

Life of Christ

A New Commandment

John 13:31-35

Younger Verse

Love one another. John 13:35 (NirV)

Older Verse

If you love one another, everyone will know you are my disciples. John 13:35 (NirV)

Bible Story

The following is a summary of the Bible story to help supplement your preparation. In your personal study time, use this summary as a guide, and make notes to help you remember your plans for the lesson. Please do NOT read to the children.

Do you remember what week or what night of the week our lesson from last week happened, when we talked about Jesus washing His disciples' feet? Well, Jesus ate with His disciples and washed their feet during the Passover week, on a Thursday night. Who remembers what Jesus has been trying to tell His disciples during the weeks before this one? He has been preparing them for His death.

In our lesson, Jesus is still in that upstairs room. Eleven of His twelve disciples are there. Judas has left to betray Jesus. They have eaten supper and Jesus has washed their feet. They are now around the table again and they are talking. Let me ask you a question. If you knew you were going away tomorrow and would never see your friends and family again, what would you tell them today? Would you just talk about the weather? Would you go out and buy new clothes? I don't think I would. I would want to spend the last minutes I had with the people I loved the most. I would tell them how much I loved them and try to remind them of things that I would never want them to forget! Well, if that is how I would feel, how much more did Jesus feel that way! Jesus knew that He would die the next day, on Friday. Jesus knew that He was going away and that His disciples couldn't be with Him. It was already dark outside and Jesus only had a few hours left. Jesus wanted to use these last hours to remind His disciples of some things.

So, what do you think Jesus was thinking about the most that evening? Do you think He was so afraid of dying that He could think of nothing else? Do you think He was trying to find Judas? Maybe He was just so ready to be back in heaven with God that He did not care what else happened. Well, from the conversation we have written for us in John 13, none of that seemed to be taking up Jesus' thoughts very

Lesson Goals

To understand that a person's receptiveness to the gospel depends on our love for one another.

much on this last evening before His death. Jesus' thoughts were for His disciples that night. He loved them and knew that after He was gone, it would be their responsibility to tell the truth of Jesus to everyone around them until the whole world was changed. How would this be possible?

Jesus shared a "new command" with them. They already had the ten commandments, but Jesus knew that if they could practice this one thing, it would show the world that they really followed Him. So, what was it that Jesus told them? Jesus said, "I give you a new command. Love one another. You must love one another, just as I have loved you. If you love one another, everyone will know you are my disciples." What was it that Jesus thought was so important? What did He want His disciples to remember? To love one another! Jesus must have thought it was important because He said it three times in these two short verses!

Do you know that Jesus was talking to His disciples on that night so long ago and it was to those followers of His that He gave this new command. But, do you also know that what He said is also meant for you and for me? So, if we are supposed to love each other, how do we do it? Should it be different for everyone? Jesus tells us how. He says that we should love one another just as He loved us! Why should we love each other? Jesus commanded us to, that's why. But Jesus tells us why it is important. He tells us that if we love one another, everyone around will know that we belong to Him! Have you ever thought that people could tell you love Jesus just by the way you act!

It is very important that we tell other people about Jesus. But it is just as important that we show them what Jesus is like by acting like Him. So, how can we do that? First, you must choose to be His follower. To do that you need to agree that you are a sinner. You also need to know that for that sin, you deserve death, but while you were still sinning away, Jesus died in your place. His death made a way for you to be okay with God. When you believe this, you can choose to let Him be a part of your life. Second, you don't need to be so wrapped up in what you want. Put someone else's feelings and needs before yours and you will be on your way to living out our memory verse!

**Memory Verse
Activity**

Play the "Love One Another Relay" game. Form two teams. The first student in each team receives a heart shaped token with the memory verse. Each student, beginning with the first from each group, runs to the end of the area of play, recites or reads their memory verse and returns to tag the next player. Play ends when a team has exhausted all of its players.

Preparing for Next Week

Lesson 32
Peter Will Deny Jesus
John 13:36-38

Preschool Lesson

Love Each Other

Sing: "Make New Friends"

Make new friends,
but keep the old.
One is silver,
the other is gold.

Teach: Do you remember our lesson last week? Jesus ate supper with His followers, the disciples, and then He washed their dusty feet. He showed them how to care for each other, to see what needed to be done and to do it. In our lesson for this week, Jesus is still with His followers. Jesus knows that He will not be with them very much longer and He wants to share some very important things with them.

I have a question for you. When you are at home, and your mom or dad or grandma asks you to do something, do you think they are just playing with you? Are you obedient the first time they ask you to do something? If they say something to you two or three times, what does that usually mean? It probably means that they are really serious about what they are saying and that it is important for you to listen and obey!

Well, on this night before Jesus was going to die, while He was trying to help His followers be ready for His death, Jesus told them something. He didn't just say it once. And He didn't just say it twice. Jesus told them something three times! Listen to what Jesus told His followers and see if you can tell me what He repeated three times. Jesus said, "I give you a new command. Love one another. You must love one another, just as I have loved you. If you love one another, everyone will know you are my disciples." Who can tell me what it was that Jesus said three times? Yes, He said, "love one another." Let me read to you again what Jesus said and you count off each time Jesus says "love one another."

"I give you a new command. Love one another. **(one)** You must love one another, **(two)** just as I have loved you. If you love one another, **(three)** everyone will know you are my disciples."

Jesus tells us that He wants us to love others the way He loves us. How is that? Well, he makes sure we have what we need. He shares with us. He cares for us. He also tells us why He wants us to love each other. When we love each other, the people around us can tell that we love God. And when the people around us see that we love God, they will want to know and love Him, too!

Pray: Oh God, thank you for loving me. Help me to love others.

Activities

- Provide coloring pages and word puzzles that will enhance what you have taught today.
- Make puppets to reinforce the idea of loving one another. Many materials may be used; for example, toilet paper tubes, plastic spoons, etc.
- Make a paper hearts chain, one heart for each word of the memory verse including the reference. If long paper is not available, tape together several smaller chains.
- Make heart shaped sugar cookies and share with someone who was not at church.
- Begin today by encouraging students with the memory verse “Love one another.” Do this if you find them bickering or when one does not want to talk to the other, etc. Make this a habit.