



FEBRUARY THEME
**BEHIND THE
SCENES**

BIBLE STORY

John 15:12-13

Power of Love | No Greater Love

BOTTOM LINE

Love others because Jesus loves you

MEMORY VERSE

“Here is what love is. It is not that we loved God. It is that he loved us and sent his Son to give his life to pay for our sins.”

1 John 4:10, NIV

LIFE APP

Love | Choosing to treat others the way you want to be treated

BASIC TRUTH

I should treat others the way I want to be treated

FOR LEADERS ONLY

GOD VIEW: the connection between **LOVE** and God’s character, as shown through God’s big story

This WEEK: We start off the month learning about God’s perfect love. In **John 15:12-13**, we discover that Jesus showed us love in the most sacrificial way possible, by laying down his life for us. Jesus asks us to love one another, just as he loved us, in the way we sacrifice for our friends.

Bottom Line: Love others because Jesus loves you. As kids learn about Jesus’ sacrificial love for us, we pray they will start to understand how they can show love sacrificially to the people in their lives. Showing love to others will not always be convenient. When we begin to see our potential to love in light of Jesus’ love for us, we will understand that showing love, even when it’s difficult, is worth all the effort.

SOCIAL: PROVIDING TIME FOR FUN INTERACTION

Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and catching up. Get ready to experience today’s story.

Before kids arrive, **PRAY** for each regular attendee by name. Pray for those who might visit your group for the first time. There is no better reason to love others than because Jesus loved us first. Pray that your few would start to understand that they can love others not through their own power, but through the power of the love Jesus gives to us.

•• **EARLY ARRIVER IDEA**

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Ask kids to think of something great that happened this past week.
 - Did someone in particular make that awesome thing possible?
 - Perhaps someone was kind to you in some way?
- Then ask:
 - Who are some of the people you love the most?
 - Why do you love them?
 - How do you show them that you love them?

•• **COPY THAT!**

What You Need: Scrap paper, markers

What You Do:

- Ask kids to choose a partner and have everyone sit or stand so that one partner is facing the back of the other.
- Give a scrap of paper and a marker to the partners in front.



- Take the partners in back out of your room and whisper one of the words listed below to them without letting their partners hear. *(Use the same word for all pairs.)*
- Explain that the partner in back will use his finger to draw that item *(not the word)* on the back of the other partner. The partner in front will then duplicate on his index card what he thinks is being drawn on his back. *(Direct the partners in the back to keep tracing their drawing.)*
- When finished, have kids show their drawings to one another.
- Tell kids to switch places and play again using a different word.
- Here are some words you can use:
 - House —Hand —Cross —Dog
 - Heart —Smiley Face —Flower —Tree

What You Say: “Great job with this activity! It’s not easy to imitate something when you can’t actually see it. **[Transition]** Today in Large Group Worship/WOW Family Worship, we’re going to discover/we discovered something that God wants us to copy or imitate. It’s not a picture of a house or a dog, and thankfully, you don’t have to go at it blindly the way you did with your drawings.

[Sunday Leaders: Lead your group to the Family Room for Large Group Worship. Wednesday Leaders: Continue with the study.]

GROUPS: CREATING A SAFE PLACE TO CONNECT

Create a safe place to connect and learn how the Bible story applies to real life experiences, through interactive activities and discussion questions.

●● **NOW PLAYING** *(application activity / review the Bible story)*

What You Need: Bibles, “Now Playing Cards,” pens, copy paper

What You Do:

- Begin by reading John 15:12-13 to review the focus of today’s Large Group time.
- Next, give each kid a “Now Playing Card” but ask that they not let anyone else see it.
- Explain that the cards contain names of actual movies filmed over 50 years ago. Their job is to create a plot that fits the title of the movie on their card and tells about a way someone chose to love others.
- Give kids a piece of copy paper and a few minutes to write a short summary *(1-3 sentences)* of their movie plot.
- Remind them to make sure their storyline goes along with the movie title. Assist with ideas and suggestions as needed.
- When kids have finished writing, collect all of the title cards and spread them out on the small group table.
- One at a time, read the movie plots written by the kids and let everyone guess which film title they think it goes with.
- After each guess, have a short discussion by letting the kids elaborate a bit more on their plots. Ask questions about the characters and possible ways those characters could show love to other people in the movie.

