

As I Have Loved You

Theme: We are to love others as Jesus loves us - Sixth Sunday of Easter

Object: Suckers or candy that comes in a variety of flavors

Scripture: "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you." John 15:12 (NIV)

This morning I have a bag of suckers. As you can see, they come in many different flavors. There are lemon, cherry, grape, watermelon, orange, and butterscotch.

One thing I have noticed is that when you offer to share your suckers with children and allow them to choose the flavor they want, children can be very picky about the flavor they choose. My experience is that when I do this, I almost always end up with butterscotch suckers left over when all of the other flavors are gone.

I don't know why so many children won't choose the butterscotch suckers. Maybe it is because their flavor is different from the other suckers. Maybe it is because they don't like the color of the wrapping paper on the suckers. Whatever the reason may be, I always end up with butterscotch leftovers. Do you know what I do with the leftover suckers? I eat them myself! You see, I love them all!

Sometimes we treat people the same way some children treat these suckers. When children play games, some children are always the last to be chosen. Maybe it is because they are just a little bit different. Perhaps they have a physical handicap or maybe their skin is a different color. Whatever the reason might be, the other children just won't choose them.

Have you ever been the one that wasn't chosen? It isn't a very good feeling, is it? We all need to remember that Jesus loves ALL the children and He said, "Love each other as I have loved you." If you are ever the one that is left out, don't worry, Jesus loves you just as much as He loves the other children. He loves us all!

Dear Father, help us to remember that Jesus taught us to love one another just as you loved him and as he loved us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Scripture Reading: John 15:9-17

SUCKER RELAY: Divide the children into teams or groups. Set a timer for the length of time you want the relay to last. When the timer starts, team members will take turns running to a bucket filled with small suckers and will take ONE sucker and run back to the team and put it in the team bucket. The relay will continue until the time is up. When the time is up, the children will count their suckers and see which team has the most. Tell the children that each sucker represents other boys and girls who need to be shown God's Love.

BUBBLE BLOWING: Give each child a small bottle of bubble soap and let them blow as many bubbles as possible during a specified time limit. Tell children that there are more

boys, girls, men and women who need to know about God's love than all the bubbles they have blown.

LOVE RUN: Before class time begins, the teacher will put pieces of tape with GOD'S LOVE written on them at various places around the room. When the teacher says, GO FIND GOD'S LOVE, the children will search for the pieces of tape and quickly tape the words on a poster board until the designated time is up!

PEOPLE CHAIN: Provide the children with strips of various colors of construction paper that are all the same length and size. The children will be given a specified time limit to make as many paper loops linked together to form a chain. Explain to the children that each loop represents all the people, regardless of their skin color, that need to know GOD's Love.

PEOPLE FOLD OUTS: To begin making a paper doll chain, cut a sheet of construction paper in half lengthwise. Accordion fold your paper, making the folds as wide as you want your paper doll to be. Draw the doll shape onto the top fold. A basic doll shape is fine for beginners. Carefully cut out the design remembering that you should not cut the ends of the arms or the feet because this will make the chain fall apart. When opened up, the person should form a chain of 3 or 4 people. Let the children hang all their people on the wall representing those who need to know GOD's love.

HEART WREATH: Give each child a paper plate to lightly color and then glue or tape colored hearts all around the edge of the plate. Write today's Bible verse inside the middle section of the plate.

LOVE PRAYER BAGS: Give each child a lunch bag to decorate with markers and stickers. The child will then be given cut out hearts to write a name of someone they know on each heart and place all of their name hearts INSIDE the lunch bag. Encourage the children to take one heart out of the LOVE BAG each day and say a prayer for that person to experience GOD's LOVE that day. Make sure that everyone in the class writes their Sunday School classmate's names as well as the teacher's name!

LOVE CARD: Give each child a piece of card stock paper to fold and to write today's Bible verse inside the card. Write GOD'S LOVE on the outside of the card, as well as stickers, glitter, hearts, foam hearts or crosses. Children can be encouraged to stand their LOVE card on their dinner table at home.

SING A SONG: LOVE ONE ANOTHER

Love One Another

Theme: Loving others as Jesus loved us (6th Sunday of Easter)

Object: Cookies (see recipe below)

Scripture: My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. John 15:12 (NIV)

The cookies that I brought to share with you today are very special. These cookies were made from a recipe that was used for many years by a special lady named Lottie Moon. Lottie Moon lived many years ago. She grew up in a Christian home and went to church and learned about Jesus and his love.

