
“What is True Love?”

Children’s Sermon Object Lesson for Valentine’s Day from
Matthew 5:21-37 and John 15:12-17



Children’s Message: What is true love?

Loving others and loving God

Main Objective: Children often hear about and talk about love from early ages, but they might not always understand what it means, or that there’s more to love than hearts and goodnight kisses. This message briefly explores some of the aspects of love, in order to communicate to kids how we can love each other, even when we don’t feel like it. Most essentially, God’s love should mean more to us than anything else and should also give us hope and encouragement.

Law/Gospel Theme: Jesus is the ultimate example of love. He gave His life up for us. Because of that, we know that we should listen to His words and follow them. We want to share His love with one another, even when it is difficult. “We love because He first loved us”! (1 John 4:19)

Optional Lesson Props & Materials: Valentine’s treats or cards, heart-shaped items or candies

Bible Passage: Matthew 5:21-37; John 15:12-17

More Valentine’s Day Lessons and Crafts

- See all our [Sunday School Lessons for Valentine’s Day](#)
- Download our [Love themed Valentine coloring pages \(Christian Themes\)](#)
- Compare the [Love Your Neighbor \(Luke 10 – Good Samaritan\) Bible Lesson](#)
- Download our [Heart Craft ideas for Valentine’s Day](#)
- Get more [Valentine’s Ideas from Sunday School Works](#)

Message Note: As with most messages, the details of how you choose to communicate this are adaptable and should cater to timing as well as to your audience and student needs. In this instance, the idea of love is reviewed in the context of Valentine’s Day, but this message may not coincide with the holiday directly, and any “love item” might work. Use what best suits you and those you teach.



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Valentine's Day Children's Sermon & Object Lesson: What is True Love?

Hello, children of God! You know, there's something I have been noticing around a lot lately...I don't know if you have seen it, but there sure are a lot of heart-shaped and "love"-related items in stores. Maybe it has something to do with this whole Valentine's Day thing?

I have to say, I am kind of over it. I mean, look... *(If you have them, hold up items as you describe)* it's one thing to have these cute little cards...And then you get candies, or these heart-shaped chocolates...and then there's these conversation hearts with weird phrases on them...does anyone actually even eat those? And there's these other heart-shaped candies, too!

It's everywhere! Do people even realize that this is not the actual shape of your heart? This is out of control! Oh, and don't even get me started on the whole mushy "love is in the air" idea. It's on commercials and posters and in songs. Not just on Valentine's Day, either—the Hallmark channel has it year-round!

Well, you may or may not agree with me that all the romance can be overwhelming. But did you know that there are other kinds of love? It's true! There's love you have for your friends, love for your family, love for your pets...even love for pizza or sports! God views love as a very important thing in our lives. Jesus talks a lot about it, in fact, and how we need to love one another.

In fact, He talked about love in this special sermon from today's Gospel lesson. Jesus was teaching a bunch of people, and He shared with them some things about love, some of which might have been a little shocking.

He said that if you were fighting with someone, you need to make peace, even before you go to church! Friendship and conflict resolution are so significant to God that He wants us to take care of arguments in order to authentically worship. In this



sermon, Jesus also spoke about our heart intentions. He said that hating someone was as bad as killing them!

Wow, that's pretty serious. I mean, I certainly never murdered anyone, but to think that hating them is just as bad... See, Jesus want us to be genuine. We can't just say we love God and then treat His beloved creation poorly. We demonstrate His love by our kindness to each other. And it isn't always easy! Jesus even said that we should love people who are not nice to us, and are even enemies!

That's a lot more challenging than acting kind to our friends. How can we even do that? The truth is we can't do it on our own...but with GOD's help, anything is possible! Even if you don't feel like praying for them, you ask God to help you pray.

He knows what love is, because He loves us. That's the very best kind of love. It's called "unconditional" love, because He loves us no matter what we do. Even if we don't love Him back, He still cares for each and every one of us! He loves us so much, He sent Jesus to DIE for us. That's what love looks like. We can take comfort and hope in that, and we can know that He will help us when we ask. Why don't we pray for help with that now? (*Optional: after prayer, hand each child a heart-shaped treat or candy.*)

Children's Prayer Moment

Dear God,
Help us to understand what love means
Help us practice it with those around us
Even when it is difficult, and even when we don't feel like it!
You are so amazing.
Thank you for the love of Jesus
We love you, God!
In Jesus's name, Amen!



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Matthew 5:21-37 New International Version (NIV)

²¹ “You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’ ²² But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, ‘Raca,’ is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell.

²³ “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.

²⁵ “Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still together on the way, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. ²⁶ Truly I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

²⁷ “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ ²⁸ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹ If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. ³⁰ And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

³¹ “It has been said, ‘Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.’ ³² But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

³³ “Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not break your oath, but fulfill to the Lord the vows you have made.’ ³⁴ But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all: either by heaven, for it is God’s throne; ³⁵ or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. ³⁶ And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. ³⁷ All you need to say is simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything beyond this comes from the evil one. [Matthew 5:21-37 NIV](#)



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