

A voice of freedom

**Bible verses:**

Philippians 2:1–4

Does your life in Christ give you strength?

**Aim:**

To think about the needs of others and consider how we can stand with them

**Today's fruit:**

Love



In today's session we will explore Philippians 2:1–4 and think about what it means to put the needs of others before our own.

As part of Black History Month we will hear about Harriet Tubman, who found her own freedom from slavery but chose to risk her life to help many others escape too. We will discover that showing God's love means caring for others as well as ourselves. Let's be encouraged to take our own steps of love and use our voices to share God's love with the world.

As we choose to put the need of others before our own, we are showing the fruit of love. We share God's love with others as we help and care for them.

Each child will need:

- Pens/pencils and paper
- *Explore It ideas* handout

You will need:

- A large pair of shoes
- An image of Harriet Tubman (eg from commons.wiki.org)
- Fruit of the Spirit poster: *Love* – download from **Salvationist**
- Memory verse poster

**Start it**

Bring a large pair of shoes, big enough that they'll clearly not fit the children.

Say:

Have you ever tried to walk in someone else's shoes? What happens if they're too big or too small? Let's try it out!

Invite a few children to try walking across the room in the oversized shoes. Let others cheer them on.

Ask:

- Was it easy or difficult?
- How did it feel to walk in shoes that weren't your own?

Say:

There's an expression that says, 'Before you judge a man, walk a mile in his shoes.'

Ask:

What do you think it means?

Say:

It doesn't really mean literally wearing their shoes! It means trying to imagine how they might feel. The Bible teaches us to put others first, and today we'll find out about someone who showed God's love by doing exactly that.

**Sing it**

Display the *Love* sign.

Say:

Today's fruit of the Spirit is **love**. The Bible tells us to love one another, and that means thinking about other people's needs as well as our own. When we love others, we are showing them God's love too. Our song for today reminds us that God's Spirit helps us love one another, just like Jesus loves us.

Song

'Love One Another' (official music video Yancy and little praise party) by YancynotNancy (2:43)

**Share it****Say:**

Our Scripture verses for today remind us how important it is to think the way Jesus thought about other people.

Read:

‘Does your life in Christ give you strength? Does his love comfort you? Do we share together in the Spirit? Do you have mercy and kindness? If so, make me very happy by having the same thoughts, sharing the same love, and having one mind and purpose. When you do things, do not let selfishness or pride be your guide. Be humble and give more honour to others than to yourselves. Do not be interested only in your own life, but be interested in the lives of others.’

(Philippians 2:1–4 *ICB*)

Ask:

What do you think it means to ‘give more honour to others than to yourselves’?

Say:

In a different Bible translation, it says this: ‘Let each of you look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others’ (Philippians 2:4 *ESV*).

Ask:

Does this version help you to understand the verse more clearly? If so, how?

Say:

This passage reminds us about humility – not thinking we’re better than other people – and empathy – trying to imagine what life feels like for someone else. When we love and follow Jesus, we learn to notice the needs of others as well as our own. It’s not about ignoring our own needs or thinking badly of ourselves, but about being ready to share, to show kindness, and to put love into action. Sometimes that might mean letting someone else go first, sharing what we have, or helping at home before we relax. These are all small ways to show God’s love to others.

Show the children a picture of Harriet Tubman.

Say:

As part of Black History Month, we are celebrating people who loved Jesus and showed his love by standing up for others. One of those people was Harriet Tubman. She was born into slavery, which meant she wasn’t free to make her own choices and was often treated very unfairly. Despite this, Harriet loved God and trusted him to guide her life.

Watch the following clip to learn more about Harriet Tubman. Timings are given to stop and discuss Harriet’s life.

Video

Who was Harriet Tubman? (all about Harriet Tubman for kids) by Twinkl USA (4:06)

Watch: 0:00–1:15 ‘... that would whip her if the baby she cared for cried.’

Ask:

– What does enslavement mean?

- How old was Harriet when she was sent to care for the children of a posh family?
- Can you imagine being asked to look after a baby at just six years old? What would it be like?

