



DECEMBER THEME

**UNDERCOVER
CHRISTMAS**
Make Others Your Mission

BIBLE STORY

1 John 4:9-12

I Will Follow | God Showed His Love

BOTTOM LINE

Love others because God loved you first

MEMORY VERSE

“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.”

John 3:16, NIV

LIFE APP

Compassion | Caring enough to do something about someone else’s need

BASIC TRUTH

I should treat others the way I want to be treated...and with God’s help I can!

FOR LEADERS ONLY

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

THIS WEEK—Key Question: How will you love others? Showing God’s love to others is an important part of following Jesus. We want to help families figure out a plan for how they can show compassion to others and help them realize how much God loves them.

We finish our series on compassion in **1 John 4:9-12**, where we read about God’s great love for us when God sent Jesus to pay the price for our sins. John reminds us that no one has ever seen God, but when we show love to others, people see God through us.

Bottom Line: Love others because God loved you first. This week, we want to help families connect their compassion to the source of compassion. We show love to others, not just because it’s a good thing to do, but also because it’s what God did for us and what God calls us to do for others.

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 group member by name. Thank God that we can show compassion and spread God’s love during every season, not just the Christmas season. Pray that kids would be encouraged today to continue their journey of compassion and loving others because God loved us first.

•• JUST FOR FUN

Made to Connect | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: Ball-pit ball

What You Do:

- Guide kids to sit around your small group table.
- Give a ball to one kid. Tell her to share her favorite thing that happened during the Christmas season (so far) and then toss the ball to someone else.
- Continue until all kids have had a chance to share.
- If time allows, play again sharing something kids hope will happen sometime during the remainder of the Christmas season.

•• GET YOUR HEAD IN THE GAME

Made to Imagine | An activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment

What You Need: “What Happened First?” activity pages, pens

What You Do:



- Divide kids into teams of three and give each team a “What Happened First?” activity page and a pen.
- Read the story aloud. Kids will likely be confused.
- Explain that this is the ending of the story. They get to decide what happened first.
- Instruct teams to each write a short beginning to the story.
- Allow teams to share their story beginnings with the others.

What You Say: “Those were some pretty funny story beginnings! When we just had the ending, we knew a little bit about what happened, but we didn’t know WHY the kids were laughing. We didn’t know what happened first. It’s a cause and effect thing. What Kamika did was the cause, and the laughing was the effect. When you wrote what she did, we knew why she laughed. **[Transition]** Today in Sunday CM worship/WOW family worship, we’ll hear/we heard the beginning of an awesome love story!”

[Sunday Leaders: Lead your group to the Family Room for Children’s Ministry 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.

•• TAKE A SNAPSHOT [Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Move | An activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and taps into the energy in the body

What You Need: 2 dice

What You Do:

- Explain that kids will take turns rolling the dice. The number they roll (2-12) corresponds with a month of the year. For example, 5 corresponds to May. *(Note: if they roll a 2, they can choose either January or February).* Once the month has been determined, they should share a way to show compassion to someone during that time of year.
—For example, since January is cold, an act of compassion might be to make a cup of hot chocolate for someone.
- Remind students of holidays that are celebrated in certain months such as Thanksgiving in November, Valentine’s Day in February, Mother’s Day in May, Father’s Day in June, birthdays all year long, etc.
- Encourage creative ideas that are not only tangible gifts but also acts of kindness, helping others, encouraging words, and sharing their time.

What You Say: “Every day, all year long we have opportunities to show compassion. With a little creativity and a willing attitude, each of us can share God’s love every single day with others. Telling others that God loves them means so much more when you also show them God’s love. When you make the first move to do something thoughtful, put someone first, or say something encouraging or when you’re just there for someone who’s having a rough day, you’re sharing the heart of God with them. That’s something that can be done anytime, all year long—not just at Christmas.”

•• BIBLE STORY EXTENSION [Talk about God | Bible Story Review]

Made to Connect | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: Bible, “Discussion Symbols” activity cards

What You Do:

- Ask for a volunteer to look up 1 John 4:9-12 in a Bible.



- Ask for another volunteer to read the verses aloud to the group.
- Place the “Discussion Symbols” activity cards where everyone can reach them.
- Unpack 1 John 4:9-12 by inviting kids to choose one of the “Discussion Symbols” then share their thoughts, ideas, or questions based on the card they chose.
 - ARROW POINTING UP | Share something these verses tell us about God.
 - ARROW POINTING DOWN | Share something these verses tell us about people.
 - A LIGHT BULB | Share something you learned from this verse that you didn’t know or had forgotten.
 - AN EXCLAMATION MARK! | Share why this verse is exciting to you.
 - A QUESTION MARK? | What do you not understand or want to ask about this verse?
 - ARROW POINTING TO SIDE | Share something this verse tells you to do.

•• **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS** [Live for God | Application Activity]

Made to Connect | An activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: No supplies needed

What You Do:

- Ask:
 - Why do we help people?
 - Why do we sometimes not help people? Can those ever be good reasons or are they just excuses?
 - Can our motives/reasons/intentions ever be selfish even when we’re doing something to show God’s love to others? Explain.
 - Do you think that being a kind person means that someone is a follower of Jesus? Why or why not?
 - If someone is kind to you first, it’s usually easy to be kind back. What has God done to show kindness and compassion to you first? How can you show kindness back to God?

•• **VERSES TO TAKE WITH YOU** [Hear from God | Memory Verse Activity]

Made to Imagine | An activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play and reenactment

What You Need: Bible, red paper strips, green paper strips, pens

What You Do:

- Invite someone to read 1 John 4:19 to everyone.
- Ask group members to take turns finishing the followings sentences:
 - This verse means . . .
 - I need to remember this when . . .
- Form two teams.
- Ask one team to write on red strips of paper ways God has shown love to us in the past as well as day-by-day. *(One idea per paper strip.)*
- Ask the other team to write on green paper strips ways we can show love to others through the things we say or do. *(One idea per paper strip.)*
- Bring everyone together when finished.
- Invite teams to share what they wrote on the paper strips.
- Save the paper strips for use in “Make it Personal with Prayer.”

What You Say: “God has shown us love in far more ways than we can ever show to others. We could never love others enough to equal God’s love for us. But that’s not the reason we work hard to show compassion. We don’t do it simply because it’s Christmas, either. When we love the way God does—always and every day, no matter what—God’s love is shining through us like lights on a Christmas

