

Monthly Overview

Week	Bible Story	Bottom Line	Conversation Starter
1	Jesus Teaches Nicodemus John 3:1-21	God loves the whole world.	Where have you seen God's love?
2	The Most Important Commandment Matthew 22:34-40 (supporting: Exodus 20:1-21)	Love God. Love others.	How have others shown love to you?
3	Zacchaeus Luke 19:1-10	The love of Jesus can change things for the better.	How can love change things?
4	Jesus Heals Jairus' Daughter and a Suffering Woman Mark 5:21-43	Show the love of Jesus to people in need.	How can you show love to others?

Core Insight

**Community in the Context of
God's Family**

Key Application

Love

**"I give you a new command. Love one another.
You must love one another, just as I have loved you."
John 13:34, Nlrv**

VERSE
MEMORY
VERSE
MEMORY

Weekly Summaries

Week	Bible Story	Summary
1	Jesus Teaches Nicodemus	We start off as Nicodemus visits Jesus at night. While Nicodemus struggles to understand how a grown-up could be born again, Jesus challenges him to see with new eyes. John, recording this scene, interprets for us: "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life." [BOTTOM LINE] <u>God loves the whole world.</u>
2	The Most Important Commandment	During Week 2, we explore the Most Important Commandment. Several religious leaders try to trap Jesus with a trick question: basically, choose your top commandment so everyone can take you down for picking the wrong one. Just how many rules are we talking here? We revisit the original Ten Commandments in Exodus, as well as the additional 603 laws and the extras added around them by the religious leaders. Instead of debating, Jesus rolls them all into two simple commands. [BOTTOM LINE] <u>Love God. Love others.</u>
3	Zacchaeus	In Week 3, Jesus singles out Zacchaeus, a tax collector who has scrambled up a tree for a better view. Instead of scolding Zacchaeus for stealing from his neighbors, Jesus invites himself over to the tax collector's house for a party. Profoundly changed by Jesus' love and acceptance, Zacchaeus offers to pay back anyone he has cheated—four times as much! [BOTTOM LINE] <u>The love of Jesus can change things for the better.</u>
4	Jesus Heals Jairus' Daughter and a Suffering Woman	We wrap up the month with Jairus, a synagogue leader, who begs Jesus to come heal his gravely ill daughter. While Jesus is on the way, a desperate woman with a chronic illness pushes through the crowd to touch his robe... and is instantly made well. Jesus doesn't discriminate between the wealthy and the outcast; instead, he responds to anyone in need. [BOTTOM LINE] <u>Show the love of Jesus to people in need.</u>

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DAY 1

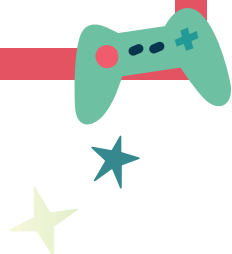
Read John 3:16 NIV

“God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life.”

God loved you, and so He did what people who love do: He gave. What did He give? His one and only Son, Jesus. Why? Because Jesus came to take the punishment for our sins, the wrong things we choose to do. We all make wrong choices and choose to do what we want and not what God wants.

When we choose to trust Jesus as Savior, our sin no longer separates us from God. So Jesus' birth, which we celebrate on Christmas, is a really big deal. It's what makes real joy possible.

Grab a piece of paper and illustrate this verse, any way you'd like. You can draw a heart for love, a cross for Jesus, etc. When finished, choose someone in your family or neighborhood to give your drawing to. Then tell them about how Jesus' birth means that everyone can be a part of God's story.



DAY 2

Read 1 John 4:16 NIV

“So we know that God loves us. We depend on it. God is love. Anyone who leads a life of love is joined to God. And God is joined to them.”

What are some things you depend on?

You depend on shoes to protect your

_____.

You depend on a life jacket to

_____.

You depend on a car, bus, or a train to

_____.

When it comes to being loved, there is someone you can always depend on.

God loves you. He loves you when you obey Him and live in a way that makes Him happy. He loves you when you make bad choices and need to be forgiven. He loves you when you choose to trust and follow Him. He even loves you when you decide that your way is better.

You are loved. No matter what you say. No matter what you do. God loves you. You can depend on it. You matter to Him. And when you do make bad choices, He loves you enough to forgive you when you ask Him. Loving others is easier when you realize that YOU are loved by a great big God.

DAY 3

Read John 13:34 NlrV

"I give you a new command. Love one another. You must love one another, just as I have loved you."

When Jesus spoke the words we read in today's verses, He said He had a "new command" or order. And what was it? That's right. God made you to love others! Why? Because Jesus loves you. Jesus showed us how much He loves us by putting us first and facing the pain of the cross. He took all that punishment on Himself because of His great love for us. And He's asking you and me to love others, too.

