

Let Us Love One Another

Grades
1-2

BELOVED • EASTER 5 • YEAR B

1 JOHN 4:7-21



5

What is happening in this story?

This text is best seen as the explanation to Jesus' commandment to "love one another, just as I have loved you" from John 13:34. First John emphasizes that it has always been God who loved us first because God is love. Love begins with God. Our love for one another is only possible because we have first known God's love for us. If we do not show love for one another, we do not fully know or understand God.

Why does this story matter for kids?

"Abiding in God's love" is a tough concept to understand and might be explained to kids as knowing what God wants and doing what God wants in all areas of our lives. God wants us to love others because God is love, so when we act in love of others we are "abiding in God's love and God is abiding in us." Further, acting out of love toward everyone is a difficult task, as most kids will know. It helps to tell kids first that, of course, it's a hard task; second, when we love others, it shows others who God is, because God is love.

What is the lectionary connection?

In the months that follow Easter, we try to make sense of the resurrection message. This is a great scripture, geared for the early church, which sums up the message of Christ: "Love God with all your heart, soul, and mind, and love your neighbor as yourself." This is a great exploration of why and how to do that.

AGE LEVEL TIP

Kids this age may think "love" and jump straight to "romance." So today, remind kids of all the different types of love in the world. Yes, there is romantic love, but there is also love for the people in our family, love for pets, and love for God.



GENERAL SUPPLIES

- Markers
- Construction paper
- Scissors

LESSON SUPPLIES

- Chenille stems
- Hole punch (single)

Do some kids arrive early? Try this.

Ask kids to make cards using construction paper and markers for people in your community. Include words of encouragement and love to those who are sick or shut-in, celebrating births or anniversaries, new church members, and others.

Invite kids to gather near the Wall Chart.

Point out today's date, season (Easter), color (yellow), and icon (butterfly). **Today it is still Easter! Who remembers how long Easter lasts? Easter lasts fifty days. The Easter season reminds us that Jesus is always with us! Jesus lives, even though he died.** Write a series of Xs and Os in the air. **Sometimes Xs and Os are used as symbols for hugs and kisses. They're used to send love to someone in letters and cards.** Invite each kid to draw a few Xs and Os on the Wall Chart. **These Xs and Os will help us remember today's story!**

Ask kids to echo what you call out.

Alleluia! Repeat. **Jesus lives!** Repeat.
Alleluia! Repeat. **Jesus lives!** Repeat.
Al-le-lu-ia! Repeat.

Pass out leaflets and markers.

Hold up a leaflet and point to today's activity. **God loves us. We can love God, and we can love people! What are some different ways you can show love to other people?** Allow kids to respond. **We can give a hug, smile at the new kid in class, or help our family with chores! These are all ways of showing God's love. Draw or write one more thing YOU can do to show love in the blank space.** Ask kids to share what they wrote or drew. Collect their leaflets until Respond.

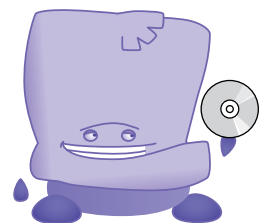
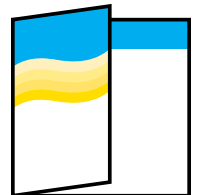
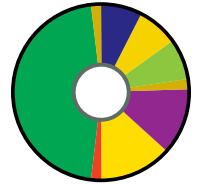
Gather kids around the screen where you'll watch the video.

What do you think Jax would do if he saw money lying on the ground? Let's watch and find out what happens.

View Episode 11, "Nazareth Now," on the Whirl Year B Spring PreK–Grade 2 DVD.

Ask kids these questions about the video:

- **What is Victor up to?**
- **Where are the kids going for their field trip?**
- **How can Jax feel Victor's feelings? Why can't the other kids?**
- **Have you ever been nice to a bully? Tell about it.**
- **How do you think Victor feels when Jax gives him the gift? How do you feel when someone does something nice for you?**



Pass out Whirl Story Bibles to kids.

Let's find our story today! Help kids find "A Letter about God's Love" on page 510. Start by pointing out the graphic that shows the butterfly in the yellow circle for the Easter season. Before you read, invite kids to look for a letter, a cup of water, and a baby.

Read the story and Ada and Otto's questions and comments on each page.



Ask these questions after you read the story:

- Who did Jesus love?
- If we can't see God's love, how can we show God's love to others?
- What is the church all about? Hint: It's a four-letter word!
- Describe what people are doing in the pictures on page 513. How can our church do the same?
- Name two people you can write to about God's love.

Play together!

What would it be like to be a big heart? Let's try it. Stand up, bend your elbows at your sides to make a heart shape, and then make your heart begin beating—baboom, baboom, baboom, baboom. Allow kids to beat like hearts for a few minutes. Then add more actions to the beating. Kids might be dancing beating hearts, snoring beating hearts, helping-others beating hearts, jumping beating hearts, cooking beating hearts, and more. **Our hearts help us do lots of things. Our hearts help us put God's love into action!**

BIBLE BIT

- Jesus gives a new commandment in John 13:34 that is important for this story: "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another."

WATCH IT AGAIN

- Pay close attention to Victor's actions this time.
- **Why do the video kids find Victor hard to love? What makes them love him anyway?**

OUR CHURCH

- Ask worship leaders to put today's letter (1 John) on paper and into an envelope. Then ask a reader to open the letter during worship or a fellowship time and read it to your community.

RESPOND 10

Pass out leaflets and markers.

Unfold and tear off leaflet square.

1. **God loved us first. With God's love, we can love our *whole* family and *all* of God's people!**
2. Hold up leaflet. **Today we're going to make our square into a heart.**
3. Ask kids to first lay their square on the table with the purple triangle at the top (like a diamond instead of a square).
4. **Fold the purple triangle over and away from you on the fold line.** Demonstrate. **Now turn and fold the white area at the bottom down and away from you on the fold line.** Demonstrate.
5. **Next, fold both the red sections on their fold lines over and away from you.** Demonstrate.
6. Ask kids what the heart says. **Our hearts say, "Love Others."**
7. Now open the heart up to the white portion, where you'll find four blank triangles. **In each of these four triangles, draw or write the name of someone you love or can try to love.**
8. Close the flaps and flip the whole piece over. Fold over the four tips and flip the whole piece again. When kids finish working, gather in a group to show each other your hearts. **God loved us first so we can love *all* of God's people!**

LAUNCH 10

Circle up with kids for a quick review.

We love other people because God loves us! How does our story today help us understand love? Allow kids to respond. **Our story reminds us that "when we live in love, we live in God, and God's love lives in us." God's church is all about love. How did we show God's love today?** Allow kids to respond.

Pass out leaflet panels, scissors, paper punch, and chenille stems.

Kids fill in their names and one way of showing love in action on a heart. Then kids cut out the hearts, punch holes, and use chenille stems to connect the hearts together for an at-home door hanger.

Send kids out.

Ask kids to echo what you call out.

Alleluia! Repeat. **Jesus lives!** Repeat.

Alleluia! Repeat. **Jesus lives!** Repeat.

Al-le-lu-ia! Repeat.

Pray together: **God, your** (point up) **love** (hands over heart) **is in me** (point to self)! Repeat. **Your love is in me. I can give it away just like you! Amen.**

Thank kids for showing God's love to others. Remind them of the Family Square on the other side of the leaflet.