

God's Plan: 2 LOVE Us 4-Ever!



So...now
what do
I do?

You can live as
God's child. He will
help you show His
love to others.

Bible Story

God's Love Is Forever!

Mark 16:15; Acts 1:1–11; 2:4,41–47; 4:32–35

Bible Verse

Live as Jesus did. Show love to others.
(See Ephesians 5:2.)

Session Goals

1. PARTICIPATE in telling a story about early Christians sharing and helping.
2. TELL ways to show love like Jesus by helping and sharing with others.
3. ASK God for help to show love to friends and family.

Spark Principle—Chain Reaction

A series of events caused by the one before. Sharing God's love with others can start a chain reaction and go on and on and on!



Heart

Hearts stand for love! Whenever we see a heart, we remember that God loves us! When we become part of God's family at Baptism, He promises to help us. God will help us show love to our friends and family.

Today's Tip

The last day of VBS can make us start to feel like horses headed for the barn—the end is in sight! But choose ahead of time to make focusing on your little people your first priority. You may not see some of them again—so be the living love of Jesus to them in ways they will remember and understand!

Heart Prep

Salvation is a complete and finished work of God for us. Jesus on the cross said, "It is finished!" (John 19:30). God's plan was complete and finished in that moment! When we believe, we receive a new life, a new heart. We are made new creatures; we are given a new mind and new service opens before us. The new commandment of love is the only commandment of our new life.

Probably if you or I had gone through as much as Jesus did to make salvation possible, we would have been tempted to assure the spread of our work by some supernatural means. But when the Lord Jesus Christ went back to heaven, He left only a group of people to continue His work—a people called out of the world for His glory.

The Church is the organization that the Lord has ordained to carry on His work. The whole process of evangelization boils down to one point: Someone must tell of the love of Christ for others to know about it. You and I are the only messengers that He has. Throughout all of history, the Lord's people have with varying degrees of steadfastness continued this work. Now it is our turn.

The Lord promised that the gates of hell will not prevail against His Church. Instead, it will triumph until Christ returns. You and I can triumph, too, if we will let the Lord work in our lives to make us examples of the way in which members of the Body of Christ should act, both toward Him and toward others.

Daily Recap

At the end of each session, take time to reflect on what happened. Use these questions as a guide:

- ⦿ What did you learn this week? What do you think the kids learned this week?
- ⦿ Thank God for the things that happened this week—the best, the worst, the strangest and the most laughable.
- ⦿ Ask the Holy Spirit to help you and your children show God's love to others every day.

Bible Learning Activities (40–45 minutes)

Science Center Wind Wonders!

Materials

- * drinking straws or small cardboard tubes
- * small objects of various weights (marbles, paper scraps, feathers, toys, pencils, etc.)
- * blow-dryer with cool setting

Preparation: Set out items on a table. Plug in dryer.

Procedure: **We're going to learn about the wind!**

Let's pretend we're tall trees. Lead children to raise arms like branches and mimic your actions. **How would our leaves move when the wind blows gently? How would we move when the wind blows very hard? What other things do we see the wind move?** (Flags. Boats. Papers.)

We can make the wind blow inside, too. Give each child a straw or tube. Show children how to blow through straws and tubes so their "wind" moves small objects. **Can you move this (toy car) by blowing through your straw?** Talk about which objects are heavy, which are light, how easily they move and why. Then turn blow-dryer on cool setting. Show children how the "wind" it makes can move heavier objects.



Art Center House of Love!

Materials

- * scissors
- * markers and crayons
- * stickers or magazine pictures
- * glue sticks

For Each Child

- * large sheet of colored construction paper

Preparation: Fold each sheet of construction paper in half. Cut off corners next to fold at an angle to look like a roof. Cut an upside-down L in the center of the front half of paper and fold back to make a door.



Procedure: **Today, let's make pictures of ways we can share and show Jesus' love in our houses.** Give each child a prepared "house." Write child's name, if needed. Children open papers and draw a picture of themselves sharing or showing kindness to a friend or family member. Children then decorate house, drawing, adding stickers or gluing on magazine pictures for details.

Kindergarten Option: Challenge children to draw two floors inside their houses and draw more than one picture. With help from an adult, they may cut out windows in their houses.

Talk About

Use these discussion ideas with any of the Bible Learning Activities.

- ☉ In our Bible story today, we're going to learn about how God's family grew. They showed love to each other. Our Scripture Verse tells us to live as Jesus did. Show love to others.
- ☉ I see (Deon) helping (Jack) catch his feather. Thank you! God wants us to show love as Jesus did. When we help our friends, we are showing love. When we share and are kind, we show Jesus' love.
- ☉ Thank You, God, for loving us. Please help us show love as Jesus did. In Jesus' name, amen.

Dramatic Play Center Clean Lab!

Materials

- * Lab Report Page (p. 54)
- * dishpan half-filled with water
- * broom and other cleaning supplies
- * clipboard and pencil
- * small handheld vacuum
- * dress-up clothes and props (lab coats, safety glasses, gloves, plastic test tubes and beakers, magnets and magnetic toys, plastic jars and cups, clipboards, etc.)