Grab some red, pink, or white construction paper. Cut out 21 hearts from the paper and write one word from the verse on each heart. Stack the hearts and then shuffle to mix them up. Set a timer and see how fast you can put the hearts in verse order. Mix them up, shuffle, and see if you can beat your time.

DAY 4

Read Psalm 136:1 NlrV

"Give thanks to the LORD, because he is good. His faithful love continues forever."

Think about some things you love to do. Maybe you love to dance. Could you ...

Dance forever?

Read forever?

Run forever?

Play video games forever?

Our human bodies get tired. We have limits. Even if you LOVE to dance, it's impossible for you to keep dancing forever. Good thing for us, God never grows tired or weary. He just keeps going and going. And the BEST thing about God is that He loves us forever and always. His love is never-ending; it continues forever. Isn't that the coolest thought? There is no limit to His love. His love isn't available just for certain people. It's for everyone. What a good, good God.

Spend some time thanking God for His never-stopping, never-ending love for you. Ask Him to help you see others around you as people made in His image, worthy of His never-ending love, just like you.

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DAY 1

Read 1 John 4:19 Nlrv

“We love because he loved us first.”

Is it ever hard for you to love someone else?

Unscramble the answers below. Pro tip: Read 1 John 4:19 if you need some extra help!

What comes first?

1. DGO DEVOL SU:

What comes second?

2. EW EVOL SREHTO:

Why do we love? Because God first loved us. We don't love because the other person deserves it. We don't love only when we “feel” like it. Love comes from God. And His love is perfect. Believe it or not, the people who are hard to love are all loved by God, too. They matter to Him. We should love others because they matter to God.



DAY 2

Read John 1:29 Nlrv

“The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him. John said, “Look! The Lamb of God! He takes away the sin of the world!”

What are some things you have to do that aren't any fun?

- Going to bed early on a school night.
- Studying for a spelling test.
- Getting a cavity filled at the dentist.

Maybe you can name some things that are even harder than those. Life can be really hard sometimes. Write down three more things that you think are “no fun” in the space below.

Sometimes the things we go through are painful. Jesus knows all about that because He faced the hardest thing. He went all the way to the cross. Jesus suffered and died so that our sins could be forgiven. That's how much He loves you. He was willing to lay down His life so that you could have a relationship with God. That's why you can love others—because Jesus loves you!

DAY 3

Read Matthew 22:37-38 NIV

“Jesus replied, ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Love him with all your mind.’ This is the first and most important commandment.”

How can you show God that you love Him? You can't exactly run up and give God a big hug or a high five.

To love God with all your heart means that you try hard to make sure that nothing comes between you and him. Sometimes, we need a “heart check” to make sure that no yucky stuff like bitterness, anger, or jealousy is getting in the way. Loving Him with our mind and our soul means checking our reactions to see if those things in our hearts are spilling out in the way we treat others.

Grab a piece of paper and draw a large heart in the center. On one side, write down any emotions you've felt lately that are disrespectful toward God or others. Flip the heart over and write out today's verse. Underline the words heart, soul, and mind. Hang it up verse side out to help you remember to perform regular “heart checks” this week.

DAY 4

Read 1 Corinthians 16:14 NIV.

“Be loving in everything you do.”

Grab a piece of paper and your grown-up or an older sibling. Set a timer for one minute. During that minute, tell your parent/sibling everything you did today and ask them to write it down. Don't leave anything out. If it comes to mind, it goes on the page. Ready? Go!

Take a look at your list. Put a check mark beside each thing you did that involved someone else. Did you show love in each of those situations? How? If not, why?

Does today's verse say, “be loving sometimes” or “be loving when you feel like it”? That's how we act sometimes. Love is easy when it doesn't cost us much. But God isn't asking us to only love when we feel like it. He's asking us to love others in “everything” we do.



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DAY 1

Read Galatians 5:22 NlrV

“But the fruit the Holy Spirit produces is love, joy and peace. It is being patient, kind and good. It is being faithful.”

Have you ever picked a strawberry that wasn't quite ripe yet? Ever pop a sour grape into your mouth at lunch? Not so fun, right?

When you allow God to work in your heart, when you read His word and talk to Him and live out what it says, the Holy Spirit produces GOOD fruit in you. We're not talking about apples and bananas here either. It starts with following God. He is the only one who can really help you be kind to someone who isn't kind to you. He's the only one who can help you be patient and loving in a situation where all you really want to do is blow up in anger. You can respond with the love of Jesus and change things for the better.

Use a plastic knife to carve the words “LOVE OTHERS” into the side of a banana and pack it in your lunchbox. Your secret message will appear when you open your lunch to eat it at school!

DAY 2

Read 1 John 4:7–8 NlrV

“Dear friends, let us love one another, because love comes from God. Everyone who loves has become a child of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.”

