



**Mustard Seed Sunday School Lesson for March 18, 2007
Released on Wednesday, March 14, 2007**

"God Loves Us" (The Source of Love)

Lesson: 1 John 4:7–21

Read: 1 John 4:7–21

Devotional Reading: John 21:15–19

Background Scripture: 1 John 4:7–21

Time: A.D. 90–95

Place: probably from Ephesus

GOLDEN TEXT: "We love him, because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19).

SCRIPTURE LESSON TEXT:

1 John 4:7–21

Knowing God Through Love (cf. John 3:16)

7. Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

8. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

9. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

10. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

11. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

Seeing God Through Love

12. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

13. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he is us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

14. And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

15. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

16. And we have known and believed the love that God hath us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

The Consummation of Love

17. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

18. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

19. We love him, because he first loved us.

Obedience by Faith

20. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

21. And this commandment have we from him That he who loveth God love his brother also.

TEACHER'S NOTES ON THE LESSON

God loves you. It is fitting that now you love others. In a nutshell, that is the message of this week's lesson from 1 John.

Writing to his believing friends, the Apostle John began with the exhortation "Let us love one another: for love is of God" (4:7), as if to say that showing love to each other was simply appropriate behavior now that the believers had been "born of God."

Communicating this truth in the language of primaries is the task set before us.

John started off his discussion of love by defining the word. Today we love our parents. We love our spouse. We love to read. We love ice cream. We love gospel music. John pointed out that *Bible love* is something else.

The apostle reminded his friends that God Himself had demonstrated what love is. And how had He done that? He did so by doing something for us—something that we needed, something that would benefit us. He sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. [Propitiation means *substitutionary atonement* (for another's offence). Jesus took our place by dying on the cross for our sin.]

Primaries (and most adults) think love means simply liking a person or thing or activity very much. However, love is more than liking. Love is more than feeling. "Herein is love," John wrote, "not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent

His Son" (vs. 10). Love results in doing what promotes the welfare of someone else. As though to make that point, he added, "If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another" (vs. 11).

Then the apostle turned from discussing God's love toward us and focused on our love toward others. God Himself is the source of the ability to love. When we care about and then do something for another's welfare, it is an indication that He dwells within us. The opposite is also true. The one who claims to love God but never reaches out to help a brother is lying. When God indwells a believer, He will manifest Himself through some degree of caring for others. John reminded his readers again that we have been commanded to show such love.

If you ask a group of boys and girls to think of ways they can do good for others, they will probably mention helping. Some will think of giving money or food or clothes. And those truly are the needs of some, but not all people need to be helped. In addition, children often do not have material things to give. Even primaries, however, can understand that there are other needs and other ways they can show love.

David's friend Jonathan is the Bible's own illustration of that other way of loving (1 Sam. 18:1–4; 19:2–3; 20:4–22; 23:16). Jonathan obviously expressed his love in words. He and David pledged their friendship. He did give David gifts. But he did more. When David needed to be warned of danger, Jonathan alerted him. When David was hiding from his enemies, Jonathan sought him out to give encouragement.

Our young students can be on the watch for people who need a kind and helpful word. So can we.

THE OBJECT IN VIEW:

Teach that God, who dearly loves His children, has commanded us to do the things that show His kind of love to others.

TRUTHS TO STRESS:

1. God deeply loves us.
2. God has demonstrated what love does by sending the Saviour to meet our need.
3. He enables us to love others.

PLANNING VISUAL AIDS:

For Beginning the Lesson, take a picture of a zoo, the scroll from lesson 1, and a Bible.

For Telling the Lesson, you will need pictures of a cross, Jesus talking with Nicodemus (Christian bookstore, or internet), and a group of adults and children. Also draw stick figures to represent David and Jonathan and a flash card reading "GOD."

For Helping to Remember, for each student draw a large heart on red construction paper and an identical one on white paper. Each child will need scissors (round edge for safety), glue, crayons, and gummed stars.

BEGINNING THE LESSON:

Jamie and his parents were spending an afternoon at the zoo. (*Show picture of zoo.*) Jamie thought it was a good day to be there. He liked animals, and today there were even some baby animals to see.

They watched the mother lion for a while. She was licking her cubs with her tongue, just the way Jamie's cat washed her kittens.

Next they stood in front of the chimpanzee cage and watched a mother chimpanzee cuddle her little one. Jamie thought of the way their neighbor, Mrs. Dennis, held her new baby.

