

Theme: Loving God & Loving Others

4 week series



These sessions are made to be used alongside the Children's Ripple Resources developed by Jill Hamilton, Diocesan Children's Worker.

Session 1: God Loves Us

Memory Verse

Why not discuss the memory verse with your young people?

Ask them what the verse says about:

1. God?
2. Jesus?
3. Us?

Discussion Activity

Which of the quotes below do you think expresses the meaning best of the story of the Prodigal Son and why?

"Never cease loving a person, and never give up hope for him, for even the prodigal son who had fallen most low, could still be saved; the bitterest enemy and also he who was your friend could again be your friend; love that has grown cold can kindle." Søren Kierkegaard

"He came to put a harlot above a Pharisee, a penitent robber above a High Priest, and a prodigal son above his exemplary brother" Fulton J. Sheen

"The back door beckons to a prodigal son." Michael Davidow

"The difference between grace and mercy? Mercy gave the prodigal son a second chance. Grace gave him a feast." Max Lucado

Activity: A love letter from God

As we think about how God loves us, why not get your youth to write a letter to themselves from God. They can contemplate the truths of how God shows himself in the parable of the Prodigal son or through the truths they know in the gospel. You can let them take it home or post it to them a month later as a helpful reminder of God's truth.

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Session 2: Loving God

Memory Verse Follow Up

Ask your young people if they have had any more thoughts about the memory verse since your last week? Have they learnt it already? if so you might want to ask them to lead this part of the session with the children.

Discussion Questions

1. What do you think loving God looks like? Does it look like an activity? A gathering? A thought?
2. What does the experience of Mary & Martha teach us about following Jesus? Does this mean we stop going to school to listen to Jesus?
3. What can their experience teach us about variations or differences in how believers experience God? Have you ever seen people experience God in different ways?
4. Do you think preparing a big banquet for someone could still look like loving them? If so, what would you do differently to Martha?

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Session 3: Loving Each Other

Discussion Questions

1. Can you think of a parallel of how you would tell this story with references that apply in today's world? We know that the Jews & the Samaritans were opposed to one another.
2. Have you ever been shown love by someone out of the ordinary or who you didn't expect?

Challenge Activity

What could your young people do this week to show their love for someone else?

Set them a challenge to commit to one action/encouragement/event that would express & show God's love to that person. Get them to plan it, commit it and as a group pray for them in the week ahead.

You might want to show this video to get them to think big!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7VJsyEtwAUy>

Together you could do a **Post-It Project**. It involves gathering your group together & writing as many positive encouragements on post-its. Then pop them all around your schools locally! As the students arrive in on a morning there are encouragement's everywhere! You could pop one each on their lockers or on school desks.

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Session 4: Love is Greatest

Videos:

Why not get your young people to watch a short video considering love.

Do you know you are loved?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3csWpwD9ZMg>

What does love look like to you?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZpR84MoyjnY>

Activity

From your knowledge and understanding of the Bible, think of as many examples of God being loving as you can. List them all out!

Prayer

Pray together using LOVE as an acronym to base your prayers on. You might want to use the suggestion for ideas below or get your young people to write a prayer together.

You could pray:

L - learn to be more like Jesus

O - open to your Holy Spirit

V - valuing others

E - encouraged by the promises in the Bible