

TAKE LOVE COLLECTION



TAKE LOVE BIBLE STUDY 2018

LOVE IN ACTION

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GETTING STARTED

1. What does it mean to you when someone says "I love you"? What do you expect from someone who says this?

This is probably the one thing everyone in our world wants to hear. When someone says "I love you," it:

- brings comfort and security
- makes us feel valued and dignified
- allows us to be vulnerable and honest
- makes us feel safe going into the future trusting everything will be alright.

We expect people who say this to us to treat us kindly and with respect.

However, be sensitive to the fact that your kids might have had negative experiences and low expectations when someone says "I love you."

2. Have you ever been let down by someone who told you they loved you? What made that experience painful or hard?

No one is perfect at loving others (except Jesus of course). When people say "I love you" you expect them to act in a certain way but sometimes people have failed to do this. For example:

- people who didn't care for you
- parents who failed to follow through on their promises
- siblings who didn't defend you
- friends who weren't there for you.

What is common in all of these situations is that their love was empty, all words and no action which might have left you feeling sad and isolated.

3. Have you heard someone say "God loves you!"? Did you believe them? Why/why not?

Maybe give your students time to write down their answer if you think it might be difficult to share in front of the whole group.

Your youth may have positive or negative experiences. Both experiences will be determined by whether or not they see a consistency between God's promise to love us and his actions.

When we look around us we see a world that so often fails to act on the promise of love. Is God's love the same? When God says "I love you," are these just empty words or does he show his love in action? This is the question we're going to investigate in this study.

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taking the love of God to anyone who needs it

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DIGGING DEEPER

4. Read the following passages and discuss whether or not God kept his word to his people?

Person	God's word	God's action
Moses	Exodus 3:7-8	Exodus 14:21-31
David	1 Samuel 16:1, 12-13	2 Samuel 5:4
Jesus	Genesis 3:14-15 2 Samuel 7:12-16 Isaiah 53:3-6 Micah 5:2	Luke 2:10-11 John 1:14 John 19:28-37 John 20:19-20

Above are examples of God keeping his word. Feel free to use as many of these as time allows but make it a priority to look at Jesus.

5. How was God active in each of these scenarios?

God was active in each of these passages. God delivered his people out of slavery in Egypt. God made David king when the odds were stacked against him. God himself came into the world to save his people.

The great hope and assurance we have as Christians is that God keeps his word. John 3:16 says "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." When God says "I love you", it is, always has, and always will be shown in his actions.

In Jesus, God not only demonstrates his love for us, he sets the standard for how we should love others.

Read 1 John 3:16-18

6. What does verse 16 say that love is?

The ultimate promise fulfilled and ultimate act of love is Jesus laying his life down for us, so that we could have life ourselves. His death on a cross and resurrection from the grave completely overcame the power of sin and death. Now we can have a personal relationship with God that extends from now into eternity.

7. What response in verse 16 are we told to have?

We ought to lay down our lives for others. We are to demonstrate love in action. This requires sacrifice.

8. Verse 17 immediately gives us an example of what a life of love in action looks like. In what ways does helping those in need reflect the love that Christ showed us?

In the same way that Christ sacrificed himself so that we may have life, we too should be willing to give of our money, time, clothing and food to help those in need. Putting the lives of others before our own is evidence of the life-changing work of the gospel and the love of God at work within us.

We also demonstrate the eternal active love of God in the gospel. As we feed the hungry, clothe the naked and give to the poor, such actions point towards the one

who gives life, restores our humanity and offers hope for eternity. If we love because he first loved us (1 John 4:19) then all our loving action has an eternal direction, pointing people to Jesus.

9. Why is it so important to love others? Consider the question John asks in verse 17.

The use of this question emphasises how important it is to link love and action. Life-giving love is the evidence that we belong to Jesus. If we're not willing to give food to those in need, are we really willing to lay down our lives for them?

10. Why does John appeal to us to not love in "words or speech, but with actions and in truth"?

Our actions prove that our love is genuine (true).

11. Are words bad?

Loving people with words is not bad. In fact God commanded us to love people with words when he said to share the gospel and go and make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19-20).

Words are not bad, but empty words are. If we have truly been transformed by the gospel we will demonstrate our love for others both in the way we speak and the way we act (just as Jesus did).

12. How should we use our words?

Our words should always be followed through in our actions. This is how we know the love of God is at work within us. This is how we truly demonstrate the life-giving love of Jesus Christ.

REFLECTION

When God said "I love you", they were not empty words. He sent us Jesus. Now God's love continues to be expressed in the life of his people who take love to a world in desperate need of it. As we demonstrate sacrificial love to those around us we point others to the God who always keeps his word.

13. Do your words match up with your actions? Do you say you love Jesus but sometimes fail to show the love of Jesus to others?

14. How can you love others sacrificially?

15. How can you sacrificially love your

- community
- friends
- church
- family

in a way that shows the love of God is in you?

16. Who is someone you could tell the gospel to and how could you love that person in a practical way?

Spend some time praying for all those you know of who are in need and ask God to give you opportunities to love them in a way that will bring life.