What You Say: “The story of Jesus is a true love story. It’s not some mushy movie plot someone made up a long time ago. His love for you is real and goes on forever. It won’t change or end no matter how the story of your life plays out. You can **[Bottom Line] love others because Jesus loves you**. That means you can pass on that never-ending love Jesus has given you. When you pay attention to what others need and do what you can to help them, you’re sharing his love. Sometimes it might be as simple as taking a few minutes of your time to pray with someone or encourage them in some way. Sharing your stuff with others, letting them go first, treating them with respect, and making sure to say ‘thanks’ are simple ways you can give Jesus’ love to others.

“One thing that kids who know Jesus should do better than anyone else is love. Why? Because you’ve experienced God’s love for you



firsthand. Love is all about choosing to treat others the way you want to be treated. You will have to make some sacrifices in order to do that, but they will be small compared to what Jesus did for you and me.”

Discussion Questions:

- What are some things you truly love ALL of the time?
- What about people? Are there people who you love all the time? Or are there people you like all the time—people who don’t really ever get on your nerves?
- Who are some people you CHOOSE to love even when you don’t feel like it?
- Can anyone give an example of when someone has shown you genuine love? How did you know it was genuine? How is that different from a time when someone might have been faking love toward you? Are you willing to share an example and how that felt?
- Is it “fake” to show love to someone you don’t like? What is good or not good about that kind of love?

•• **BEHIND THE SCENES** (*application activity*)

What You Need: “Behind the Scenes” cards

What You Do:

- Give each of the kids two “Behind the Scenes” cards.
- Challenge kids to do a random act of kindness for someone this week and leave the card behind for that person to find and pass along to someone else.
- **[Make It Personal]** (*Share about a time when you were so inspired by someone else’s act of kindness that you wanted to pay it forward and be kind to others.*)
- As a group, brainstorm some ideas of acts of kindness kids could do this week.

What You Say: “God’s love is never fake. God never has to ‘try’ to love you. God’s love is honest, pure, and real. It’s that kind of love that God wants you to share with others. This week, think of some ‘Behind the Scenes’ ways you can demonstrate God’s love to someone. Pray about it and see what ideas God gives you. Maybe you can make your brother’s bed or empty the dishwasher for your mom. Maybe you can leave a candy bar on the desk of a kid in your class or a small gift for your teacher. Or maybe you can spot a mess or some trash on the floor at school and clean it up. When you do, leave one of your “Behind the Scenes” cards for someone to find. As you do, pray for him or her to know that God loves them and sent Jesus to show them how to live and love. Ask God to help you **[Bottom Line]** love others because Jesus loves you.”

•• **WORD FOR WORD** (*memory verse activity*)

What You Need: Bible, scrap paper, pens, stopwatch or timing device (*optional*)

What You Do:

- Have kids look up 1 John 4:10.
- Share the navigation tip below if kids need help finding the book of 1 John near the back of their Bibles.

Finding verses with 4th-5th graders: Our verse is from 1 John. Ask kids to tell you whether that’s in the Old Testament or the New Testament. (*New*) So we know it’s toward the back of the Bible. When they find 1 John, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Tell them to find chapter 4. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Tell them to them find verse 10 in chapter 4.

- Invite a couple of kids to read the verse out loud.
- Pass out scrap paper and ask kids to work together to write each word of 1 John 4:10 on its own individual piece of paper, including the reference.
- When finished, mix up the cards and place them face down on your small group table.
- Tell kids to try to say 1 John 4:10 word for word as quickly as they can.

