

## **Small Group Activities**

### **1. Love God, Love Others**

**What You Need:** “Love God, Love Others” (Activity Pages); “Love God” and “Love Others” index cards

**What You Do:**

- Divide the cards in half.
- Turn the “Love God, Love Others” cards upside down.
- Take turns flipping the cards over.
- Guide kids to decide if each picture is an example of loving God or loving others.
- While you work together, place the “Love God” cards on one side of the table and the “Love Others” card to the other.
- After you go through all the cards, briefly review the scenarios under each category.
- Ask kids to list some other ways they can love others. (If kids are stuck for ideas, ask guiding questions such as: How else could you show love to a friend? How could you show love to a neighbor?)

**What You Say:**

“You guys came up with some great ways to love others. And you know what? When you love others, you’re also loving God! The Bible says: *[God] will not forget what you have done. He will remember the love you have shown him. You showed it when you helped his people. And you show it when you keep on helping them (Hebrews 6:10 NIV)*. Wow! When we love others, we’re loving God, too! We can say it this way: **[Bottom Line] you can LIVE (do the sign) for God by loving others.**”

“What’s one way you can love others this week? (Pause.) Great ideas! So, remember: **[Bottom Line] you can LIVE (do the sign) for God by loving others.**”

### **2. Prayer**

**What You Need:** Index cards; markers

**What You Do:**

- Give each child an index card.
- Quickly review the Bottom Line: **[Bottom Line] you can LIVE for God by loving others.**
- Set out the markers and invite kids to write or draw a picture of a way they’ll live for God by loving others this week.
- Invite kids to share their drawings.
- Lead kids in prayer, thanking God for His love and asking Him to help both you and the kids live for Him by loving others.

### **Connection Time**

Use the following questions to keep the conversation going and to keep kids thinking about what they’re learning!

- What are some ways you can love others?
- Say: **[Bottom Line] You can LIVE for God by loving others.**

# The Greatest Commandment

**Bible Story:** The Greatest Commandment • *Matthew 22:36-40; 1 Corinthians 13*

**Bottom Line:** You can LIVE for God by loving others.

**Key Question:** How can you focus on others?

**Memory Verse:** “Let us keep looking to Jesus. He is the one who started this journey of faith. And he is the one who completes the journey of faith.” *Hebrews 12:2a (NIV)*

**Life App:** Faith—Trusting in what you can't see because of what you can see

**Basic Truth:** I should treat others the way I want to be treated.

## Small Group

### Discussion Questions

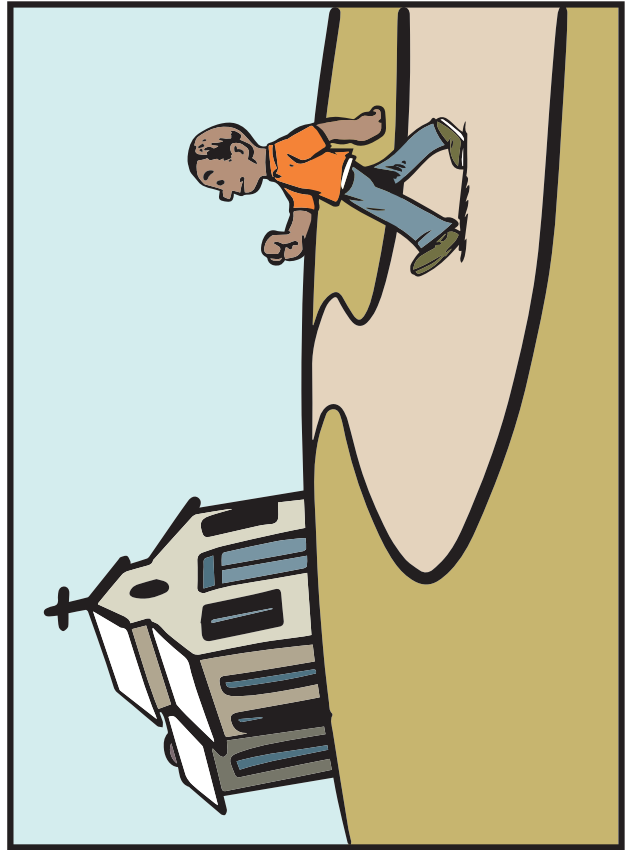
- Finish this sentence: “When I think of love, the first thing that comes to mind is . . .”
- How can you tell when someone genuinely loves you?
- How might the world be different if everyone loved God first and showed unselfish love to others?
- When is it easiest for you to love others? When is it hard?
- How can you show love to people when it's difficult?
- What's one way you can focus on others this week?

