His apostles the teachings about love.

Key Verse: 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

THE WAY

Christ Connection: Deuteronomy 6:5

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."

"Love your neighbor as yourself." Matthew 22:37, 39b

For your own encouragement this week, read John 14:15-21. Please join us in praying this week's Teacher's Prayer: "Thank you Lord, for giving us the New Testament letters. Help the children understand John's letter about love. Fill us all with Your Spirit so that we can love one another. Amen."

PREPARE

Highlight in your Bible:

- ☐ 1 Corinthians 13:4-7
- ☐ 1 John 4:11-12
- ☐ Deuteronomy 6:5

Read:

- ☐ Teacher's Guide
- ☐ At-A-Glance

MAILBAG

Create a list of today's New Testament letter scripture references, fold it and place it in the Teacher's Bible. Put Teacher's Bible, Pen Pal Letter and a bag of 15 paper hearts in mailbag. Print each description of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 on a separate paper heart.

TEACHER TIP

Complete THE WORSHIP, THE WORD, and THE WAY. If time allows, choose a Got Time? activity or create your own activity to illustrate the Bible Story, the Aim, or the Bible Memory Verse.

PRESET

THE WELCOME

- ☐ Getting Started—Four buckets, four cups, marbles and sturdy paper in four coordinating colors, scissors, floor tape or chalk, timer

THE WORSHIP

- ☐ Scripture Reading—Matthew 22:37-39
- ☐ Bible Memory Verse Song—"Yahweh: Love The Lord Your God"
- ☐ Other related music
- ☐ Worship Illustration or Storybook Lesson 22

THE WORD and THE WAY

- ☐ Golden Bowl—pencils & note cards
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Mailbag
- ☐ Daily Way Lesson 22
- ☐ Treasure Treat—This week's New Testament Postcard with a stamp or sticker of a heart

GOT TIME?

Heart-shaped snack, drinks, napkins, plates, cups, two pieces of cloth, red, pink or white sturdy paper or craft foam, scissors, hole punch, yarn or ribbon, Bible, Basket of Love template, candy or similar treats, pencils, colored pens, assorted craft supplies, box for shipping or delivering, "New Testament Overture" song and player, 27 sheets of paper, marker, clothesline or thin cord, 27 clothespins or paperclips, Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse song, player and poster

Resources: The additional resources referred to in this lesson and supplemental materials are available at www.childrensministrywarehouse.net. To be a resource yourself, click on the Teacher's Blog tab to share your ideas with teachers worldwide.



1. THE WELCOME

(10 minutes)

Getting Started

To spark anticipation, encourage arriving children to meet and greet one another with today's

Meet & Greet Question: Who is one person you love?

GAME: SHARE YOUR HEART RELAY

PURPOSE: To introduce some of the teachings about love found in the New Testament letters.

SUPPLIES: Four buckets, four cups, marbles in four colors (or buttons, bean bags, painted pebbles, small balls, etc.), four pieces of sturdy paper that coordinate in color with the marbles, scissors, floor tape or chalk, timer

PREPARE: Cut a heart shape from each piece of paper. Tape one heart shape to the side of each bucket. Place the four buckets together in the center of the play area with the heart shapes visible. Use floor tape to mark four starting lines close enough for children to toss the marbles into the buckets. Place a cup full of the same colored marbles at each starting line. Each cup should have the same number of marbles.

SAY> Let's pretend these marbles are hearts. In this relay, try to toss your heart marble into one of the buckets. The bucket with the colored heart that is the same color as your heart marble is your team's bucket. But because this is the "share your heart" relay, your heart marble only counts if it goes into another team's bucket. So, don't aim for your team's bucket! Give your heart to another team!

DIRECTIONS:

1. Help children divide into four teams of equal number.
2. Each team lines up behind a starting line.
3. Assign one child from each team to retrieve any marbles that miss the buckets and put them back into the team's cup.
4. When the timer begins, the first child in each line grabs a marble from the cup and tries to toss it into one of the buckets that is not their team's bucket.
5. The first child goes to the end of the line and the next child takes a turn.
6. Teams play until time runs out.
7. To determine a team's score, count all of the team's marbles that landed in every bucket except their own bucket.

