



Love is Spelled G-O-D

THEME: Godly Love

BIBLE STORY: Jesus Washes His Disciples Feet (*John 13:1-15*)

MATERIALS NEEDED

OPENING GAME

- A bag of conversation candy hearts
- One plastic cup per family

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

- A shoebox or another cardboard box
- A piece of silverware
- A towel
- A water bottle
- A bucket or basin
- A flip flop or sandal

GAMES

- Four index cards per family
- A marker
- A plastic bowl
- A bag of assorted wrapped candy
- A pair of mittens per family

CRAFT

- Skeins of yarn in different colors, count two or three skeins for every 10 people
- Paper plates, one per person
- [Plastic lacing needles, one per person](#)
- A pencil, one per person
- A pair of scissors
- Colored markers, one pack per family

90-MINUTE SESSION OUTLINE

- [Introduction and Opening Game](#) (10 minutes)
- [Family Craft](#) (30 minutes)
- [Games](#) (20 minutes)
- [Devotional Thought](#) (10 minutes)
- [Family Discussion](#) (15 minutes)
- [Closing Prayer and Dismissal](#) (5 minutes)

Introduction and Opening Game

(10 MINUTES)

Introduction

Welcome to family fun night! We are so glad you're here. Our goals are to help your family have fun together and to learn about God's love and his word.

Tonight, our theme is LOVE! We are going to look at a Bible story where Jesus demonstrates godly love to his friends. Let's read it now.

Read John 13:1-15.

After this, Jesus said to his disciples: "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (John 13:34-35, NIV).

We'll return to this story later, but right now let's get things rolling with a family competition!

Opening Game: Tower of Hearts

Give each family the same number of candy hearts in a plastic cup. Each family will have three minutes to construct a candy heart tower without it toppling over. The family that constructs the tallest tower after the three minutes are up wins!

Craft Activity

(30 MINUTES)

Heart String Art

Preparation:

Give each person a plastic lacing needle, paper plate and a string of yarn, approximately one meter long.

Instructions:

1. With a pencil, lightly trace a heart in the center of the paper plate.
2. Using the sharp end of the pencil, poke small holes all around the edge of the outlined heart.
3. Erase the pencil outline gently. What will remain is a heart outline created by the holes.
4. Thread yarn on a needle
5. With yarn threaded on the needle, weave in and out of the holes. Weave across the heart to create artistic patterns.
6. When finished, tie the last end of the yarn in a small knot on the back side of the paper plate.
7. Draw a border around the edge of the paper plate with a marker in any color.

Games

(20 MINUTES)

L-O-V-E Shuffle Race

Setup: Create one L-O-V-E shuffle card set per family. One set = 4 index cards with the letters L O V E spelled out, one per card. Each family will form one team. You will need one L-O-V-E Shuffle Card set per family prepared in advance. Mix up all the letters from every set together and place them face down randomly all over the floor over your playing area.

How to play: The first player from each team runs to find one of the letters from the word to spell out L-O-V-E. They should find the L first, then the O, and so on in order. Each player can turn over one letter per turn. If it's not the correct letter, they need to turn it back over and run back to their team, tagging the next player to go. If they find the correct letter, they take it back to their team and tag off to the next player in

line. Have each family lay the letters out on the ground as they collect each one and begin to spell out the word L-O-V-E. Play continues like this until all teams complete the word.

Mitten Unwrap Relay

Setup: Give each family a plastic bowl with wrapped candy, at least one piece per participant. (Note: Make sure that all the bowls have the same number of wrapped candies.)

How to play: The first player from each family must put on the pair of mittens and unwrap one candy from the bowl. Then, the second player will take the mittens and unwrap another piece. Play should continue until all the candies have been unwrapped. The winning family is the first to unwrap all the candies.

Devotional Thought

(10 MINUTES)

How has someone demonstrated love for you? Turn and talk about this with your family.

Allow each family to talk amongst themselves.

We started our time together today with a story about Jesus demonstrating his love for his disciples.

Let's hear the story again in a different way.

Place the following items into a mystery box. Keep the objects hidden from view until called for.

- A piece of silverware
- A towel
- A water bottle
- A bucket or basin
- A flip flop or sandal

Jesus gathered all his disciples together in an upper room to eat one last meal together because Jesus was about to say goodbye to his friends, die on a cross and return to his Father in heaven.

Pick up the piece of silverware from the box and show it to the group.

