

Kingdom blessings

**Bible verses:**

Matthew 5:1-12, 43-48
Jesus teaches the people

**Aim:**

To see how Jesus teaches about those who face difficulties, recognising that includes us

**Today's fruit:**

Love



In today's session we will discover what Jesus had to say in the Sermon on the Mount.

Jesus taught people in lots of different ways. He used stories and sermons and showed them how they should live their lives through the way he lived his. We'll think about his call for us to show love to others and how we should care for those facing difficulties and injustice.

God wants us to have love in our hearts for others.

Each child will need:

- Two different-coloured square sheets of paper, plus green and white paper, scissors, a straw, glue, sticky tape, a paperclip and pens/pencils
- *Explore It ideas* handout

You will need:

- Fruit of the Spirit poster: *Love* – download from **Salvationist**



Start it

Say:

Today we are going to learn about Jesus and the way that he taught people.

Discuss:

- Who is your favourite teacher?
- Why do you like them so much?

- How do they make learning fun and interesting?
- What kinds of things make learning difficult for you? How could your teacher help?

Say:

Jesus understood how people learn and he used lots of different methods to help them understand what he was saying. In today's session we will look at a few examples and discover why Jesus was such a great teacher.



Sing it

Say:

Jesus used a variety of ways to teach the people. One day, he gathered the disciples and a lot of other people together on a hillside. He taught them what it means to be happy or blessed. Many of the things he said went against the ways of the world. Jesus said that those who are humble will be happy and those who are treated badly for doing good will be happy.

Say:

Our song for today is based on Jesus' teaching in Matthew 5:1-12. This part of Scripture is known as the Beatitudes and is part of the Sermon on the Mount.

Song

'The Beatitudes' (lyrics) by Saddleback Kids (2:34)



Share it

Say:

Today we are going to discover more of Jesus' teaching and the way he wanted the people to live their lives. Jesus gathered the people together to share an important message. This message is called the Sermon on the Mount and is found in Matthew chapters 5 to 7. Let's watch the clip to find out more about what Jesus had to say.

Video

God's Story: Sermon on the Mount by Crossroads Kids' Club (4:34)

Discuss:

- What kind of people did Jesus say would be blessed by God?
- In what ways can we show love to others?
- In what ways did Jesus show his love to others? What were some of the stories mentioned in the clip?

Say:

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus speaks with hope and promise to the crowds. He describes those who are on the edges of society, those who have no power or voice in their communities, as being welcomed and empowered in God's Kingdom.

Ask:

How does it make you feel when you hear how much Jesus cares about those who are facing difficulties in their lives?

Say:

Jesus also speaks about how people can live in order to be part of God's Kingdom. Jesus acknowledges that it won't be easy and challenges us to live in a way that is different from those who do not follow him.

Read:

'You have heard that it was said, "Love your neighbour and hate your enemies." But I tell you, love your enemies. Pray for those who hurt you. If you do this, then you will be true sons of your Father in heaven. Your Father causes the sun to rise on good people and on bad people. Your Father sends rain to those who do good and to those who do wrong. If you love only the people who love you, then you will get no reward. Even the tax collectors do that. And if you are nice only to your friends, then you are no better than other people. Even people without God are nice to their friends. So you must be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.'

(Matthew 5:43-48 ICB)

Discuss:

- The people had always been taught to love their neighbour and hate their enemy. What did Jesus teach and how was it different?
- When Jesus was talking to the crowd, who do you think he meant when he was talking about their enemies?
- What do you think the people thought when they heard this new message from Jesus?
- What do you find challenging about loving your enemies?

Please note

In a way that is appropriate for your group, explain what 'loving your neighbour' is not! Jesus is not asking us to continue to tolerate abusive or destructive behaviour without setting any boundaries. We don't know what the children may be experiencing at school or at home, but we don't want them to misinterpret Jesus' words and think that loving an enemy means we let them continue to behave in a negative way toward us. Instead, we want to raise children's awareness of personal safety and to encourage them to learn about the elements that make good relationships. Please refer to The Salvation Army's *Safe & Sound* handbook for further guidance.

Say:

Loving and praying for our enemies is what Jesus is asking us to do. Jesus knew that loving those who were unkind and unfair was difficult, but he said that we could celebrate and be happy because we know we are living how God wants us to.

Action it

Say:

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus makes it clear that following him and caring for those who are oppressed might make others unhappy.

Ask:

- Why would anyone be unhappy about people being treated fairly?
- Can you think of any examples of people who might feel this way? Share them with the group.

Say:

Sadly, in some places in the world, the people in charge want to keep hold of their power. They get so used to having power and money that they forget about the people they should be trying to help. As we saw in the last two sessions, the Israelites forgot the importance of looking after those in need.

Ask:

Which prophet reminded them how to behave, and what did he say?

Memory verse

'He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.

And what does the Lord require of you?

To act justly and to love mercy

and to walk humbly with your God.'

(Micah 6:8 NIV)

Say:

Jesus continued this message in his Sermon on the Mount.

Display the *Love* sign.

Ask:

What is the message of love in today's Bible story? There might be more than one message.

Explain that the children are going to make a message of love for someone that they know. It might be for someone who is facing a difficult time or who is experiencing injustice. It might be someone they have struggled to get along with in the past or someone who just needs to hear that God loves them.

The clip below shows how the love message can be created. Adapt and simplify the activity to suit the needs of your group. The children can write a message about God's love in their hearts.

Video

Paper Heart Flower Craft (Mother's Day craft for kids) by Easy Kids Craft (2:57)



Pray it

The children will need their love message flowers for the Pray It section. Bring the group together, preferably in a circle, and ask them to hold their flower. As the music plays, ask them to pray for the person who inspired their love message flower. When the music finishes, bring the session to a close in prayer and encourage the children to make time to give their love message flower to the person they prayed for.

Listen

'Micah 6:8' (Sing the Bible vol 4) by Slugs and Bugs (3:39)

Key dates (optional)

This week is the start of Fairtrade Fortnight. This campaign highlights the need for fair prices and decent working conditions for all farmers and workers around the world. We are going to pray together to bring more of God's justice and equality into the world.

Spend time praying with your group and then bring the session to a close.



Explore it

Remember to send home the *Explore It ideas* for children and families.



Explore It is produced by the Children and Youth Department in collaboration with Kay Moorby (soulwithaview)

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Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.



Bible verses:

Matthew 5:1-12, 43-48



Aim:

To see how Jesus teaches about those who face difficulties, recognising that includes us



Today's fruit:

Love



Discover

To discover more about Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, watch the clip.

Let's Go: Sermon on the Mount by Crossroads Kids' Club (4:12)



Share

Take a moment to sit with someone at home and share with them everything you have learned in this week's Explore It session. Read the Beatitudes from Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:1-12) together and discuss how you could follow Jesus' call to love others.



Song for the week

'The Beatitudes' (lyrics) by Saddleback Kids



Memory verse

'He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.

And what does the Lord require of you?
To act justly and to love mercy
and to walk humbly with your God.'

(Micah 6:8 NIV)

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OUT FAITH**

Kids Alive! Online – salvationarmy.org.uk/kidsalive

Kids Alive! The UK's only weekly Christian comic – is filled with jokes, competitions, Bible-based cartoons and much more... and is now available to read online!



Children
& Youth