### Bible Story Extension

**What You Need:** Bible

**What You Do:**

- **Remind** kids that Jesus said to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind and to love our neighbor as ourselves.
- **Ask** kids why they think Jesus called that the greatest command of all.
- **Explain** that 1 Corinthians 13:4-6 gives us a closer look at the kind of love Jesus was talking about when He told us to love our neighbor as ourselves.
- **Discuss** 1 Corinthians 13:4-6 using questions that help kids take a closer look at how to live in a way that shows love to others.
  - When we love others, we're reflecting or imitating God's love. Why is love for others so important?
  - After reading 1 Corinthians 13:4-6, define love in your own words.
  - Jesus said to love God with all of our heart, soul, and strength. What does that look like for a kid your age?
  - Jesus also told us to love our neighbor as much as we love ourselves. Do you think it's possible to love someone as much as—or even more—than you love yourself?
  - Give some examples of what you can do (or have done) to show love to others.
- **Challenge** kids to pick one of the descriptions of love from 1 Corinthians 13:4-6 that they can focus on today and lead them to think of ways to live it out.



**What to Do:**

Print on cardstock and cut apart. Provide one set for each small group.

**Love God, Love Others**

VBS, DAY 5, Small Group K-1

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**GOD LOVES YOU!**



**VBS!**



**I LOVE YOU!**



**What to Do:**

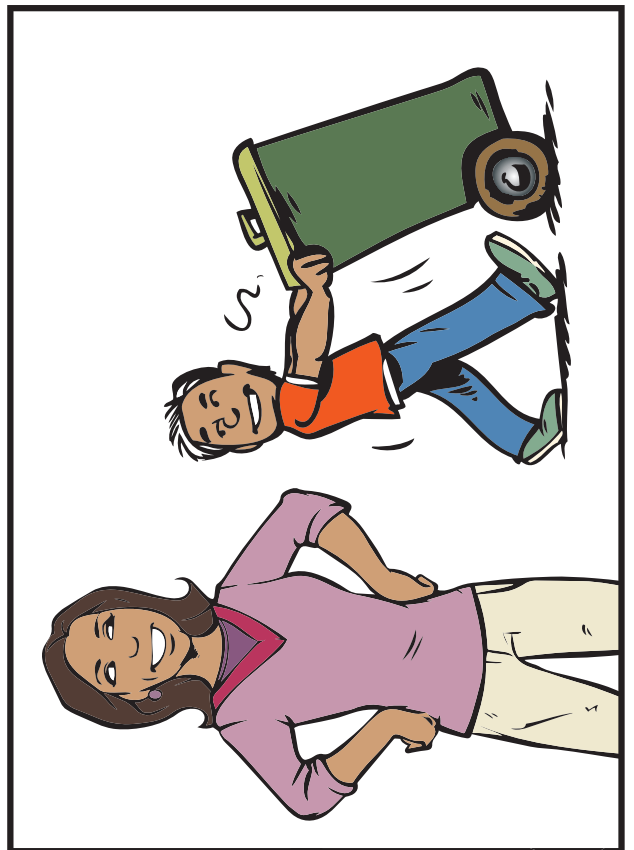
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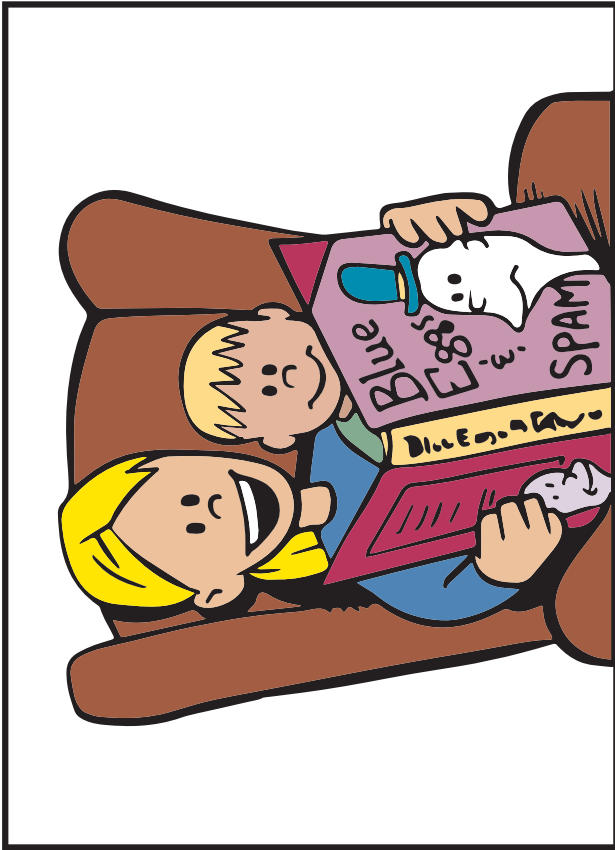
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**What to Do:**  
Print on cardstock and cut apart. Provide one set for each small group.