Then they walked past the farm animals' part of the zoo. Inside the fence a mother hen was clucking to her chicks. They all came running and hid under her wings.

Jamie said, "All the animal mothers really seem to like their babies."

"God made sure that animals would take care of their little ones," Dad said. "Animals do not love in the same way people love. But in their animal way, they do love."

We know about people. Most fathers and mothers love their children. Did you know that the Bible says God, our Father in heaven, loves His children very, very much?

Jesus' friend John talked a lot about loving in that letter he wrote to some other friends. (*Show scroll.*) In the last two weeks we learned that God put that letter in the Bible. And here it is. (*Show 1 John in your Bible.*) What does his letter say about love?

TELLING THE LESSON:

First, John told the believers that God Himself has shown us what love does. He wrote, "This shows God's love: He sent His only Son into the world so that we could have life that lasts forever. He loved us and sent His Son Jesus to pay for our sins." (*Hold up cross.*)

When Jesus was still on earth, a man named Nicodemus came to see Him one night (John 3). (*Show Jesus and Nicodemus.*) Nicodemus wanted to talk.

Jesus told him about how people are born into God's family. Then He told Nicodemus what God did so that that could happen.

"God loved the world so much," Jesus said, "that He gave His only Son so that whoever believes in Him would have life that goes on forever in heaven" (see John 3:16). That is the kind of life you must have to be in God's family.

Because God loves us, He did something that would help us. He gave us Jesus to be our Saviour.

Remember Bible love does for somebody else what that somebody else needs. That is what God did for us. He saw we needed the kind of life that makes us fit for heaven, and He sent Jesus to die for us so that we could have it. That is how God showed His love.

Three times John wrote, "He loved us," "God so loved us," and "He first loved us."

God still loves us today. If you have believed that Jesus is your Saviour, you are extra special to Him (1 Pet. 2:9). He loves you in a special way. He could not love you more than He does right now, for He is God.

As John said, God Himself has shown us what love is. God's kind of love cared about us and did what we needed. Now Jesus wants the boys and girls and grown-ups who belong to Him to love other people that way. (*Show group of adults and children.*)

"If somebody says he loves God but does not care about helping other, he is not telling the truth," John said next. John meant that if you say you love God, you should show it by showing love to other people. People who really love God think about how they can be good to others.

In the Bible we read that David and Jonathan were best friends (1 Sam. 18:1—4; 19:2—3; 20:4—22; 23:16). (*Show David and Jonathan.*) Jonathan was a prince. He should have been the next king, but he knew that David would be king instead. Jonathan did not mind. He was glad the Lord had chosen David. He wanted David to have what was good.

Jonathan gave presents to David because he loved him, but he did much more than give gifts. He did things to help. Once he heard about some danger, and he warned David to be careful. Another time, David was hiding from his enemies. Jonathan came to see him. He reminded David that the Lord was with him and told him not to be afraid. Those were ways Jonathan showed his love.

Now, we cannot make ourselves care about others. God is where love comes from. (*Hold up "GOD."*) People like to think about themselves and what they need. The Lord is the only one who can make us want to love one another.

TELLING HOW TO LIVE:

Remember you show God's kind of love by doing what is good for others. You show God's kind of love by helping other people have what they need.

When you get up each morning this week, you might ask yourself, "Who can I especially help today?" Then ask the Lord to show you how to do that.

HELPING TO REMEMBER:

Let the children cut out their red and white hearts and glue them back-to-back. On the white side they should print "God Loves." On the red side they should print "I Love." Then they can decorate both sides with gummed stars.

EXPLAINING THE GOLDEN TEXT:

"We love him, because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19).

The Bible tells some of the mighty things the Lord God has done. He made the world with its trees and rivers and oceans and mountains. He made the sun, the moon, and the stars. And He made the first people.

The Bible also tells us what the Lord is like. The Lord God is good. He was the first person to love someone else. He loved the first people. He loves us. He loved us before we loved Him.

That is where love comes from—from God Himself. He makes us able to love Him, and He makes us want to please Him by loving others.

MUSTARD SEED LESSON ACTIVITIES:



MEMORY VERSE:

"We love him, because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19).