SAY> To win this game, you had to give your heart marbles to another team. God gives us love. He wants us to give our love to others. Let's find out how God wants us to love!

***Option:** Small groups can play with two teams instead of four.

Teacher Tip: Limited Space? Divide the room of children into two teams based on where they are sitting. Place the two buckets together in the middle of room. Using paper balls or beanbags instead of marbles, children toss the "hearts" into the buckets from their seats.



2. THE WORSHIP

(15 minutes)

Worship Theme: The Spirit Who Teaches Us

Today we worship the Spirit who teaches us how to live a life that pleases God. One way the Holy Spirit teaches us is through others who love Him. During worship, everyone who loves God gets to join together to show Him that love through songs, prayers and giving our offering. Those are three of the many ways we can love the Lord with all our heart and soul and mind. (Sing: "Your Love is Amazing" while collecting the offering.)

Worship Elements:

Designate a special corner or area for worship.

Select songs that focus on love.

Scripture Reading: Matthew 22:37-39

Lead a prayer to bless the offering; collect offering

Perform Worship Illustration or read Storybook:

- Prophets & Promises Unit 5, Lesson 22

Unit 5 Song Suggestions:

- Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse Song: "Yahweh: Love The Lord Your God" www.childrensministrywarehouse.net
- "Praise The Lord O My Soul" www.childrensministrywarehouse.net
- "New Testament Overture" www.childrensministrywarehouse.net
- "As The Deer"
- "I Love You Lord"
- "How Great Is Our God"
- "Hallelujah (Your Love Is Amazing)"
- "In The Secret"
- "Friend Of God"
- "We Want To See Jesus Lifted High"
- "Open The Eyes Of My Heart Lord"

Unit 5 Song Collection Suggestion:

- Songs 4 Worship Kids, Volume 1—Awesome God
- Worship Jamz—(Volumes 1, 2, 3)
- Hillsong Kids

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE SONG

"Yahweh: Love The Lord Your God"

Matthew 22:37, 39b (NIV)



You shall love the Lord your God
with all your heart,
with all your soul,
with all your mind.

Love your neighbor as yourself,
the best commandments you'll find.
Yahweh!

I know I can go to...Yahweh!
She can, he can go to...Yahweh!
Weekends we can go to...Yahweh every day!

(Repeat two times going faster each time.)

*Sheet music and recordings available at
www.childrensministrywarehouse.net.*



3. THE WORD

(5 minutes)

Paul and John wrote letters about love.

Transition: As you move from worship to instruction, change rooms or locations within a room to help redirect the children's focus to the Bible story. During this transition time, have each child write their name on a card and place it in the Golden Bowl.

Before we read God's Word, let's go over our Class Covenant. A covenant is an agreement. Just as God made a covenant with His people, I ask each of you to make this covenant promise with me today. Listen as I read our Class Covenant. (Read Class Covenant.)

CLASS COVENANT

I will keep my  on my teacher,
my  in control,
my  on God's Word;
knowing God is my goal.

BIBLE TIMELINE

The New Testament letters were written from circa 37 A.D. to 95 A.D. The Bible Timeline Review activities will resume in Prophets & Promises, Lesson 32 when we complete our ten-week study of the New Testament letters.

Last time we learned that Paul stayed in a house guarded by a soldier for two years. He spoke boldly to everyone who would listen. Paul was bold in his letter writing as well. His letter to the Corinthians taught them about the deepest, strongest kind of love—the love of Jesus.

(Teacher holds up mailbag.) Today we have a mailbag with letters about love from the Bible.



If you brought your Bible, open it now and share with others. (Hand out spare Bibles.) Today's New Testament letters are in the mailbag. (Teacher opens mailbag and removes Bible, opens Bible and takes out list of today's New Testament letter scripture references: 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, 1 John 4:11-12.)

Before we read, let's stand and ask God to open our eyes, ears, hearts and minds to His Word today. Who'd like to pray that for us? (Child prays aloud.) Be seated.

Let's read from Paul's first letter to the people of Corinth. Check out Paul's description of real love. (Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.)