Preparation: Place cleaning supplies together. Photocopy Lab Report page and place on a clipboard with pencil.

Procedure: Children dress in clothing and use props to act out cleaning up the lab. **One important thing lab assistants do is keep things clean. If their tools get dirty, they don't work well.** Children wash plasticware, sweep and vacuum, spray and clean surfaces, etc. **You are all doing a good job of helping each other. Helping each other is a way we can show Jesus' love!** Children "write" or draw the results on the Lab Report page.



Kindergarten Option: Challenge children to take turns using the broom. Help them learn how to make effective sweeping strokes.

Block Center Mountain High!

Materials

- * Stand-Up Activity Cards from *Posters & Props*
- * brown or tan towels
- * small toy animal and people figures
- * blocks in a variety of shapes and sizes

Preparation: Place Session 5 Stand-Up Activity Cards in Block Center area. Lay out brown or tan towels.

Procedure: Children use materials for free play. **Let's use our blocks to make some mountains.** Children build mountains and then cover them with towels. Guide children to use Session 5 Stand-Up Activity Cards to act out the story as you retell it.



Bible Story Time (15–20 minutes)

Materials

- * Bible
- * Music & More CD and player
- * "God's Love Is Forever!" Session 5 Big Book from *Posters & Props*
- * Session 5 Daily Plan Pennant
- * Sparky the Lab Dog puppet
- * a large bag holding a sticker for each child

Song: Play "God's Plan 4 U" from CD. Sing song once or twice with children, clapping or making some of the song motions. **It's fun to be here in Sparky's Lab. Oh, look! Here's my lab partner!**

Puppet Script: Use a Labrador puppet or other puppet to perform the following script.

Sparky: (Sparky *enters*.) **Rowf! Hello, my fellow lab assistants! Today is our last day in the lab. If you want to tell me what you liked doing this week, pat your head.** (Sparky *nods*; child *tells*.) **I am GLAD you had fun. I had fun, too. In fact, I have something I want to SHARE with you . . .** (Sparky *rummages in bag, pulls out stickers and distributes one to each child*.) **One way we show love is by giving and sharing. That's why I wanted to share my stickers with you and you and you!** (Sparky *indicates each child*.) **It was good to learn along with you this week! But now, it's time to go. I am GLAD you came to Sparky's Lab. Good-bye! ROWF!** (Sparky *exits*.)



Rhyme: **Today we are going to learn about ways we can show Jesus' love to others.** Lead children in the following action rhyme:

God shows His love to me.



I show God's love to you



By (sharing blocks and toys)



And speaking kindly, too.



Invite children to suggest other phrases for words in parentheses, such as "taking turns with you" and "letting you choose first." You may also sing these words to the tune of "Farmer in the Dell."

Activity Sharing: **Tell me some things that the wind can do. Who made a house picture? I saw (Shane) and (Zea) helping clean up our lab. Many people were showing love today!**

Scripture Verse: Hold Bible open. **Today's Scripture verse tells us to live as Jesus did. Show love to others.** (See Ephesians 5:2.) **When we show love to others, God's love goes on and on and on! Let's march to these words.** March in rhythm with the words as you repeat verse several times with children.

Song: Play "God So Loved the World" from CD. Lead children in singing and doing motions.

Prayer: **What are some ways we can show love?** Children respond. **Let's thank God that we can show love like Jesus' love. Pray, Dear God, thank You for helping us to . . .** (Children repeat things they named.) **Thank You for loving us. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Transition: Hold up Bible. **What are some things you like to do with your friends?** (Children respond.) **Jesus spent lots of time with His friends. Listen to find out some of the special things Jesus' friends did with one another.**

Bible Story: God's Love Is Forever!

Hold Bible open to Acts 1. Expressively tell the story, inviting children to do actions in **red**. Use Session 5 "God's Love Is Forever!" **Big Book** as a visual aid to tell or review today's story.

Jesus Goes to Heaven

We are the friends of Jesus.
When He died, we all were SAD. **Make sad face.**
But now we know that He's alive—
We're very, very GLAD! **Clap and cheer.**

We're walking here with Jesus **Walk in place.**
Up a mountainside today.
We're listening as He tells us **Cup hand to ear.**
That He's going to go away.

We're standing and we're watching **Shade eyes.**
As He goes up in the sky.
He disappears into the clouds
Before our very eyes! **Look surprised.**

He's going back to heaven! **Point up.**
But one day He'll come again.
He wants us all to share His love
With others until then. **Point to others.**

Telling Others

We're telling everybody **Cup hands to mouth.**
All around us, "Do you know?
Jesus died but lives again
Because God loves you so!" **Hug self.**

And those who hear this great good news
Tell others all around, **Cup hands to mouth.**
And soon, the news is spreading
All across our busy town. **Spread arms.**

We like to be together **Nod.**
As we pray and talk and eat. **Pretend to eat.**
And the crowds are getting bigger **Spread arms.**
In the places where we meet.



