

Love for a Blind Man

Bible Verse

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. John 15:12

Bible Story Reference

Mark 10:46-52

Teacher's Devotional

God loves us so much that He gave His only Son to take the punishment for our sin. God sees in us something so precious that, in spite of our unworthiness, He made the ultimate sacrifice for us. Only God incarnate, who is sinless, could demonstrate this perfect love.

It is solely out of God's perfect love for us that our love is born—both for God and for others. There is no doubt that God is precious and worthy of our love. But what about the imperfect humans with whom we interact each day? How can we love them when they so often seem to be unlovable?

Bartimaeus of Jericho was not very easy to love. His blindness made him a liability in most people's view. His poverty made him unattractive, even suspect for having done something deserving of this handicap. And then there was his mouth! Bartimaeus was loud—obnoxiously loud! Even when a noted rabbi was entering the city, Bartimaeus did not hesitate to begin bellowing about his unhappy state in life. Who could love a fellow like this, especially when the best efforts of the people around him could not get him to quiet down? Who could love him? Jesus could. While others were concerned about respectability and saw Bartimaeus as a nuisance, Jesus was attuned to hear a blind beggar's cry.

Long before Jesus made that ultimate demonstration of His love for us, He was making repeated smaller demonstrations of His love for individuals. How do we know the way to show love to others? Watching Jesus respond to Bartimaeus is a great place to begin.

Character Builder

We can follow Jesus' example by showing love to people others might ignore.

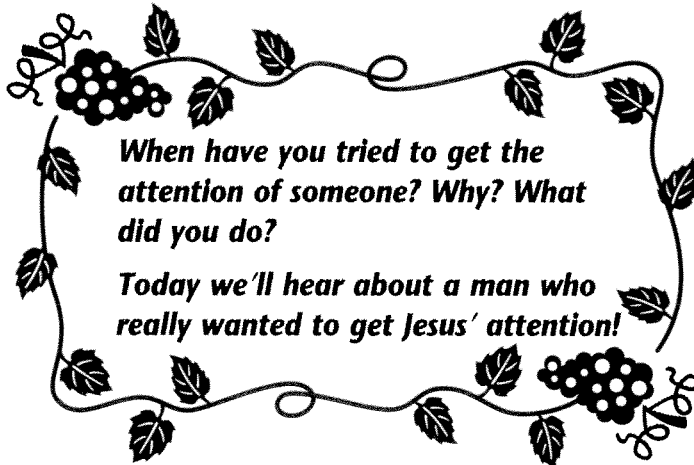
Bible Story Center

Materials

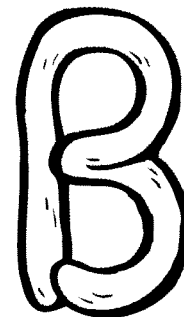
Love poster from *Poster Pack*, ¼ cup (2 oz.)
play dough for each student.

Tell the Story

Follow along with me as we use our dough to tell today's story.



1. **Divide your dough into three parts. With the first part, roll a rope and make the letter B.** One day a blind man named Bartimaeus (BAR-tih-MAY-uhs) was sitting at the gate of the town of Jericho. He was begging. Bartimaeus couldn't see to plant seeds and take care of plants like a farmer. He couldn't see to cut wood and build like a carpenter. In Bible times, the only way that a blind person got the money he needed was to beg. Beggars called out to people walking nearby, asking them for money or food. So Bartimaeus sat along the busy road and begged. Day after day all the people around would hear Bartimaeus calling out for people to help him.

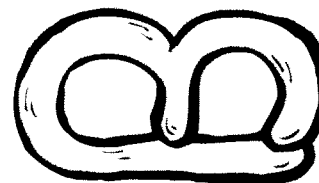


2. **Turn the B sideways to look like blind eyes.** One day Bartimaeus heard many people walking together along the road. Bartimaeus called out to the crowd, "What's going on?"



"Jesus of Nazareth is coming!" someone shouted back.

3. **With the second part of your dough, roll a rope. Make an open mouth under the blind eyes.** "JESUS! Son of David, have mercy on me," Bartimaeus shouted. (Son of David was a name used for the Savior that God had promised to send. To have mercy means to care about and be kind to a person.)