Watch 1:16-3:24 ‘... where she rescued her elderly parents from racial intolerance.’

Ask:

- Harriet Tubman escaped her slave owners with her two brothers. Why did she end up back where she started?
- How did Harriet escape the second time?
- What was the underground railroad system?
- How did Harriet help others once she had escaped enslavement?
- What Bible character was Harriet Tubman compared to?

Watch 3:25-end.

Ask:

- Why do you think Harriet chose to go back and help others, even though it was dangerous? How does this show Philippians 2:4 – ‘not only looking to your own interests, but also to the interests of others’?
- What was the most inspiring part of Harriet’s story for you?

Say:

Harriet escaped slavery, but she wasn’t satisfied with just her own freedom. Because of her love for God and others, she helped around 300 people escape to freedom too. She put Philippians 2 into action – she wasn’t only interested in her own life but cared deeply about the lives of others. Harriet’s story reminds us that, just like her, we can share God’s love by looking out for others and helping when we can.



Action it

Say:

Harriet Tubman walked many miles to bring people to freedom. Each step she took showed her love for God and for others. We can also take steps to share God’s love in our everyday lives.

Display the monthly memory verse and read it together.

Memory verse

‘The Lord God has put his Spirit in me.

This is because he has appointed me to tell the good news to the poor.

He has sent me to comfort those whose hearts are broken.’

(Isaiah 61:1a *ICB*)

Say:

God's Spirit helped Harriet to be brave and to care for others more than herself. God's Spirit helps us too.

Give each child a sheet of paper and some colouring pencils.

Invite the children to place one foot on a sheet of paper and carefully draw around it. Inside their footprint, ask them to write or draw one step they could take this week to live out our memory verse, for example:

- telling a friend God loves them
- sharing food
- comforting someone who is sad
- helping a family member

When everyone has finished, lay all the footprints down to make a path.

Say:

Our footprints remind us of Harriet's journey and of our memory verse: God's Spirit is in us to bring good news and comfort to others. Harriet didn't just think about her own freedom; she cared about the needs of others and put their lives first. That's what Philippians 2 tells us to do, to look out for the interests of others as well as our own. Each of us can take steps of love, just like Harriet, that help others and lead them closer to Jesus.

**Pray it****Say:**

Harriet Tubman used her feet to lead people to freedom, but she also used her voice. She prayed, she listened to God, and she spoke up for people who couldn't speak for themselves. As part of Black History Month, and with Anti-Slavery Day and International Development Week, we're reminded that God wants us to use our voices too, in prayer and in speaking out for others.

Invite the children to stand together in a circle. Explain that we're going to pray short prayers out loud, using our voices to ask God for freedom and love in our world.

Go round the group and invite each child to speak out one prayer sentence aloud, eg 'God, please give food to people who are hungry' or 'God, please bring freedom to people who are trapped'.

When each child who feels comfortable has had a turn, bring the session to a close in prayer.

Key dates (optional)**18 October: Anti-Slavery Day**

How might Harriet Tubman view the fact that today there is an Anti-Slavery Day?

18-26 October: International Development Week

Spend time praying for The Salvation Army's international projects which aim to bring clean water, food security, education, gender justice and aid during disasters. It is also aiming to prevent and protect people from trafficking and modern slavery.

Explore it

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



A voice of freedom

Here are some ideas for you to explore at home.



Bible verses:
Philippians 2:1-4



Aim:
To think about the needs of others and consider how we can stand with them



Today's fruit:
Love



Discover

Write or draw one way you could put others first this week. It could be helping at home, letting someone else go first, or comforting a friend.



Share

Tell the people at home about Harriet Tubman's story. Harriet used both her feet to lead people to freedom and her voice to pray and speak up for others. Spend time thinking of one way you could use your voices this week to share God's love, maybe by praying together, encouraging someone, or speaking up for someone who needs help.



Song for the week

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Memory verse

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**LIVING
OUT FAITH**