## READ 1 CORINTHIANS 13:4

We use the word LOVE to describe a lot of different things. We love pizza, video games, our favorite stuffed animal, and cookie dough ice cream. But there's a big difference between loving stuff and loving people. This week, we'll take a look at a chapter from the Bible that's all about love. As you read it, you'll discover that love isn't just a feeling; love is an action.

- 1. LOVE IS PATIENT AND KIND.** Even when you want your way and you want it right now, to love others well means you stop yourself before you say something unkind or push your way to the front.
- 2. LOVE DOES NOT WANT WHAT OTHERS HAVE.** It's hard to love someone when you're jealous of something they have or something they've accomplished.
- 3. LOVE DOES NOT BRAG; IT IS NOT PROUD.** Instead of saying "Look at me, I'm SUPER awesome!" love focuses on others and their awesomeness.

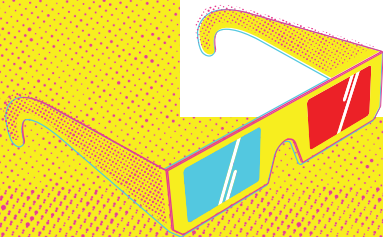
Grab a piece of paper and draw a large heart in the center. Write the phrases in red from the list above in the center of your heart. Write small. You'll be adding more phrases throughout the week. Ask God to help you live for Him by loving others this week.

## READ 1 CORINTHIANS 13:5

Loving others isn't always easy. But God will help us do what He asks us to do. So let's keep going as we learn about LOVE this week.

- 1. LOVE DOES NOT DISHONOR OTHERS.** If a famous actor or athlete were to come over for dinner, how would you treat him or her? Love says we are to treat EVERYONE like that.
- 2. LOVE DOES NOT LOOK OUT FOR ITSELF.** When was the last time you asked someone else about his or her day before you started telling a story about yours?
- 3. LOVE DOES NOT EASILY BECOME ANGRY.** Have you yelled at your little brother lately? Have you pitched a fit about something you didn't like? Anger gets in the way of loving others, big time.
- 4. LOVE DOESN'T KEEP TRACK OF WRONGS.** When you're frustrated with your sister or friend, do you say things like, "He always \_\_\_\_\_," or, "She never \_\_\_\_\_"? It's not fair to bring up past mistakes when dealing with a current disagreement.

Grab your heart from yesterday and add the phrases in red to the front. Thank God for loving you, and ask Him to help you honor others, forgive, put others first, and calm down when you're frustrated so you can love others!





## READ 1 CORINTHIANS 13:6

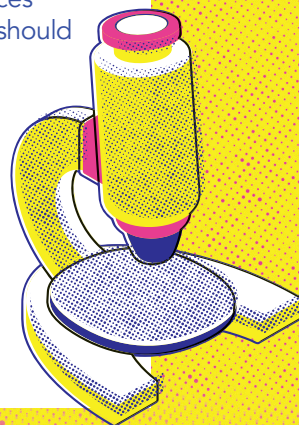
We've been learning a lot about what love is and what it isn't this week. And we're not done yet. Let's dive into today's verse.