Bartimaeus was making a LOT of noise! The people around Bartimaeus told him, "BE QUIET!" These people had seen Bartimaeus begging every day. Perhaps they thought he was making too much noise. Or maybe they wanted to see what Jesus was going to do and didn't want Jesus to be interrupted.



But Bartimaeus didn't listen to the people who told him to be quiet. He wanted Jesus to HEAR him! So he shouted out louder still, "JESUS, HAVE MERCY ON ME!" Bartimaeus hoped that Jesus would hear him and care about him.

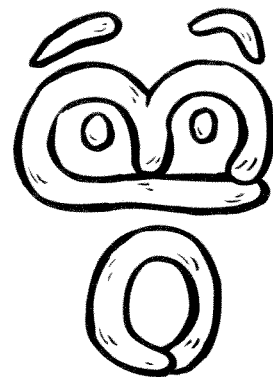
Jesus could have passed right on by this noisy man. He could have said, "Not now, Bartimaeus." But Jesus didn't ignore him. He didn't keep walking down the road. No, Jesus cared. He STOPPED! He said, "Bring Me that man who is shouting out My name."

Several people quickly came to Bartimaeus. "Cheer up! Get on your feet. JESUS is calling you!" they said. They pulled Bartimaeus up by the arms and guided him to Jesus.

When Bartimaeus came up to Jesus, Jesus asked, "What do you want Me to do for you?"

Bartimaeus said, "Wonderful Teacher, I want to SEE!"

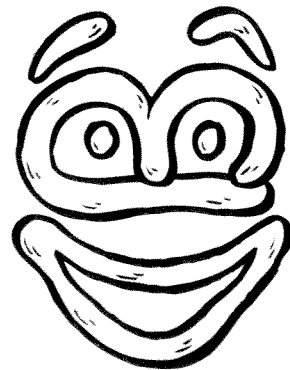
4. Add the third part of your dough to the B eyes so that they look open. Jesus must have smiled when He heard what Bartimaeus wanted. This man was VERY sure Jesus could help him! Bartimaeus wouldn't be stopped, even though other people hadn't cared about him. He wouldn't be stopped, although they had said unkind words to him.



Jesus said to him, "Then open your eyes. Your faith in Me has healed you!"

5. Change the open mouth to a smiling mouth.

Instantly Bartimaeus could SEE! Jesus' face was probably the first thing Bartimaeus ever saw! He was so happy that he began praising God for giving him sight!



Bartimaeus could SEE the crowd following Jesus. Now he could WALK by himself without bumping into things. He wanted to stay with Jesus, who had loved him and healed him. So Bartimaeus came right along with the crowd and followed Jesus, too! The crowd was AMAZED! They joined Bartimaeus in praising God. They had seen a MIRACLE—something only God can do. And it only happened because Jesus cared about this noisy blind man when others just wanted him to be quiet!

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Focus on the Fruit

Why did Bartimaeus beg for a living? (He was blind and couldn't earn money.) **What did people tell him to do when he began to call to Jesus?** (Be quiet.) **How did Jesus treat Bartimaeus?** (Paid attention to him. Helped him.)

Sometimes we see people to whom others don't pay much attention. Show the Love poster. **Jesus cared about all people, including people others didn't care much about. He wants us to act like that, too. It's one way to pass on His love to other people. Showing God's love to others helps us grow the fruit of His Spirit in our lives!**

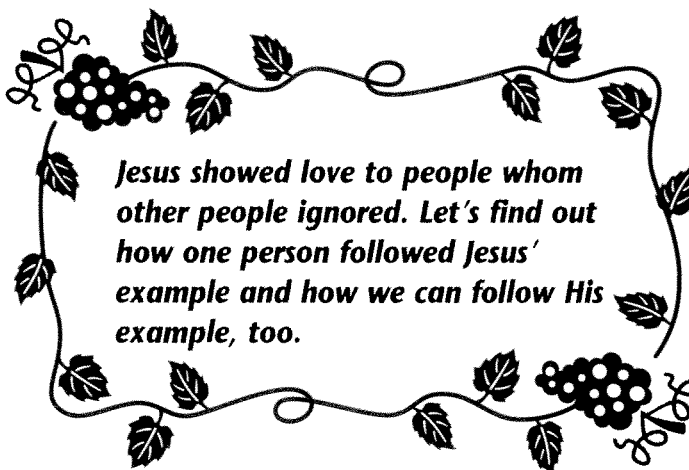
Fruitful Lives Object Talk

Bible Verse

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. John 15:12

Materials

Bible with bookmark at John 15:12, bag containing six to eight school supplies (pencil, notebook, eraser, ruler, pencil sharpener, crayons, folder, book, etc.).



