



Love One Another



Bible references – John 13:1-17; 34-35



In this session the young people will explore what Jesus means when he commands his followers to 'love one another' and how this sits at the heart of discipleship. Through Jesus' example of washing his disciples' feet, they will consider what it looks like to love with humility, service and intention, even when it is difficult or not returned. They will reflect on how this kind of love becomes a visible sign of following Jesus and how their lives can point others to him.

You will need:

- 'Neighbourhood Circles' handout
- Paper and pens
- Seven different-coloured pens (for the Sound Check activity)



Beat

Say:

Think about your everyday life for a moment. Not just your closest friends, but everyone you come into contact with. We're going to map that out.

Leader's notes:

Give each person a 'Neighbourhood Circles' handout and ask them to fill it in.

- In circle 1, write the names of your family members
- In circle 2, your close friends
- In circle 3, classmates and colleagues
- In circle 4, people you see regularly, like teachers, neighbours or people in your community
- In circle 5, anyone else who features in your life
- In circle 6, anyone you find difficult or don't get on with (you may want to suggest just writing the initials for this section)

Encourage them to take a few minutes to complete the handout.

Ask:

- What do you notice as you look at your circles?
- Were there more people in your life than you expected?

Say:

We're going to come back to this later; but for now, just notice how many people are part of your everyday world.

 **Bridge****Ask:**

Do you think we naturally treat all those people in the same way? Why or why not?

 **Amplify****Say:**

In our last session we looked at the importance of producing fruit in our lives and read the following quote from Mother Teresa.

'Love is a fruit in season at all times, and within reach of every hand.'

– Mother Teresa

Ask:

What do you think Mother Teresa was trying to say?

Say:

Today our focus will be on Jesus' command for us to love one another. As Mother Teresa suggests, this love is within reach for every one of us.

Read:

³⁴ **'A new command I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.'**

– (John 13:34-35)

Ask:

What do you think 'as I have loved you' might actually look like?

Say:

Jesus didn't just tell the disciples to love one another; he demonstrated what that kind of love looked like.

Read:

¹ It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

² The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. ³ Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; ⁴ so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel round his waist. ⁵ After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped round him.

⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?'

⁷ Jesus replied, 'You do not realise now what I am doing, but later you will understand.'

⁸ 'No,' said Peter, 'you shall never wash my feet.'

Jesus answered, 'Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.'

⁹ 'Then, Lord,' Simon Peter replied, 'not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!'

¹⁰ Jesus answered, 'Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you.' ¹¹ For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

¹² When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. 'Do you understand what I have done for you?' he asked them. ¹³ 'You call me "Teacher" and "Lord", and rightly so, for that is what I am. ¹⁴ Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. ¹⁶ Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

– (John 13:1-17)

Ask:

What do you notice about what Jesus chooses to do here?

Say:

This is what Jesus means when he says, 'Love one another.' It's not just words – it's something he lives out.

Watch:

John 13 – Washing the Disciples' Feet – Bible Study (3:42)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=8_cfgFMmwco

Discuss:

- How does Jesus show us how to love one another in this story?
- 'We offer Christ-like love, knowing that not all will respond with devotion to Jesus.' What do you find challenging about this quote from the clip?

- How does the way we love others show Jesus to the world?
- In what ways do 'our lives become good news'?
- The clip suggests that following Jesus means becoming like him. What do you think that looks like in the way we treat people?
- Why do you think this kind of love is such a powerful witness in the world?

Say:

Loving one another isn't an extra part of following Jesus. It's at the centre of it. This is what discipleship looks like in everyday life.

It means choosing to love people the way Jesus has loved us. Not just when it's easy, but when it's difficult. Not just when it's returned, but even when it isn't.

Jesus says this is how people will recognise his disciples.

 **Bridge****Ask:**

If a group of people really lived like this, what do you think others would notice?

 **Sound Check****Say:**

We've seen that loving one another is at the centre of what it means to follow Jesus. This is what discipleship looks like in everyday life.

Now we're going to think about what that might look like for you, with the people you already have in your life.

Leader's notes:

Ask the group to look back at the Neighbourhood Circles handout that they completed at the start of the session. Working from the outer circle inwards, discuss the practical ways that the group could show love to the people within each circle. Jot down the ideas on a group list. As the discussion progresses, ask the group to consider the following question: Are there specific people that you feel Jesus would like you to show love to this week? Encourage them to choose seven different people to focus on over the coming week. Take seven different-coloured pens and circle one name in each colour, for each day of the week. Then each day do one practical thing to show God's love to that person. Make a note of what you do, how you feel, and what that person's reaction is (whether positive or negative).

Say:

Jesus calls us to love real people in our everyday lives. This isn't about doing something big or trying to impress anyone. It's about choosing to love in small, intentional ways as part of following him. As you go through this week, notice what happens. Notice how it feels, how people respond, and what it teaches you about living as a disciple.

 **Bridge****Ask:**

As you think about showing love to those people this week, how are you feeling about it? What's going through your mind?

 **Selah****Say:**

We're going to take a few moments to pause and reflect. Keep your Neighbourhood Circles in front of you, and think about the people you've chosen.

As we listen to this song, use it as a moment to reflect on how Jesus has loved you, and what it might look like to show that same love to others.

Watch:

Israel Houghton - 'Others' (5:13)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=_pCtTTXGYbQ

Leader's notes:

Allow time for quiet or spoken prayer. Encourage the group to pray for the people on their handouts and ask God to help them follow through on the ways they want to show love this week.

 **Coda****Say:**

In a piece of music, the coda brings the different aspects of the melody, harmonies and bassline to a conclusion. It pulls together the different themes and often, but not always, brings resolution to a piece of music.

Ask:

- As you reflect on everything you have learned today, what is your coda?
- What is one thing you will take away from Jesus' command to love one another?

Leader's notes:

Give the young people a moment to think about your question and briefly share their coda with the group before the session comes to an end.



Neighbourhood Circles

