



FEBRUARY THEME

PLAYLIST

Put Love into the Mix

BIBLE STORY

John 15:12-13

You're the Inspiration | No Greater Love
Spark Story Bible, pg. 452-453
Jesus the Vine

BOTTOM LINE

Love others because Jesus loves you

MEMORY VERSE

"Here is my command. Love one another, just as I have loved you."
John 15:12, 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.

Key Question: What makes you feel loved? We start with this question because when we start to understand the times when we feel loved, we'll be more aware of how our actions can help someone else feel loved.

We start the month with something Jesus said in **John 15:12**, "Here is my command. Love one another, just as I have loved you" (NIV). Jesus proved this to us with his whole life, including when he put us first by giving his life for us. If we say that we follow Jesus, then we should show others how much we love them.

Bottom Line: Love others because Jesus loves you. More than anything, we want families to know that Jesus loves them. When we understand how much Jesus loves us, we can see how important it is to share that love with others and point them back to Jesus.

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. Pray that kids begin to understand how much God loves them and that God's love for them is more than any other love they could ever experience. Pray that kids will be inspired by God's love to love others.

•• JUST FOR FUN

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:

- Invite kids to give their answers to the following questions, and share why they chose one answer over the other.
 - Would you rather be first in line at an amusement park or first among your friends to get a cool phone?
 - Would you rather be first to give a report in front of the class or first to sing a solo in your choir concert?
 - Would you rather miss the first day of school or the first day of summer vacation?
 - Would you rather be the first player chosen on a team or first to score a point in the game?
 - Would you rather be first to show kindness to someone or first to receive it?
 - Would you rather be first to jump into a cold swimming pool or first to jump into a hot hot tub?
- Add other questions as needed, keeping the theme of being first.



●● **GET YOUR HEAD IN THE GAME**

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

What You Need: Copy paper, pens

What You Do:

- Hand out copy paper and pens.
- Instruct kids to brainstorm some of their favorite songs, and write them on their paper.
- Let kids share their lists with the group. Encourage them to sing a sample of songs that others are not familiar with.
- After hearing everybody's favorite songs, give kids a few minutes to rank their top 5 all-time favorite songs. They can be from their original lists, or songs that their friends recommended.

What You Say: "When we put together a list of songs, it's called a playlist. We often put the songs we like best at the top—or the beginning—of a playlist. **[Transition] Today in Sunday CM worship/WOW family worship, we are going to find out/we found out that Jesus always put love on the top of his list, and he wants us to do the same!**

[Sunday Leaders: Lead your group to Fellowship Hall 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** [Talk about God | Application Activity]

Made to Play | An activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group

What You Need: "Unfamiliar Words" activity cards, pens

What You Do:

- Hand an "Unfamiliar Words" activity card to each group member.
- Invite kids to write a description of the perfect friend on the back of their activity card using the word on the card.
—When everyone is finished, take turns reading the definitions to one another.
—Challenge the group to see if they can figure out the meaning of the chosen word based on how it's used in the description.

What You Say: "It's not easy to describe a true friend—especially with a random, unfamiliar word attached— but we know a friend when we meet one. Friends make us feel loved. They often put us first, and we do the same for them. The fact is love didn't start with us. We love others because God loved us first. We are able to love others because God put that ability within us. God will always love us first, best, and most. Love is part of who God is and how God interacts with the world. God sent Jesus into the world to show us how to love. That is why it is important to **[Bottom Line] Love others because Jesus loves you.**"

●● **BIBLE STORY EXTENSION** [Talk about God | Bible Story Review | Application Activity]

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

What You Need: Bible, 10 index cards

What You Do:

- As a group, look up John 15:12-13 and read it together.



- Create a playlist of ten song titles based on John 15:12-13 (*songs about love*) and write each title on a separate card.
- Discuss the titles kids came up with.
 - Which song title sounds like a song you might sing in church?
 - Which title is a song that might encourage you to love others more like Jesus does?
 - How does it make you feel to know that Jesus loved us first?
 - Is it possible for us to love others the way God loves us? Why or why not?
 - Who is someone you can show love to first, even if they don't return it?
- Challenge kids to pick one of the song titles and take the card as a reminder to live out what they learned today.

•• **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 the following questions...
 - What's something you love ALL of the time?
 - When do you feel most loved?
 - Think (*silently*) of someone you CHOOSE to love even when you don't feel like it. It's probably someone in your family or maybe a friend you tend to have drama with. What do you do to show love to that person when you don't FEEL love toward them?
 - [**Make it Personal**] (*Share your own answer to this question, especially if kids seem to be stuck for answers. If you can share without being gossipy or overly negative and talk about a typical situation in which it's hard to feel love toward a particular person, do so. Kids don't need to know all the details, but it's good for them to know their leaders struggle with the same things they do!*)
 - If you don't really like someone, is it fake to be nice to them? What is okay or not okay about that kind of love?
 - What can you do to better show genuine love to others?

•• **VERSE TO TAKE WITH YOU** [Live for 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, "Love Chain" activity pages, scissors, markers, pens

What You Do:

- Help kids look up John 15:12 using the tips below...
 - Finding verses with 4th + 5th graders:** Guide them to open their Bibles to the front and find the table of contents. (*Hold up a Bible opened to the table of contents to show the kids what the page looks like.*) When the kids find the table of contents, lead them to find John in the list under "New Testament." When the kids find John, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find John. Help the kids find the page. When they find John, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 15. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help them find verse 12 in chapter 15.
- Ask for a volunteer to read the verse, and then spend some time trying to memorize it.
- Hand out a "Love Chain" activity page to each kid.
- Instruct the kids to follow your instructions as you demonstrate how to cut out the silhouettes.
 - Cut out the large rectangle
 - Fold, accordion-style along the light gray lines, so you end up with 8 folds.
 - Cut out the top, middle, and bottom shape. DO NOT cut the linking pieces (*which will end up being the part where the arms and legs connect*).
- When finished cutting, show kids how to unfold their 'Love Chain' to display four silhouettes connected by three hearts.
- Tell the kids to think of four people they can show love to.