Lottie had six brothers and sisters. One of her sisters was a missionary in China. Reading the letters her sister wrote helped Lottie to come to love the Chinese people and decide that she also wanted to be a missionary to China. Lottie went to college and studied to become a teacher then went to help her sister teach the children of China (IME 2004).

When she arrived in China, Lottie started a school and began to hold classes to teach boys and girls to read the Bible. At first, the Chinese children were afraid of Lottie. She tried to think of a way to get the children to trust her. She decided to bake some cookies, but that didn't work. You see, the children were afraid to eat the cookies because they were afraid that they might have poison in them. One day, one of the boys was so hungry that he decided to try one of the cookies. When he didn't get sick, the other children decided to try them too. Soon, Lottie became known as "the cookie lady." After the children ate the cookies, they would talk with Lottie, hear Bible stories and learn to read (IME 2004).

Why do you think Lottie loved the Chinese children so much? I think it was because she believed and put into practice what Jesus taught his disciples. Jesus said, "Love one another as I have loved you." How much did Jesus love us? He loved us so much that he gave his life for us. Lottie loved the children of China so much that she dedicated her life to teaching them how to read and write. And, even more important, she taught them about Jesus and his love.

Jesus loves you too -- and he wants you to love others as he loved you. How can you show the love of Jesus to other people? Maybe you could bake cookies for a someone who is sad or lonely. Maybe you could be a friend to a new student at school who doesn't know anyone. You could go to visit and pray for someone who is sick. There are a lot of ways to show people that you love them.

God wants all of us to be missionaries -- like Lottie Moon -- but you don't have to go to China to be a missionary. You can be a missionary right where you live! In fact, I think that is what God wants us to do.

Dear Jesus, we thank that you loved us so much that you gave your life for us. Help us to love one another as you have loved us. Amen.

Plain Tea Cakes Recipe

2 cups flour	Cream the butter and sugar. Add the egg and mix
1 heaping cup of sugar	well. Add the flour and cream. Dust a board with flour and roll the dough very thin. Cut cookies
1 tablespoon cream	with a round cookie cutter. Place on a greased or
1/2 cup butter	nonstick cookie sheet and bake at 475 degrees for
1 well-beaten egg	about five minutes.

Scripture Reading: John 15:9-17

LARGE COOKIE CUTTING: Let children cut out a very large circle and decorate as a COOKIE and write as if in frosting gel, "LOVE EACH OTHER"... John 15:12

COOKIE HUNT: Mini cookies can be purchased and hidden around a designated area for children to hunt for as a snack during the lesson today. Provide a small baggie for the cookies that they find. When children return to their classroom table, have children pass their bags of cookies to the right 2 children, or to the left 3 children, etc, so that each child will not keep the bag that they collected but will share the cookies and LOVE OTHERS as Jesus loved us!

LOTTIE MOON: Let children try to draw or trace LOTTIE MOON. Let children try to draw several CHINESE children around her. Draw or cut out little round cookies to glue on to the picture, onto a plate in the picture or in the children's hands. Write, Lottie Moon, the Cookie Lady, who shared Jesus with others.

MY MISSION FIELD: Encourage children to take turns at the chalk board to draw a picture of a MISSION FIELD that children might have. Some ideas are in our lesson and children may think of other places to be a missionary. Children will enjoy putting their idea on the chalk board! Let them sign their name to their mission field idea on the board.

COOKIE LADY RECIPE: Children could tape the cookie recipe onto a piece of paper and write LOTTIE MOON LOVED JESUS AND MADE COOKIES TO SHARE HIS LOVE.

PANTAMIMING LOVE: Each child can pick a slip of paper with an idea or children could come up with their own idea to pantomime a LOVE ACTION that they could do to be a missionary! Ideas in the lesson as well!

COOKIE CUTTER PICS: Give children various cookie cutters and let them trace them and cut them out. Glue each cut-out paper cookie onto a poster and encourage children to write way to share God's Love INSIDE each cookie!

COOKIE VERSE: Write the Bible verse today inside a large cut out paper cookie and the Bible reference as well. LITTLE words of the verse could be written together in separate places to look like choc chips, etc. OR the Bible verse could be written around the EDGE of the cookie and dots could be added to the cookie as choc. chips or raisins. A magnet on the back of this cookie will remind children all week of sharing LOVE with others, as they hang it on their refrigerator.