

GOD OFFERS LOVE INSTEAD OF SELFISHNESS

STORY: NEW CREATION / YEAR: VALUE

BIG TRUTH: GOD OFFERS LOVE INSTEAD OF SELFISHNESS

John 13:31-35; Ephesians 5:1-2; 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13; 1 John 2:7-10; 3:11; 3:23

BIBLE VERSE: JOHN 15:12-13

“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.”

BIG IDEAS

- Sin makes us selfish.
- Love is selfless and sacrificial.
- God loved us through His Son when we didn’t deserve it.
- When we experience the love of God we extend love to others.

BIBLE STORY: LUKE 10:25-37.

Jesus died on the cross because He loved us. His love for us was greater than any other we experience. Our response is to love others as Christ loved us. Jesus teaches His listeners that we should love all people regardless of how we feel about them.

STORY: NEW CREATION

Part of the beauty of the gospel is that God does not just rescue us from the power of sin, but He is also making everything new. God offers new creation to those who place their faith in Jesus. This newness comes in two ways. The first is that by breaking the power of sin, Jesus is making men and women into brand new people with new identities. Second, God is not only making people new, but He is also going to make a new heaven and a new earth for us to live on and worship Him in.

BIG AIMS



Every child should know that:

- God offers us new life (new desires, purpose) through Jesus



Every child should feel:

- The need to live differently because of Jesus



Every child should:

- See life in light of God’s promises to those who are in Jesus



Every child should want:

- To be freed and rescued from their sin and given new life in Jesus

FAMILY DEVOTION: LOVE VERSUS HATE

God is love and He shows His love for us by sending His Son to pay our sin debt. If we know God and have followed Jesus, we, too, will love others. If we do not love others then we have hate in our hearts and we do not know God.

GOD OFFERS LOVE INSTEAD OF SELFISHNESS

BIBLE VERSE: JOHN 15:12-13

“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

We know what love is because Jesus loves us first.

- Love is from God and we learn what love is from Him.
- He loves us and shows His love through His provision for us.
- We can understand love because Jesus loves us first.
- We can see the way in which Jesus sacrificed for us and we can learn from His example how to love others sacrificially.

We can love others by abiding in Christ.

- We can do no good thing apart from Christ.
- We cannot really love people if we do not abide in Christ.
- In order for us to understand how to truly love others, we have to know Christ.
- Christ loves us first and shows us what love really is.
- When we abide in Him, we grow in love and understanding and we are able to love others as He loves us.

The greatest thing we can do is love others as Christ loved us.

- When we seek to be like Christ, we will love others sacrificially.
- When we love others, we are putting to death our flesh nature and becoming more like Christ.
- The greatest way we show love for Christ is by obeying Him in loving others.
- We are able to love others because Christ lives in us and shows us how.

BIBLE STORY: LUKE 10:25-37

Opening Illustration:

Give each child a large piece of paper or poster board and markers or colored pencils. Ask the children to create a comic strip that tells of the many things that God offers us, such as salvation, a new home, love, the opportunity to serve Him, eternal life, etc. Talk with the children about how God offers us a new way that is better than our sinful way.

GOD OFFERS LOVE INSTEAD OF SELFISHNESS

BIG IDEA: SIN MAKES US SELFISH.¹

Our sin makes us jealous of others.

- Our sinful hearts are selfish and self-centered.
- Our hearts grow jealous when others have things we want or seem to have a better life.
- Our jealous hearts cause us to have strife or conflict with others.
- This sin keeps us from truly loving others as we're called to love.

Our sin keeps us from counting other as more significant than ourselves.

- Our sin nature causes us to be focused on ourselves.
- From the very beginning we are selfish people.
- We seek to please ourselves and we want to make ourselves happy and satisfied.
- Our self-focus keeps us from thinking of others as more important than us.
- We cannot love others as we should when we are only thinking of ourselves.

Our sinful hearts keep us focused on our own happiness.

- Because our sinful hearts are blind to the truth, we only think about ourselves.
- We are not focused on God's glory or pleasing Him. Instead we are focused on our own pleasure and happiness.
- We are blind to the truth and we are self-centered until God shows us the truth.

What makes us selfish? (Our sin makes us selfish.)



Divide the children into groups. Give each group a marker and poster. Set a timer and ask the children to make a list of the ways we are selfish. Once the timer goes off have each group share their list. Remind them that it is our sin that makes us selfish.

1. Psalm 119:36: Our hearts do not naturally seek God's truth. We are selfish by nature because of our sinful heart.

GOD OFFERS LOVE INSTEAD OF SELFISHNESS

BIG IDEA: LOVE IS SELFLESS AND SACRIFICIAL.²

Love is unconditional.

- We know what love is because God shows us by loving us.
- Love is not jealous or envious.
- Love is not based upon what someone does.
- God does not require a person to behave in such a way in order to “earn” or “deserve” His love in return.
- God loves us unconditionally.
- He does not require any action from us in order to receive His love.