Before Jesus and his disciples sat down for the meal, Jesus got up, took off his robe, and tied a towel

around his waist.

Pick up the towel from the box and show it to the group. If the towel is long enough, tie it to your waist.

Jesus's disciples were shocked by this. At that time, foot-washing was a task that only the servants would do. Usually disciples were expected to serve their teachers, but Jesus beat them to it!

Explain how Jesus became a servant to his disciples.

Jesus began to pour water into a basin...

Pull out the basin and the water bottle from the box and begin to pour water from the water bottle into the basin.

...and he knelt low to remove the sandals from the feet of his disciples.

Pick up the sandal from the box and show it to the group.

After removing the sandals from his disciples' feet, Jesus placed their feet into the basin, poured water over their feet and dried them on the towel that was wrapped around his waist.

Explain how the disciples feet would have been dirty, messy and stinky because they walked in sandals as they followed Jesus.

This act of service made Peter, one of Jesus's disciples, very uncomfortable. When Jesus came to wash Peter's feet, Peter moved his feet away, exclaiming: "Jesus, you'll never wash my dirty, grimy feet...ever! I won't let you. You're my king!"

But Jesus replied to him, "Peter, if I don't wash your feet, you won't really belong to me."

Peter responded, "Fine Lord, but don't wash my feet, wash my hands and my head also!"

So Jesus answered, "People who have bathed and are clean all over only need their feet washed."

After Jesus washed all his disciples' feet and put his robe back on, he sat down again and said to his disciples: "Do you understand what I have done for you? You call me your teacher and Lord, and you should, because that is who I am. And if your Lord and teacher has washed your feet, you should do the

same for each other. I have set an example for you. You should do for each other exactly what I have done for you.”

After setting this example for his disciples, Jesus said to his disciples: “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

When we experience Jesus’s love like his disciples in today’s story, we receive a new command: to love others in the same way we’ve been loved by Jesus!

Here’s an example of what that might look like:

Place all the items back in the box and place it in front of one of the participants. Then, ask them to pass the box around to the others.

I hope you notice something as we pass this box around. Can you give away the box if you don’t first receive it?

Pause.

That’s right! We have to receive the box first before we can give it away. This is the new command we are given: Receive and experience Jesus’s love first, and then give it away and share that same love with others!

What are some things you notice about Jesus in this story?

Give the families some time to discuss, and then take their answers.

What are some things you notice about Peter and the disciples in this story?

Give the families some time to discuss, and then take their answers.

I also noticed that Peter was hesitant to receive Jesus’s great act of love. Peter could not imagine his Lord and king humbling himself by taking the lowest position, the position of a slave, to wash his feet. Little did Peter know that he was going to watch Jesus die on a cross and lay down his life for his friends. Here’s what I’d like us to remember from this story. Jesus demonstrates what true love looks like. Godly love is this kind of love:

Love is patient and kind.

Love is not selfish.

Love is not boastful or proud.

Love is not rude.

Love does not demand its own way.

Love is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged.

Love does not rejoice about wrongdoing but rejoices whenever the truth wins out.

Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.

(Adapted from 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, NLT).

For God is patient and kind.

God is not selfish.

God is not boastful or proud.

God is not rude.

God does not demand his own way.

God is not irritable, and he keeps no record of being wronged.

God does not rejoice about wrongdoing but rejoices whenever the truth wins out.

God's kind of love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance!

Let's pray. Lord Jesus, thank you for showing us what true love looks like. Help us to receive your love so that we might extend that same love to others, so proving that we do indeed belong to you! Amen.

Family Discussion

(15 MINUTES)

Distribute the family discussion guide and give the families time to discuss the questions there together.

Closing Prayer and Dismissal

(5 MINUTES)

Thank everyone for coming. Make any announcements about future family fun nights or other events at your church. Let the families know you love them and want to serve them. If anyone needs prayer, offer to pray for them.

Close the evening in prayer.

FAMILY DISCUSSION GUIDE

What are some of the good things that change can bring? How can change be challenging?

Read the story together again, and then answer the questions together. Be sure everyone has a chance to speak.

It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet. Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me." "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!" Jesus answered, "Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. (John 13:1-15, NLT).

To Discuss

- Retell the story in your own words.
- Why was what Jesus did so shocking?
- What was the example that Jesus set for his disciples?
- Why do you think Peter first refused to let Jesus wash his feet?
- How do we know that Jesus loved his disciples?
- What must we do first so that we can demonstrate this same kind of love to others?