

# **GOD IS LOVE**

**BIBLE PASSAGE:** 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

**STORY POINT:** God has shown us perfect love through the life and death of Jesus and we will be able to show love as our lives bear fruit by the Holy Spirit.

## **BIBLE STORY**

When we trust Jesus and live with him he helps us be these things: loving, kind, joyful, patient, gentle, peaceful, good, faithfulness, and have self control. When we say fruits, we aren't talking about the fruit we eat, we are talking about the characteristics we have.

God created us to love Him and love others. Jesus was the greatest example of love.

Jesus told us in Mark 12:30-31 that the most important commandment is to love God and to love others.

The Bible tells us that love is from God and that God is love. The neat thing about God's love is that it's not a feeling to him, he can't fall out of love with us. He loves us even when we're not loveable and when we're grumpy or doing bad things. He loves all of us no matter what.

So what does love look like? 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 talks about what love looks like. Love is:

- Patient
- Kind
- Does not envy
- Does not boast
- Is not proud
- Does not dishonor others
- Is not self seeking (or selfish)
- Is not easily angered
- Does not keep a record of wrongs
- Does not delight in evil
- Rejoices with the truth
- Always protects
- Always trusts
- Always hopes
- Always perseveres

We can see that this love is very different from the mushy kissy stuff we see on TV or even in the world around us. Jesus is our perfect example of how to love God and love others. In fact, you can replace the word "love" with "Jesus" and it would be accurate! Jesus is patient, Jesus is kind, Jesus does not envy, and so on. And he showed us his love so clearly in his crucifixion. He died for us while we were still living for ourselves out of love and obedience to God and out of love for us. The Bible says in Romans 5:8 "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

The tricky part is loving others like God loves us. This doesn't have to be mushy love, just see people as God would see them. Pretend for a day that you have special glasses on and that everyone you see you love just because God loves them.

I'm sure you'll run into somebody you don't think deserves your love or you just don't want to love at all, but God loves them and if we love God we are supposed to love them too.

Who exactly are we supposed to love?

- \*Love God

- \*Love yourself

- \*Love your family

- \*Love your friends

- \*Love your neighbors

- \*Love your enemies

What are some ways that we can love God? It's not as hard as you think. How do you show others you love them? We talk to them, try to get to know them better, listen to them, and sometimes we do things for them. We can do all these things for God. We might not be able to touch Him but we can pray to God, read the Bible and learn about him, obey Him and do the things he asks us to do.

We are also supposed to love ourselves. This doesn't mean that we should think we're better than everybody else. We get this from a Bible verse that says do for others as you would want them to do for you. This means we should take care of ourselves. Things like looking before we cross the street, eating our vegetables, and getting a good sleep at night are ways we can do that. Remember that if you're a Christian the Spirit of God lives inside us and he wants us to treat ourselves with respect.

We are supposed to love our family. Even though we get mad at our parents sometimes because they don't let us do something, we still love them. Just remember that you are part of a family and nothing will ever change that. You should always be able to depend on each other and they'll be the ones to tell you the truth before anyone else.

Loving our friends should be easy because we pick the people we want to be friends with. The thing is, sometimes when we disagree with our friends we think we don't have to be their friend anymore, but God's love would ask us to forgive them and try to work things out.

Do you know who your neighbors are? Neighbors aren't just the people who live next to you but are everyone you might run into. I don't want to encourage you to run up to strangers but think about helping others with love. By helping an elderly lady who needs help with her groceries, returning a wallet found on the street, or even praying for people that are in trouble are just a few ways to love a neighbor.

I hope you don't have any enemies but there will always be someone that you don't get along with or believes the opposite of what you believe. There are many, many people that don't believe in God and that purposely do things that hurt him and God still loves them. Loving people that bully us or our friends seems impossible, but it's not with God's help. By asking for God's help we will be able to love our enemies easier when we just can't do it on our own.

*Christ Connection: Jesus is the perfect example of love in that while we were still sinners, he died for us. We are called to love God and love others.*