John also wrote letters about the importance of love. Let's read what John says happens when we love one another. (Read 1 John 4:11-12.)



4. THE WAY

(13 minutes)

We can love others with the love Paul described.

(Print the following text on a sheet of paper. Fold the paper and place it in an envelope to create the Pen Pal Letter. Take out Pen Pal Letter from mailbag, open the envelope. Remove the letter and read.)

Hey Pals,

Have you ever had a pen pal? That's a name for a friend who writes letters to you. Many pen pals live far apart and never meet in person. They become pals or friends through the letters they write each other. As your pen pal, I'll be writing you letters about letters...the New Testament letters, that is! Today's letters are about love. In 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, Paul explained what real love is. In 1 John 4:11-12, John explained why love is so important.

Have you ever wanted to see God? Me too! We can't see God completely until we get to heaven, but John shows us that when we love each other, we can see God's love.

(Take out bag of hearts from mailbag. Invite all children to pick a heart from the bag. For groups larger than 15, children may share hearts.)

Each heart describes something about real love such as "Love is patient," or "Love is kind." Read the words on your heart. Think about a time when you gave or received that type of love. For example: I showed love by being patient when I taught my little brother how to ride his bike. That took a lot of patience! (Teacher may help younger children or non-readers share the description of love printed on their heart. Children share their individual experiences.)

Let's vote on which heart describes the hardest way for you to show love. For me, it is hard to never boast or brag. Listen carefully as we read each heart. (Children raise their hands to show the ways of loving they find to be most difficult.) Remember, God is perfect in all 15 ways of loving you!

CHRIST CONNECTION

Connecting the Old Testament, the New Testament and Us

None of us are perfect at loving others. Years before Paul and John wrote the letters about love, Moses explained God's commandment about love. Let's check it out.



Everyone place your Bible on your laps. Let's find Deuteronomy 6:5.
(Read Deuteronomy 6:5.)

The way we love God and others seems to be very important to God. Until we meet again, see how many new ways you can love God and the people that He made.

**Believe and Be love!
Your Pen Pal**

THE WAY *continued...*

Directions to create paper hearts for mailbag:

Cut 15 paper hearts from sturdy paper. Print each of the following statements below from 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 NIRV onto one the 15 paper hearts. (One sentence per heart.)

Love is patient.

Love is kind.

Love does not want what belongs to others.

Love does not brag.

Love is not proud.

Love is not rude.

Love does not look out for its own interests.

Love does not easily become angry.

Love does not keep track of other people's wrongs.

Love is not happy with evil.

Love is full of joy when the truth is spoken.

Love always protects.

Love always trusts.

Love always hopes.

Love never gives up.

THE WAY *continued...*

GOLDEN BOWL

Revelation 5:8

The Golden Bowl contains names of classmates, a local church leader and a child in another nation.

The Bible says that our prayers are like sweet smelling incense in the golden bowls at God's throne. So I'm going to lift each one of you up to God's throne out loud as you pray for each person silently. Then we'll pray out loud the Lord's Prayer. (Matthew 6:9-13.) Let's pray.

Lord God, we lift up to Your throne the name of each child here. We trust You to watch over us and our needs, the ones we say out loud and the ones hidden in our hearts.

First, we lift up to You ____, ____, ____ (read names in Golden Bowl).

Now, we pray the prayer Your Son taught us.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

FINAL FIVE MINUTES

When only 5 minutes remain, begin this segment.

TREASURE TREAT



Today your Treasure Treat is a New Testament Postcard. I'm giving you this stamp or sticker of a heart to remind you to love everyone. (Place stamp or sticker in the corner box on the back of the postcard.) Take it home and create a special mailbox or mailbag where you can collect the remaining postcards. On your postcard, list where to find today's New Testament letters in the Bible. (You'll find the scriptures listed in the Daily Way.) Read these scriptures again to help you answer the postcard question.

DAILY WAY CHALLENGE



Did anyone bring in their completed Daily Way from last time? (Praise or reward those who returned Daily Way; collect in basket.) Take home this week's Daily Way. (Distribute Lesson 22 Daily Way 5-day Bible study.) Complete this at home and let God speak to you through His own words in the Bible. Return it and place it in our class basket. When we fill the basket, we'll celebrate with a class surprise!