Lead the Activity

1. Show bag. **This bag is full of things you might need for school.**

Invite volunteers to guess items in the bag. Show items that students correctly guess and then identify items not guessed. **A long time ago in England, some children didn't have any of these things. They didn't even have a school to go to, because they lived with their mothers in a prison. The children hadn't done anything wrong; but at that time, children had to go to prison with their mothers if they didn't have other family members to care for them.**



2. **Even though most people didn't care about prisoners, a woman named Elizabeth Fry visited this prison. She was shocked by the horrible conditions in which the women and their children lived. Within a few years, Elizabeth helped to organize a school for the children and collected the school supplies they needed. Then she set up a room where the women prisoners could learn to sew.**

Elizabeth also wanted the prisoners to know about Jesus' love for them. She talked about Jesus to the women and children and read from her Bible about Jesus' love and forgiveness. Elizabeth's work to help women and children in prison became so well known that people in the English government and even the queen of England, Queen Victoria, gave money to support her work.

Conclude

Read John 15:12 aloud. **How did Elizabeth Fry obey this verse?** Students respond. **Let's thank God for Jesus' example and ask Him to help us show His love to others.** Lead students in prayer.

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Discussion Questions

1. **When have you felt ignored? How did another person help you?**
2. **Who are some people kids your age often ignore or don't pay any attention to?**
(Younger children. Kids they don't like.)
3. **What are some things you could do to care for someone who doesn't seem to have any friends?**

Active Game Center: Memory Moves

Materials

Bible, large sheet of paper, marker, tape.

Prepare the Game

Print John 15:12 on large sheet of paper and display paper where students can read it.

Lead the Game

1. Ask a volunteer to read John 15:12 aloud.

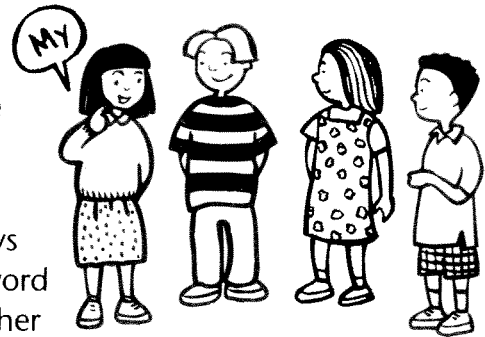
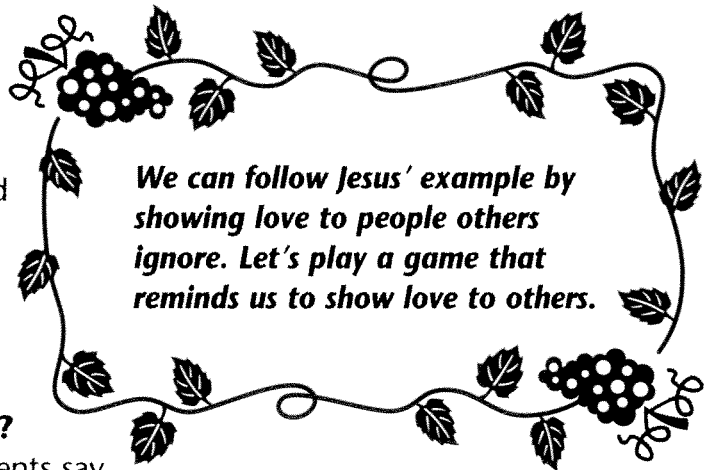
These words were spoken by Jesus.

What did Jesus command in this verse?

(To love others like Jesus has loved us.) Students say verse together.

2. Students stand in a circle. In order around the circle, assign each student a word of the verse for which to create a motion. Each student thinks of and practices a simple motion for his or her word.