CIRCLE THE CORRECT WORD:

1. "Beloved, let us (**LOVE, HATE**) one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God." **1 JOHN 4:7**

TRUE OR FALSE:

2. "He who does not love does not know God, for God is love." **1 JOHN 4:8**

TRUE OR FALSE

CIRCLE THE CORRECT WORD:

3. "In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might (**LIVE, SEE**) through Him." **1 JOHN 4:9**

TRUE OR FALSE:

4. Beloved, if God so loved us, we do not need to love one another. **1 JOHN 4:11**

TRUE OR FALSE

5. "And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world." **1 JOHN 4:14**

TRUE OR FALSE

6. "Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God." **1 JOHN 4:15**

TRUE OR FALSE

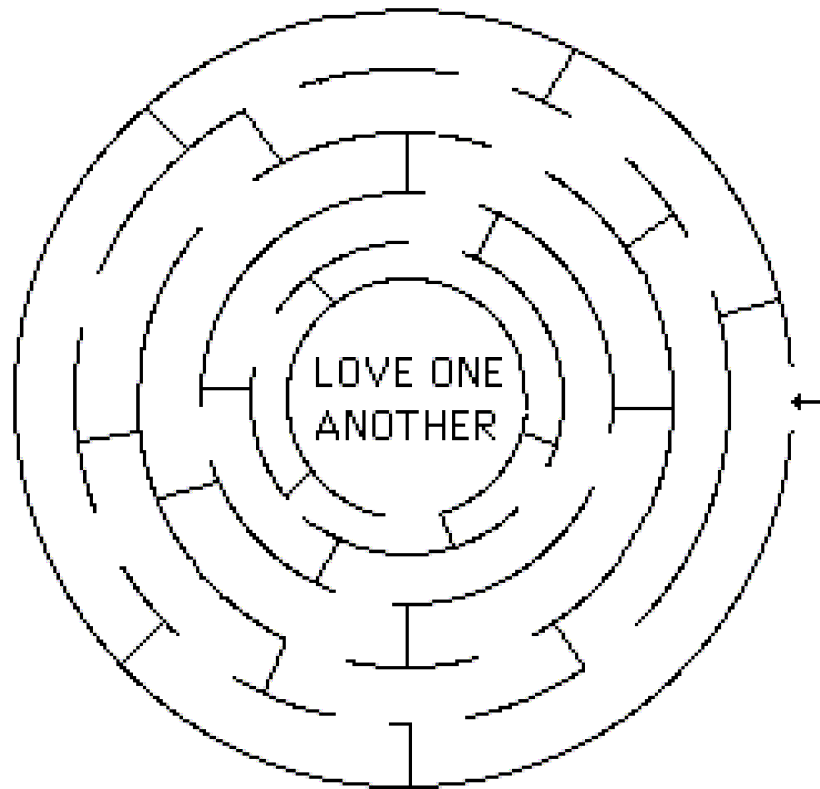
CIRCLE THE CORRECT WORD

7. "God is love, and he who abides in (**LOVE, SELFISHNESS**) abides in God, and God in him." **1 JOHN 4:16**

“God Loves Us”

S T I R I P S S W W U R N S L
E I B Z R Q Y H L F F C G Z S
E W D Z O D Y M Z S A G Z F V
N O K K I J O B D D E T J P R
G Z D E V O L E B L I D H G C
Z K E C A Q F S B W R R I E M
K K F T S R V V P Y B O P B R
N Q J I N I B E V O L G W K A
O R E H T O N A E N O Y N B L
W J T O R L S O J P G F B B B
S B N O S S V J H Z Y I O W B
C B E T P T M J G W P T F C N
C O N F E S S E S B Y S L B R
C R J A I F A E E M B E L M O
Q E V I L A Z A U W D T M D B

ABIDES	KNOWS	SEEN
BELOVED	LIVE	SON
BORN	LOVE	SPIRIT
CONFESSES	ONE ANOTHER	TESTIFY
FATHER	SAVIOR	WORLD
GOD		



QUESTIONS FOR TEACHER TO CONSIDER IN PREPARATION OF TEACHING LESSON:

1. Describe someone you know who excels at loving people. How will you follow his or her example?
2. Some may view church attendance and Bible study as good measures of a person's walk with God. What problems can that type of think create? Why is love a better test to discern authentic Christianity?
3. In what ways might you face (or have you faced) ridicule or social rebuff while expressing love as Jesus expects? How do you (or did you) react to such attacks?
4. Verse 20 implies that "seeing" a person makes it easier to love him or her. Why is this true? What are some things that we can "see" in others that can help us love them?
5. What was a time when it was difficult for you to love someone? What helped you to express loving action despite the difficulty?

Lesson Summarized by:

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