OFFERING OF ART



Until it is time to be dismissed, make an Offering of Art. For your offering, draw a picture of one way to show God's love to others.

The Offering of Art can be finished at home or given as an offering to the teacher for display.

PRAYER REQUESTS



As children work on their Offering of Art, ask how you can pray for them this week. Write individual requests in your teacher's prayer notebook.

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE SONG



Play the Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse Song or the "New Testament Overture" in the background as children wait to be dismissed.



5. GOT TIME?

If time remains, choose from the connected activities below.



SNACK, GAME, CRAFT, AND DISCUSSION

SNACK: HEART-SHAPED SNACK

PURPOSE: Children will eat a snack while discussing different ways we can show our love to others.

SUPPLIES: Any heart-shaped snack, drinks, napkins, plates, cups

ASK> Who wrote the letters we read today? (Paul and John.) They taught us how God wants us to truly love each other. Let's talk about ways you like to show someone that you love them. Listen closely to your friend's answers because you might get some new ideas about different ways to show your love!

DIRECTIONS:

1. Serve snack and drink.
2. Child prays to thank God for the snack.
3. Ask the Snack Discussion Question: "How do you show your family or friends that you love them?"

GAME: HOW DO YOU LOVE?

PURPOSE: For children to consider practical ways they can show someone they love them.

SUPPLIES: Two pieces of cloth

SAY> Today we learned about true love. Let's think of some ways we can show true love to the people we love!

DIRECTIONS:

1. Divide the children into two teams. Ask each team to choose a team captain.
2. Give a piece of cloth to each team captain to use as a flag.
3. Read a Love Question from the list below.
4. Each team discusses the answer together.
5. The team captain waves the flag when they are ready to share the team's answer.
6. After each team answers, select a new team captain and read another question to play again.

Love Questions:

- My little brother pinched me. How can I show love to him?
- My best friend just got the game or toy that I want. How can I show love to my friend?
- A girl at school does not have warm winter clothes. How can I show love to her?
- My mother is talking on the phone, but I want to talk with her. How can I show love to her?
- It's raining. I have an umbrella but my neighbor does not. How can I show love to my neighbor?
- My friend forgot to bring a snack to the park. How can I show love to my friend?

***Teacher Tip:** Create your own questions or let your children create questions to ask each other.

GOT TIME? *continued...*

CRAFT: CARE PACKAGE CRAFT—BASKET OF LOVE

PURPOSE: To create a gift and give children the opportunity to show their love by giving it away.

SUPPLIES: Red, pink or white sturdy paper or craft foam, scissors, hole punch, yarn or ribbon, Basket of Love template (see www.childrensministrywarehouse.net), candy or similar treats, pencils, colored pens, assorted craft supplies (sequins, glitter, stickers), box for shipping or delivering all of the baskets.

PREPARE: Cut out several copies of the template for children to trace. Punch holes where indicated. For each child, cut three lengths of yarn: one 20-inch piece, two 8-inch pieces. Determine the recipient(s) of the care package.*

ASK> Today we learned what the New Testament letters say about love. Who wrote 1 Corinthians? (Paul.) What did Paul say we need to have along with faith? (Love.) In 1 John 4:11-12, why does John say we should love others? (God loves us. So others can see God's love.)

SAY> One way we can show our love is by caring for others. For the next few weeks we will care for others by making care packages that we can deliver or mail. Today we will make Baskets of Love to give away to people who need to know that we love them and God loves them. (Share information about the care package recipient(s) with the children. Allow them to ask questions so they truly understand where and to whom their gift will be delivered.)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Use a pencil to trace the three templates onto the paper.
2. Place a dot in the center of the holes.
3. Cut out the shapes.
4. Punch holes through the dots.
5. Place the two hearts together.
6. Thread the yarn through the first two matching holes on the left side of the hearts. Knot the yarn.
7. Sew the two hearts together by pushing the yarn through the next hole set and back up again through the following holes. Continue threading through all the holes. Knot the yarn.
8. Match one set of handle holes with the holes at the top of a heart. Thread yarn through holes and tie a bow to secure.
9. Repeat step 8 to secure other end of handle to the top of the other heart.
10. Decorate the basket. For example: write a message or draw a picture to tell the recipient(s) that God loves them and you do, too.
11. Place the candy in the basket.
12. Place all the gifts together in the box. Seal and address the box.
13. Deliver the gifts!