**1. LOVE IS NOT HAPPY WITH EVIL OR INJUSTICE.** When you see someone getting picked on, or you see a wrong that needs to be made right, you should stand up and say so. And also let an adult know if you need help.

**2. LOVE IS FULL OF JOY WHEN THE TRUTH IS SPOKEN.** Another version says love "rejoices whenever the truth wins out" (NLT). When you see something you know is wrong or unfair, you should let someone know in a way that doesn't make the situation worse.

This week, when you see something and you think, "That's not right," find a way to make it better. Simply listening to someone who was hurt or choosing to be kind when others aren't can go a long way. You may not be able to fix every wrong or unfair thing you see, but you can certainly be part of the solution to make it better.

Add the phrases in red above to your heart. Ask God to help you love others as you look for ways to make unfair situations better for those around you.



## READ 1 CORINTHIANS 13:7

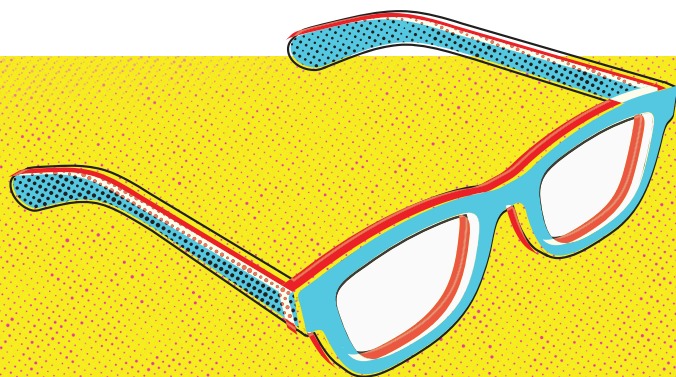
When it comes to showing love, we've talked a lot about what you shouldn't do. Today let's talk about what you **SHOULD** do.

**1. LOVE ALWAYS PROTECTS.** What does it mean to protect something? It means you're careful. You do everything you can to make sure nothing hurts the thing you're protecting—including you.

**2. LOVE ALWAYS TRUSTS.** God will help you be someone others can rely on. Good friendships start with you. Be the kind of friend that others can put their confidence in.

**3. LOVE ALWAYS HOPES AND IT NEVER GIVES UP.** Sometimes we need to keep on loving even when our little brothers drive us crazy. Instead of pointing out all the stuff that makes you mad, choose to believe the best about the other person.

Squeeze these last three phrases in red onto the front of your heart. If you need to flip it over and write on the back, that's okay, too. Read over all the phrases from this week. Which one is easiest for you? Which one is hardest? Put your finger on the hardest one and ask God to help you love others this way so that you can live for Him this week.



**YOU CAN  
LIVE  
FOR GOD BY  
LOVING OTHERS.**





## READ 1 CORINTHIANS 13.

As you read 1 Corinthians 13, circle every time you read the word "love" or "it," when it's referring to love.

**How many circles did you draw?** \_\_\_\_\_

Now go through and underline all the things that Paul wrote are greater than love.

Hmmm, you didn't underline anything, did you?

You could sum 1 Corinthians 13 up in two words: Love wins. Love is greater than all of the other things Paul mentions in this passage.

But Paul didn't originate this idea. Jesus Himself said two things are the most important above all the other commandments. Read Matthew 22:36-40 and underline the things Jesus said are most important.

Love God. Love others. If you can just focus on those two things, you'll LIVE for God.

## READ 1 CORINTHIANS 13.

Many of the ways that Paul describes love in 1 Corinthians 13 have to do with what we say or how we speak.

**Love is patient.**

**Love is kind.**

**Love doesn't brag.**

**It doesn't dishonor other people.**

**It is full of joy when the truth is spoken.**

Hopefully you love your family and friends. But do you speak to them in a way that shows them love? Do you say kind things? Do you talk back to your parents or do you honor them? Do you speak truthfully?

If there's someone in your life that you haven't been talking to in love, find them today and tell them you're sorry. Tell them that you do love them, and you recognize that the way you've been speaking to them hasn't shown them love. Promise them you're going to try to speak in love, and then ask God for help keeping your promise!