Unscramble the words to complete the sentences below.

Leaves come from _____.

S T E E R

Warmth comes from the _____.

N S U

Rain comes down from the _____.

K S Y

Love comes from _____.

G O D

Where does love come from? God! As the Creator of everything, love was God's idea. That's good news for us. Because if we know God, we know how to love. If we choose to follow Him, then He will help us love others the way He does. When you're having a hard time loving someone else, ask God to help you, and He will. Because loving is what He does best.



DAY 3

Read 1 John 3:18 NlrV

“Dear children, don’t just talk about love. Put your love into action. Then it will truly be love.”

The Bible tells us how God wants us to live. But guess what? Reading your Bible and talking to God isn’t enough. God wants you to “put your love in action.”

God wants you to show love by treating others the way you would want to be treated. That means speaking kind words. That means show others the love of Jesus. It’s about more than reading words in the Bible; it’s about getting busy **LOVING** the people around you.

Grab a piece of paper. Place your non-writing hand on the page and trace around it with a pencil. Write the words of today’s verse around the outline of your hand. Tape your handprint to the mirror as a reminder to use your hands to help you show love to those in need.



DAY 4

Read Luke 19:8 NlrV

“Zacchaeus stood up. He said, ‘Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of what I own to those who are poor. And if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay it back. I will pay back four times the amount I took.’”

Jesus showed love to Zacchaeus, and that love caused him to turn his whole life around. He became a giver instead of a taker. He made a promise to give back more than what he’d taken. When Zacchaeus met Jesus, he did a complete 180 and started living the opposite of how he had lived before!

When you put your trust in Jesus, you repent or ask forgiveness for all the wrong things you’ve done. To repent literally means to turn around and go in the other direction. Jesus’ love can change things for the better.

What areas of your life need to be turned around? Is there someone you’ve hurt? Have you said unkind words you didn’t mean? Is there a situation you could make right by admitting you were wrong? It’s time to do the Hokey Pokey, repent, and turn yourself around so you can love like Jesus.

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DAY 1

Read Proverbs 17:17 NIV

“A friend loves at all times. They are there to help when trouble comes.”

Grab a piece of paper. Draw a vertical line down the left side of the page, about an inch from the edge. To the left of the line, write down different times in your day (like “breakfast”, “math”, “recess”, etc.). Next to each title, write down some names of the people you are with during that time of day.

When should a friend love? At ALL times. A real friend loves when things are happy and awesome, and also when things are super sad or hard. There are lots and lots of opportunities in your day to see someone who needs some love and encouragement from you and to offer it. Part of loving the way God loves us is choosing to comfort others who are hurting.

DAY 2

Read Hebrews 13:1 NIV

“Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters.”

How would you want someone to treat you if you were sad about something? Circle the ways you would want someone to treat you, and put an “X” through the ways you would NOT want someone to treat you if you were sad:

Give you a hug.

Completely ignore that you are hurting.

Say, “I’m so sorry you’re sad.”

Say, “Just get over it.”

Offer to play your favorite game

Sit and listen to you

As followers of Jesus, we “keep on loving” when our friend is happy and life is great. And we “keep on loving” when our friend is sad or lonely. We “keep on loving” even when we don’t know exactly what to say and all we can offer is a hug. Let’s choose to care and comfort others just as we want to be treated.

DAY 3

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:11 NlrV

“So encourage one another with the hope you have. Build each other up. In fact, that’s what you are doing.”

Has anyone ever sent you an encouraging note or told you you’re awesome? Think about how those words made you feel. Those kind words “built you up.” They reminded you that you are loved.

When your buddy misses the goal, you can pat him on the back and tell him he can try again. When your little sister struggles to tie her shoes, you can tell her that it was hard for you at first, too. When your mom is tired after a long day, you can give her a BIG hug and thank her for being your mom.

Find some Lego® bricks or blocks and a roll of masking tape. Tear off twenty pieces of tape and place one on each block or Lego. Carefully write the words of this verse on each of the tape pieces. Then mix up the blocks/bricks and “build them up” in verse order.

DAY 4

Read 1 John 3:17 NlrV

“Suppose someone sees a brother or sister in need and is able to help them. And suppose that person doesn’t take pity on these needy people. Then how can the love of God be in that person?”

Do you have a tag on your jacket or backpack that says, “This belongs to _____.”

The way you love and care for others says a lot about who you belong to. When you see a need and offer to help, it’s like wearing a tag that says, “I belong to God. I follow God. I love others the way He loves.”

God is counting on you to show the love of Jesus to those in need. Who can you help this week to show that the love of God is in you and that you belong to Him?

Fill in the tag below.



My name is _____
I belong to God!
I will help _____