***Teacher Tips:**

- Suggested Care Package Recipients: Elderly care facility, homebound neighbor, orphanage, soldier on duty, or children's ward in a hospital. If possible, take some or all children with you to deliver the care package locally or to place it in the mail for long distance delivery. Take pictures for the children to share when delivering the package or ask the recipient to send pictures for children to see.
- Pre-trace, cut and punch holes for younger children. Help them tie knots and bows.
- Provide extra candy for the children to enjoy.

GOT TIME? *continued...*

DISCUSSION: MORE LETTERS ABOUT LOVE—1 PETER 4:8-11

PURPOSE: Children learn of a third letter about love from the New Testament.

SUPPLIES: Bible opened to 1 Peter 4:8-11.

SAY> Love does not cover sins in the way that a secret is covered up or hidden. Love covers sins in the same way that a loving hug helps us forgive one another for our wrongdoings. Peter wrote a letter about love, just like Paul and John. (Read 1 Peter 4:8-11.)

ASK> What are some specific ways Peter gives us to love others?

- Share without grumbling.
- Use our gifts for the purpose of serving others, not ourselves.
- Speak carefully as if speaking God's words.
- Serve others in the strength God gives you.
- Give God the credit for everything.

GAME: "NEW TESTAMENT OVERTURE" BOOKS ON A LINE

PURPOSE: Children learn the books of the New Testament.

SUPPLIES: 27 sheets of paper, marker, clothesline or thin cord, 27 clothespins or paperclips, "New Testament Overture" song and player, Bible

SUPPLIES: Write the name of each book of the New Testament on a separate sheet of paper. Mix the papers so the books are not in order. Hang the clothesline in the play area at a low height so the children can reach it.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Play the "New Testament Overture" song two times. Encourage the children to sing along as they become familiar with the words.
2. Challenge the children to place the New Testament books in order by hanging the sheets of paper in correct order on the clothesline with the clothespins.
3. To help the children, play the song while they work. Leave the Bible open to a list of the books of the Bible for their reference as needed. OR Leave the Bible open to the table of contents for their reference as needed.
4. As children learn the correct order of the books, try it without the aid of the list in the Bible or music.

GOT TIME? *continued...*



BIBLE MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITIES:

GAME: LOVE ALL AROUND

PURPOSE: Children learn the Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse.

SUPPLIES: Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse song, player and poster

SAY> Our Bible Memory Verse tells us to love God with all of our heart, soul and mind. What does that mean to you? (Respond.) Our Bible Memory Verse also tells us to love our neighbor as ourselves. Who are our neighbors? (All the people around us.)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Children sit in a circle.
2. Recite or sing the Bible Memory Verse one time together.
3. Say the first word of the verse: **"Love..."**
4. The child on your right says the next word: **"the..."**
5. The next child on the right says the next word: **"Lord..."**
6. Continue going around the circle, each child saying the next word of the Bible Memory Verse in turn until the entire verse has been said.
7. As time allows, play again going faster each time.

GAME: RACE TO REPEAT

PURPOSE: Children learn the Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse.

SUPPLIES: Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse poster, Bible

DIRECTIONS:

1. Practice saying the Unit 5 Bible Memory Verse together once.
2. Divide the children into two equal teams.
3. Teams sit shoulder-to-shoulder in two lines, facing each other with several feet of space between the two lines.
4. Give a number to each child on each team beginning with the number 1.
5. Place a Bible in the center of the space between the two teams.
6. Call out a number.
7. The child from each team with that number races to be the first to touch the Bible.
8. The child who touches the Bible first earns point for his or her team by saying the Bible Memory Verse correctly. (Children may use the Bible Memory Verse poster as a reference.)
9. Continue playing by calling a different number in each round until all children have had a turn.