

Chapter 9 Activity: Does God Really Love Me?

Teaching Goal: God's love is reliable.

Scripture: Psalm 89:31-33 If they violate my decrees and fail to keep my commands, I will punish their sin with the rod, their iniquity with flogging; but I will not take my love from them, nor will I ever betray my faithfulness.



Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 17:23-24 Let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me."

Materials: Sidewalk chalk
Paper and pencil
For older children rent the movie "Vertical Limit."

In Advance: Identify a large parking lot or area of cement (perhaps at your church). Get permission to draw on the lot with sidewalk chalk. FOR OLDER CHILDREN: Preview the movie scene from "Vertical Limit" for language and violence to see if it appropriate to use in your family.

☺ Words that are written in **bold** are when you, the parent, are speaking. Feel free to use your own words.

A. ACTIVITY #1: Ask each person in your family, one at a time, the following questions. Let them answer both questions before moving on to the next person: (Person's name), **do you think I love you?** Listen. **How do I show you that I love you?** After listening, write down the responses.

Next, ask each person the following questions about one another. Listen to the answers and record them as well. For instance, "**Mary** (sister), **does Jeff** (brother) **love you?** **How does he show that love?**" Make sure that you ask each person.

It's good for our family to take the time to talk about how we love one another. Most of the time we don't talk about it because we all know that we love each other, even if we argue or fight. But sometimes it's good to focus on that love.

We're also going to talk about how our love compares to God's love. Do you think that Mom and I love you more than God loves you? No. Do you think God loves us more than we can love each other? Yes. Why? Because he is God, because he made love and he knows what is best for us in every situation. His love is perfect. God does love us more than we love each other. It's hard for us to understand because we are human. We do not know and see everything like God can. He created us. So He knows exactly how to love us perfectly. Let's make a list of the ways God shows us that He loves us. Write down each suggestion.

B. ACTIVITY #2: ***FOR OLDER CHILDREN*** (Preview to make sure it is appropriate for your family. Show the first 7 minute scene from the movie “Vertical Limit.”) **We’re going to watch a movie clip of a dad rock climbing with his son and daughter. I want you to know in advance that it’s very intense.** Watch the movie clip. End when the father falls. **The father knew that the only way to save his children was to have his son cut the rope. Do you think the father loved his children?** Listen. *Yes, he gave his life for them.* **When we put the needs of someone else above our own needs it shows how much we love them.**

God loves us so much that he gave his son Jesus to die so that we could live. Which do you believe was harder, the dad asking the son to cut the rope or the son having to cut the rope? Listen. **Which do you think is harder, a father dying for his children or a father having to choose to let his son die so others could live? Would it have been a tougher situation if the father was second on the rope?** Listen. **God loves us so much that he sent Jesus to earth where he knew that he would die so that you and I could live. If God did not send Jesus, we could not have eternal life. Do you see how much God loves you and me?** Listen.

Just before Jesus was arrested and taken to the cross, He prayed to His father, God. Listen to what he said. Read John 17:23-24. **Jesus is God’s message of love to the whole world! Jesus loved us so much that he was willing to die and pay the price for our sin so that he could be with us in heaven.**

C. ACTIVITY #3 ***FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN***: Go to the parking lot and write a GIANT message of love to God. (This can also be done on the beach by drawing in the sand.) The idea is to make the message as huge as possible to recreate the big message of love God sent when He sent His son Jesus. Consider the age and abilities of your children when deciding how big the message will be. For example, preschoolers will view a heart the size of a driveway as a “big message.” Unable to write, they can still help color in the heart. Older elementary children will enjoy the challenge of making a message “WE LOVE YOU!” that can be seen by a passing airplane! .

God’s love for us is big! We want our love for God to be big too. That is what this message represents—giving God a big message of love!

Memorize: “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son...” John 3:16

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