

WHAT IS LOVE?

Love is a choice, not a feeling or emotion. It is a choice to meet the needs of others. We can learn about love from the One who is love.

A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

JOHN 13:34

PARENTS / KIDS

BEST USE

A family activity to talk about how love grows when we stay connected to God

ADVANCE PREP

A Bible and a deflated balloon

Step One

Read Galatians 5:22-23. Start your family time by discussing that the fruit of the Spirit is something that you will be talking about over the next several weeks. This first week will be a focus on the first fruit, love.

Step Two

Give each person 30 seconds to name things they love...they can be as simple as Legos, individual family members by name, favorite foods, fun activities, etc.

Step Three

Hold up the deflated balloon and explain that it represents human love. It is nice, but could be much more by connecting to God's love. When He breathes into our version of love (the deflated balloon), it becomes something much, much better.

Step Four

Read 1 John 4:16. Talk about some ways that you can "live in God" (e.g. spending time in His Word, talking to Him in prayer, obeying and trusting His commands, etc.). As each way is shared, blow a small amount into the balloon to inflate it. When we connect to God, He helps us make our love more like His.

Step Five

Play a game with the inflated balloon. Throw the balloon in the air and whoever catches it shares one way they can show love to someone else. For a more challenging game: Take turns tapping it into the air and see how long the family can keep it up by naming one way to show love to each other with each tap. Try not to run out of ideas or the balloon will fall to the floor.

Step Six

Pray together asking God to help each of you stay connected to Him so that you will grow in love.

PARENTS / TEENS

BEST USE

An activity for a parent and teen to compare Biblical love with various things in the physical world

ADVANCE PREP

A smart phone or computer with web access for each person, paper and pen/pencil for each person and a favorite treat to award the winner

Step One

Gather at a table, living area or office in the home. Each participant will need a device to search online. You can use a family friendly search engine like kidrex.org for safety.

Step Two

Say, "Today we are going to have a contest to see who can list the most types of apples in three minutes. Use the agreed upon search engine to discover as many as you can. You must be able to show a picture of any apple you list if asked for proof." Set a timer giving everyone three minutes to complete the task. Identify who won the contest and provide proof if needed. Award the treat to the winner. Ask the following questions...

- What was your favorite apple and why?
- What do all the apples have in common?
- What was the most unique type of apple? Describe it.

Step Three

Now do the same activity WITHOUT a web search. Instead open the Bible to 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Using these hints, spend three minutes listing different expressions of love. Ask, "What do all these expressions of love have in common?" Examples may include "Not about self" and "Meets another's need."

Step Four

Have each person describe one way they can show love this week from the list in the 1 Corinthians passage.

Step Five

Finish your time praying together asking God to help each person show love in a variety of practical ways this week.