3. To begin, the student with the first word of the verse says word while doing motion. The next student says the first word while doing the first student's motion and then says his or her own word while doing his or her motion. Continue around the circle, each student saying and doing the previous words and motions and adding his or her own word and motion until the entire verse is recited with motions. Invite volunteers to try saying the entire verse with motions.



Options

1. If there are more than 12 students in your class, divide group into two to play game or have students work in pairs to create a motion. If there are fewer than 12 students in your class, assign some students more than one word or assign each student a phrase of the verse.

2. To provide more action, students take turns to run to designated spot, say word(s) and perform motion(s) and then return to the group. Note the time it takes for the whole verse to be recited, and then have students repeat to try to beat that time.

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Discussion Questions

1. What kinds of people does Jesus love? (All people, even people whom others ignore.)

2. In what ways did Jesus show love to people when He was on Earth? (Talked to them. Helped them with their problems. Cared for them. Fed them.) **What can we do to follow Jesus' examples of loving people?**

3. When are some times kids your age get ignored? (At school on the playground. At a friend's house.) **What are some ways to show love to these kids?** (Talk to them. Invite them to play a game with you. Share school supplies with them.)

Lesson 20

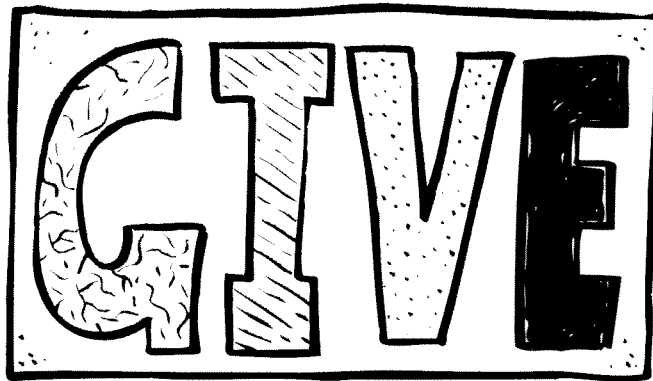
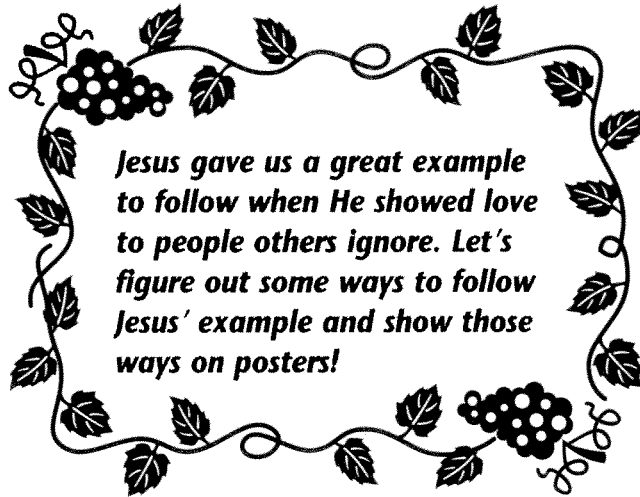
Art Center: Texture-Talk Posters

Materials

A variety of textured materials (fabric, corrugated paper, felt, sandpaper, aluminum foil, textured paper, etc.), pencils, scissors, glue sticks, large sheets of paper, large paper grocery bag.

Lead the Activity

1. Brainstorm with students a list of short words that describe ways to show love to others ("share," "give," "care," "help," "fair," "good," "kind," etc.).
2. Assign each student or pair of students a word. Students create posters by drawing and then cutting large letters out of textured materials. Students glue letters in order to sheets of paper.
3. When students have finished creating words, collect all posters. Mix up posters. Secretly place one poster into bag. Invite a volunteer to close eyes and put hand in bag to feel letters and guess the word on the poster. Repeat with other posters and new volunteers as time allows. Ask Discussion Questions as each word is guessed.



Options

1. Students create posters for the words of John 15:12.
2. If posters will not easily fit into paper bag, cover poster with large towel. Students place hands under towel to feel and identify letters.

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Discussion Questions

1. **When is a time kids your age might feel ignored?** (On the playground. When parents or brothers and sisters are busy doing other things. In the classroom.)
2. **What is one way to (share) with someone other people often ignore?** Repeat question, using other words from list students used for posters.
3. **What are the good results of following Jesus' example and showing love to people who are often ignored?** (Those people will feel loved. We are obeying God. People can learn about God's love.)

