



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 kids 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:**

- Talk about favorite moments in a movie when someone gave a gift or gave up something for someone else.
- Encourage the kids to think of tangible gifts, but giving up something intangible is okay too.
- Some suggestions might be:
  - In Aladdin, when Aladdin gave bread to the younger orphans
  - In Toy Story 3, when Andy gave his toys to Bonnie
  - In Star Wars: The Force Awakens, when Poe gave Finn his jacket
  - In Frozen, (an intangible) when Olaf chose to stay with a sick Anna even though he would melt

•• **GIVE ON A BEAT**

**What You Need:** No supplies needed



**What You Do:**

- Gather the group to sit in a circle.
- During the game, kids will name an item and slap the next person's hand (*as if giving that item*) in a rhythm. This should continue around the circle.
- Start by teaching them a short rhyme:  
—Give according to people's need. That is a way to love in deed, and we need \_\_\_\_\_.  
—The blank will be filled in with a category of things that someone might need, such as a food, clothing, or a type of shelter.
- Instruct kids to sit with their right hand lying, palm up, on their right leg.
- As they say the rhyme, they keep the beat by using their right hand to reach over and slap the right hand of the person to their left.
- The slaps will travel around the circle as the kids say the rhyme and then as they list the items in the given category.
- If anyone hesitates, pauses, or goes too fast, breaking the rhythm, that person is out and goes moves away from the small group table. If this happens and someone is already out, the new person trades places with them.

**What You Say:** "In this game, you did a great job of coming up with a whole bunch of things that people might need. One of the ways that we can show love to others is by giving them things that they need. **[Transition] Today in Large Group Worship/WoW Family Worship, we are going to learn/we learned about the greatest kind of love.**"

*[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.

●● **LOVE BY NUMBER** (*application activity / review the Bible story*)

**What You Need:** Dice

**What You Do:**

- Talk about how Jesus didn't just give up his life for us at the last minute on the cross.
- He gave up lots of things throughout his whole life for his disciples and for us. Give a couple examples: he gave up living in heaven. He gave up never being hungry or thirsty. He gave up having a home in order to travel and teach and heal people.
- Hand one kid the die.
- Tell the kids that they need to try to roll the number "1" on the die.
- The kid with the die rolls it first. If he rolls a "1" he should name one thing that Jesus gave up for others and then throw the die to the kid next to him, who throws it to the kid next to him, until the die reaches back to you.
- If the kid with the die doesn't roll a "1" he hands the die to the kid next to him who then takes a turn trying to roll a "1."
- Whoever first rolls a "1" names one thing that Jesus gave up for others and begins throwing the die around the circle back to you.
- When you get the die, give it to someone to try to roll a "2."
- Continue the game until the group rolls all the numbers on the die, in order.

**What You Say:** "You didn't give the die back to me all at once, did you? You gave it to me as you rolled the correct number. In the Bible story, we heard Jesus say: *"Here is my command. Love one another, just as I have loved you. No one has greater love than the one who gives their life for their friends"* (John 15:12-13 NIV). Jesus didn't just give up his life at the end of his life. He gave it up in little ways all throughout his life. This is the way Jesus asks us to love others—by giving up parts of our lives for others in big ways and small ways. And it's not always easy. Just like with the die, sometimes you'll 'drop the ball,' and you won't get the 'loving others' thing entirely right.



But that's okay.

**[Make It Personal]** *(Give an example of a couple ways that you have given up part of your life or a physical possession to show love to others. For example, leading this small group could be one of them.)* **[Bottom Line]** "Love others because Jesus loves you."

•• **VALENTINE CRAFT** *(application activity)*

**What You Need:** "Valentine" activity page, markers

**What You Do:**

- Ask kids to each think of someone they can show love to this week.
- Explain that kids will be making a valentine to give to someone to show love to them.
- Set out the supplies.
- Allow time for kids to create their valentines.

**What You Say:** "We can show love to people in many different ways, including giving them cards like we do on Valentine's Day. I want you to give your valentine to the person you want to show love to this week, and read it to them. We want people to know that not only do WE love them, but Jesus does, too! Jesus loves all of us so much, and he wants us to love others as well. **[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 2nd and 3rd 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 1 John in the list under "New Testament." When the kids find 1 John, lead them to look at the page number beside the word. Explain that the number tells them on what page they can find 1 John. Help the kids find the page. When they find 1 John, explain that the big numbers on the page are the chapter numbers. Help them find chapter 4. Explain that the small numbers are verse numbers. Help 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 try to say 1 John 4:10 word for word as quickly as they can.
- The only way they can say a word is to first sift through the cards and find it.
- As kids find a card, they should hold it up, say the word, and then place it back face down on the table
- Your group can refer to the Bible if they need help remembering the verse.
- Optional: Time your group and play several times to see if they can shorten the time it takes them to complete the verse. Shuffle the cards between each round.

**What You Say:** **[Bottom Line]** "Love others because Jesus loves you. Jesus doesn't just tell us one thing and then do something different. Not at all. He showed us an example of what real love taken to the ultimate extreme looks like—by dying in our place. There are millions of ways to put others' needs before your own. One of the biggest ways you can show someone you love them is by putting them first. It's exactly what Jesus did when he died for us on the cross—he put our needs above his own! It's impossible to love and trust God, and then not love the people he loves. Ask for God's help this week to treat others the way you want to be treated. The One