If you don't have someone you feel you should apologize to, then take today to focus on speaking in love to EVERYONE! Speak kindly, show honor, tell the truth, and don't brag—all of these things will communicate love to others!

The Greatest Commandment • Matthew 22:36-40; 1 Corinthians 13

**Bottom Line:** You can LIVE for God by loving others.

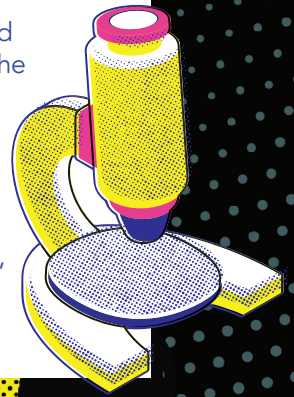
## READ MATTHEW 22:36-40.

Isn't it great that Jesus comes right out and tells us in Matthew 22:36-40 what the most important thing is? The Bible has a lot of words, and while they're all worth reading, it can be overwhelming to think about living out everything you read in it. But Jesus summarized it all so perfectly. There's just two things that we have to focus on, and if we do, we'll be living for God! Love God. And love others.

Not so fast. I mean, it's true. And it IS simple. But just because it's simple, that doesn't mean it's easy, does it? Loving God is probably easier for most people. But loving others? ALL of the others? Even the ones that are annoying? Even the ones that are mean to you? Even the ones that are . . . boys? (or girls?) Yep, all of the others.

The news gets better, though. Jesus isn't asking us to do anything that He hasn't already done. And when we put our trust in Him, the Holy Spirit will give us the strength we need to love others—all the others. All we have to do is ask for help.

Draw a heart on a sheet of paper. Then write the names of the people you find it pretty easy to love. It might be your mom or dad or your best friend. Then write the initials of the people you find it harder to love sometimes. Maybe it's a younger sibling who's always bugging you and breaking your stuff. Or perhaps it's a mean kid at school who is always picking on you. Just write their initials, and then take a couple of minutes to pray. Thank God for the friends and family you find it easy to love. Ask God for help in loving the people who are harder to love. Hang the heart somewhere you'll see it and remember to pray every day for His help.



## READ MATTHEW 22:39.

You may be thinking that you get it that love is the most important thing and that we should love God and love others. But what does that look like in your daily life? Go back and read Matthew 22:39, when Jesus is actually quoting an Old Testament passage: *Love your neighbor as you love yourself*, (NIV). If you're wondering how you can show love to someone, think about what would make YOU feel loved.

That doesn't mean if your favorite food is Cheetos® and you know your sister hates them, you give her a bag of Cheetos since it's what you love. Nope, it means that you would give your sister something that she loves as much as YOU love Cheetos. It means that you take out the trash for your dad—not because you love it when he takes the trash out, but because you know how it feels when someone does something un-fun so you don't have to.

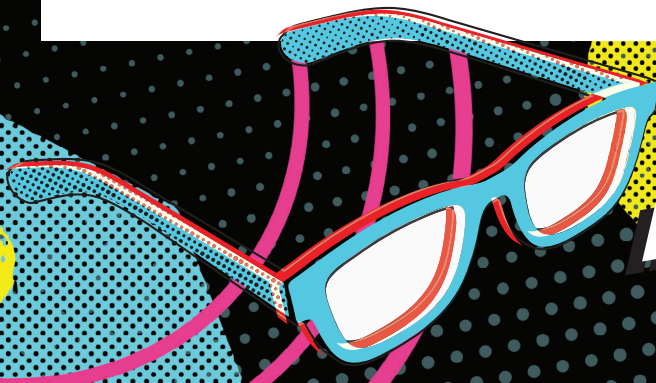
Think of at least two people you should show some love to. One person can be someone it's easier for you to love, but the other person should be someone you find it more challenging to love. Then do something for them that you know will help them feel loved by you. Make your plan here, and then follow through on it.

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Take the focus off of yourself today and focus on what others want instead. When you treat others the way you want to be treated, you'll be showing them love. And you can LIVE for God by loving others.



**HOW DO YOU FOCUS  
ON OTHERS?**