Lesson 20

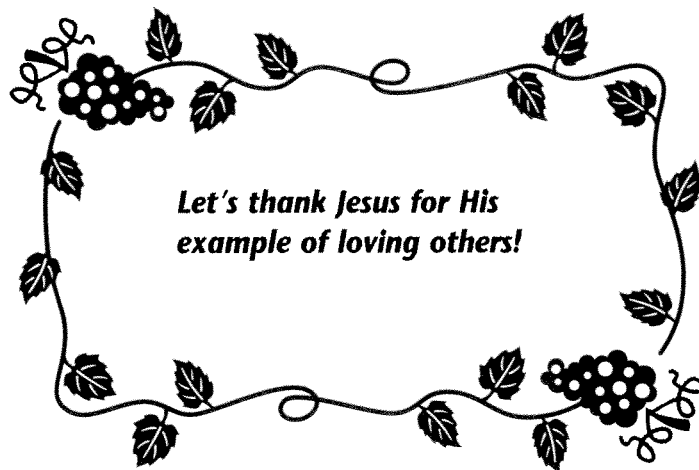
Worship Center

Bible Verse

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. John 15:12

Materials

Bible, *God's Kids Grow* cassette/CD or music video and player, "All My Heart" word chart (p. 453 in this book), large sheet of paper on which you have printed John 15:12, masking tape.



Sing to God

Play "All My Heart," encouraging students to sing along with the music. **According to this song, how can we learn to show love to God and others?** (Read God's Word. Ask God's help.) **What are some other ways to learn to show love?** (Learn from people like Sunday School teachers and parents who teach us about God's love.)

Hear and Say God's Word

Display paper on which you have printed John 15:12. Have a volunteer read the verse aloud. **What is Jesus' command in this verse?** (Love others in the same way He loves us.) **What are some ways to show Jesus' love to others?** (Be kind and care for the people around you. Tell others about God's love and forgiveness.) Lead all the students wearing (white) to say the first half of the verse and all the students wearing (blue) to say the second half of the verse. Repeat verse in this manner several times, naming a different group of students to say each half of the verse. (For example, everyone younger than eight says the first half and everyone older than eight says the second half; everyone who plays the piano says the first half and everyone who plays soccer says the second half, etc.)

Pray to God

Let's pray for each other. Let's ask God to help us show Jesus' love to those around us, especially people others ignore. Students take turns praying aloud for the person next to him or her, using this prayer: **Jesus, please help (Sam) show love to others like You did.** End prayer time by thanking Jesus for His example of love.

Options

1. If you have more than 10 students, students form circles of four to complete the prayer activity.
2. Ask students for any specific prayer requests and pray for students' requests, or ask an older student to pray for them. Record the prayer requests in your class prayer journal.

Lesson 20

Bible Verse Coloring Center



Materials

Crayons or markers, a copy of page 111 or page 112 from *Bible Verse Coloring Pages #2* for each student.



Lead the Activity

Read John 15:12. **Who in this picture do you think is obeying this verse? How can you show love to the people in your family? To your neighbors?** Students color picture.

Option

Also provide a copy of "Draw a picture of a way to show God's love to others" page (p. 223 from *Bible Verse Coloring Pages #2*). Students draw and color pictures.

Service Project Center

Materials

Materials needed for "Tray Brighteners" (p. 103 from *The Big Book of Service Projects*).



Lead the Activity

Students complete "Tray Brighteners" activity as directed in *The Big Book of Service Projects*. **How do you think people in nursing homes or hospitals might feel? How might our project help these people? What are some other ways we could show love to people who have to stay in nursing homes or hospitals?**

Discipleship Activity Center

Materials

Discussion Cards for 1 John 3:16-18 (pp. 171-176 from *The Big Book of Christian Growth*), materials needed for "Human Tic-Tac-Toe" or "Partner Concentration" (p. 19 or p. 46 from *The Big Book of Christian Growth*).



Lead the Activity

Today we're going to play a game to discover ways 1 John 3:16-18 says to show love to others. Students complete activity as directed in *The Big Book of Christian Growth*.