Love is not selfish.

- When we truly love people, we consider them more important than ourselves.
- Love is not self-centered.
- The Samaritan showed a selfless love by caring for the Jewish man.
- The Jews disliked the Samaritans, but the Samaritan didn't let this stop him from caring for the Jewish man.

Love sacrifices for others.

- God made the ultimate sacrifice by sending His only Son.
- His sacrifice was made out of love for us, even while we didn't love Him.
- The Samaritan is an example of sacrificial love.
- He helped the Jewish man even while they were enemies.
- Love sacrifices for others, even those who don't love us back.
- We should love others because God loves us, and we should love them in the same manner God loves us.
- We should love everyone, even our enemies, deeply and sincerely.
- We should love others whether or not we believe they “deserve” our love in return.

How did God show us love? (He sacrificed His only Son.)



As a class, create a mock bill for the Jewish man. Estimate what the cost of his care and the Samaritan's time would have been. Once you've created the bill, rip it up and throw it in the trash. Talk with the children about how love is sacrificial and doesn't expect something from others.

2. Ephesians 5:2: Christ gave Himself up for us and we are to sacrifice for others.

GOD OFFERS LOVE INSTEAD OF SELFISHNESS

BIG IDEA: GOD LOVED US THROUGH HIS SON WHEN WE DIDN'T DESERVE IT.³

We do not naturally love God.

- Our sin nature blinds us to the truth about God.
- Eve was deceived in the Garden and sinned.
- Because of the first sin, sin entered the heart of man.
- Our sin blinds us to God's truth and love for us.
- We do not seek God. We seek our own way instead.
- We reject God and are separated from Him because of our sin.

God loves us first.

- God's love is perfect.
- He chooses to love us even as we reject Him.
- He loves us unconditionally.
- He does not expect us to be perfect before He loves us.
- He loves us eternally.

God shows us love by sending Jesus.

- God's love is demonstrated by His sacrifice of Jesus.
- Jesus is God's only Son.
- God did not hesitate to give up His Son so that we can be reconciled to Him.
- He showed His great love for us by sending Jesus to die for our sin.
- He sacrificed for us even while we were still His enemies.

How did God show His love for us? (He sent His only Son to die for our sin.)



Divide the children into three groups. Assign each group one of the following people: Priest, Levite, and Samaritan. Ask the groups to make a list or draw pictures that demonstrate how each person showed love or didn't show love. Share the lists/pictures with the class and then remind them that God shows His love by sending Jesus.

3. Romans 5:8 While we were still sinners, God showed His great love for us. He sent His Son to pay our sin debt.

GOD OFFERS LOVE INSTEAD OF SELFISHNESS

BIG IDEA: WHEN WE EXPERIENCE THE LOVE OF GOD, WE EXTEND LOVE TO OTHERS.⁴

God's love enables us to love others.

- Because God first loved us, we are able to love others.
- We know what love looks like and how to love others.
- Without God first loving us, we would not know how to love others.
- God's Word tells us how to love others as God would love them.
- God's love sets us free to love others unconditionally because we are no longer enslaved to our sin.



Help the children create a coupon book of ways to show love to others, such as family and friends. Talk with them about how God's love for us causes us to love others.

When we love others, we show God's love.

- Because God is love, when we love others, we are being like God.
- We show God's love when we love people because we are loving what God loves.
- God commands us to love others.
- When we obey God's commands, we are showing Him love.

God's love compels us to love.

- When we experience God's perfect love, we understand just who we are and that we are no better than anyone else.
- When we gain this understanding, we are free to love others unconditionally, no matter what.
- Because God loves us in this way, we love others.
- His love spurs us on to love others.

What does God's love cause us to do? (It causes us to love others.)

4. 1 John 4:11: God's love compels us to love others. If we do not love others, we do not know God.

GOD OFFERS LOVE INSTEAD OF SELFISHNESS

HOOKS



Drink Of Water Relay

Set up small cups of water on a table. Divide the class into small teams. Set a timer and have the teams race each other to the water table, drink a cup of water, race back to their team. The team to have the most members drink a cup of water wins. Lead the children in a discussion about how God's love causes us to love others like the Samaritan loved the Jewish man.



- When we experience God's love, we will show love to others.
- We'll even show love to people we don't get along with or who are unkind to us.
- God's love is perfect and He loves us even while we're His enemies.
- When we understand God's love, we'll seek to love like God does.



Band-Aid Relay

Place several boxes of band-aids on a table. Divide the class into two groups. Write each team name on a piece of paper and set it near the band-aids. Set a timer. Have the groups race each other to the table, grab a band-aid, place it on their team's paper, and then race back to their team. The team who places the most band-aids on their paper before a timer goes off wins. Lead the children in a discussion about how God loves us through Jesus.

- The Samaritan showed the Jewish man love by sacrificing for him.
- God shows us love by sacrificing for us.
- He sent His only Son to pay our sin debt. This is the greatest sacrifice anyone could do.
- We should love like God loves.