Showing Love

Not everyone has plenty
Of the things they need to live, **Shake head no.**
And so we're sharing what we have.
We're learning how to give. **Hand out imaginary items.**

I can share my piece of bread.
There's quite enough for two! **Pretend to break bread.**
I give away my extra shirt.
It sure looks good on you! **Smile and nod.**

And all of us who have enough—**Point to self.**
Moms, sisters, dads and brothers—
Are selling what we do not need
To share it with the others. **Show open palms.**

We help each other when we're sick
Or when we're feeling sad. **Make sad face.**
And when we're showing Jesus' love,
It makes us VERY glad! **Make happy face.**

Yes, we're the friends of Jesus!
We want everyone to know **Spread arms wide.**
That we're sharing and we're showing love
Just as Jesus showed. **Hug self.**

Conclusion

God's family shows love just as Jesus did. We can, too! God promises to love us and to help us show love to others. Show Daily Plan Pennant. **These words say that God's plan is to love us forever!**

This is our Bible verse: Live as Jesus did. Show love to others. (See Ephesians 5:2.) March in rhythm with the words as you repeat verse several times with children. **God will help us show love like Jesus' love if we ask Him.**

Lead children in prayer. **Dear God, thank You that You promise to help us love others. Please help us share, give and listen to others. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Application (10 minutes)

Materials

- * Bible
- * "God's Love Is Forever!" Session 5 Big Book from *Posters & Props*
- * Session 5 *Sparky's Lab Fun Pages*
- * crayons or markers

Bible Story Review: Leader and helpers sit at tables with children. Distribute Session 5 *Sparky's Lab Fun Pages* and crayons or markers. As children look at the pictures on their *Fun Pages*, review the story by showing the "God's Love Is Forever!" **Big Book** as you ask the following:

- Who saw Jesus after He came back to life? (Lots of people. His friends.)
- What did Jesus tell us to do? (Show love as He showed to us.)
- How did the people in our story show Jesus' love? (Told others. Shared food. Shared clothes. Gave money.)
- God tells us that He will help His family to show love like Jesus' love. Tell me the name of one person you can show love to today! Children respond.

Life Application: Guide children to turn over the page. Point to Bible verse on the page. March in rhythm with the words as you repeat verse several times with children.

- Children complete "Share His Love!" activity. **Each of these children is doing something to show love. What is one way you can show love today?** Children respond.
- Our Bible verse tells us to live as Jesus did and show love to others.** Describe a way someone has shown the love of Jesus to you. Then tell a way you have shown Jesus' love to someone.

Lead children in a prayer activity. **If you want to ask God to help you show love, march in place! When I touch your shoulder, stop marching. Say, "God, please help me show Your love!"** Children take turns to repeat prayer as you touch their shoulders. Conclude, **Dear God, we are glad You will help us show love like Jesus. We want to love people as He did. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Next Step Tip

You've had fun getting to know new children. Now, make full use of that opportunity! Before the day is over, be sure that you or another leader has complete contact information for each child who is a visitor to your VBS. That way, you can visit each new child's family! Bring a photo to the family of the child's activities at VBS, along with information about your church and an invitation to the next children's activity. See this as the beginning of new ministry to another family!



Bonus Learning Centers

Recreation Game Bubble Time!

(10–15 minutes)

Materials

- * bubble solution in shallow containers
- * bucket of water
- * bubble wands and other items with holes to make bubbles (colanders, plastic berry baskets, etc.)

Preparation: Place all items in an open area.

Procedure: **Let's blow lots of bubbles today!** Children blow bubbles, experimenting with different materials and methods they can use to make bubbles.



Craft GP4U=J! Cube (15–20 minutes)

Children make “GP4U=J! Cube” craft. For complete craft instructions, see *MasterMind Crafts*.



Snack Whole-Heart Pizzas (10–20 minutes)

Materials

- * heart-shaped cookie cutters
- * cheese slices
- * English muffins
- * paper plates
- * pasta sauce
- * napkins
- * toaster oven or broiler



Preparation: Use cookie cutters to remove heart shapes from cheese slices.

Halve muffins and place each half on a paper plate; cover each muffin half with pasta sauce.

Procedure: Children wash and dry hands. Give each child a napkin and a prepared muffin on a plate. Children choose to lay either heart shapes on their pizzas or the cheese slice with the heart cut out. Adults place pizzas in a toaster oven or under a broiler until muffin is heated and cheese is browned.

Talk About: **What shape is on your pizza? (Heart.) It is not a broken heart. It is a whole heart! Whenever we see a heart shape, it can remind us that God loves us! When we become part of God's family, He promises to help us. God will help us show love like Jesus' love to our family and friends.**

Pray, thanking God for the snack before eating. After eating, children dispose of plates and napkins.

Daily Wrap-Up (10–15 minutes)

At the end of the session, gather children together for a few moments. Review the day's events, the Scripture Verse and the Q&A. See **Transition Tips** on page 10 for fun ideas that will help make a smooth ending to a fantastic session!