

They Will Know Us by Our Love 5th Sunday Easter Year C

Theme: Jesus gives a new commandment "Love one another. Easter 5-C

Object: A poster with pictures of zoo animals. ([Click Here.](#))

Scripture: A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. John 13:34-35 (NIV)

I love to go to the zoo and see all of the animals. This morning we are going to take an imaginary trip to the zoo. I will show you a poster with some animals and see how many of the animals you can name. I will point to a picture and you will call out the name of the animal. OK, are you ready? Here is the first one.

1. What is this animal? (Point to the elephant.) Right! It is an elephant. An elephant is easy to identify, isn't it? It is one of the largest of all animals, it is gray in color, has a large trunk which it uses for eating and drinking, and it has two large tusks on each side of its trunk.

2. Here is the next one. (Point to the giraffe.) Name this animal. You are right again. It is a giraffe. That was an easy one. The giraffe is the tallest of all animals. It is so tall it can eat leaves right off a tree. It has a unique spotted pattern and it can run at speeds up to 35 MPH.

3. The next one is a funny-looking animal. Can you name it? (Point to the rhinoceros.) I can't fool you! It is a rhinoceros. How can you tell it isn't an elephant? After all, it's large and gray colored. Oh, it has a big horn on its nose. That helps you to identify him right away.

4. How about this animal, can you tell me what it is? (Point to zebra.) Correct again! It is a zebra. I thought you might think it was a horse. How did you know it was a zebra? That's right! A zebra has black and white stripes. A horse doesn't.

5. Here is the last one. (Point to the lion.) I knew you would get that one. It is a lion, the king of beasts. It looks like a big cat and the male lion has a beautiful mane around his neck.

You all did a great job identifying these zoo animals, but I have another question for you. How would someone identify you as a follower of Jesus just by looking at you? That's a difficult question, isn't it? Well, our Bible reading for today has a good answer.

One day Jesus was talking to his disciples. He knew that the day was coming when he would return to heaven, and he was trying to prepare his disciples for the day when he would no longer be with them. He wanted to leave them with something that would help them to live in such a way that other people would see them and know that they were his disciples.

"I will be with you only a little while longer," Jesus said. "Then you will look for me, but you won't find me because you cannot go where I am going. I give you a new commandment. You must love each other just as I have loved you. If you love each other, everyone will know that you are my disciples."

Would you like for people to look at the way you live and know that you are a follower of Jesus? Well, then obey his command, "Love one another as I have loved you."

Dear Father, help us to live by the new commandment that Jesus left with his disciples. Help us to love others in the same way that Jesus loves us so that others will know that we are his disciples. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

Activities

MUSICAL LOVE CHAIRS: When the music stops, the one without a chair and still standing will simply tell a part of the Bible verse or a rule to follow. Then the music begins again... no one is ever out of the game.

BIBLE VERSE BALLOONS: Before the class begins, the teacher will put one word from the Bible verse on slips of paper — LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU. Roll the pieces of paper up and slip inside a balloon and have all 8 balloons blown up before class. Children will POP their balloon and together as a class they can piece together the Bible verse and then say the verse altogether.

LOVE RUN: Before class time, the teacher will hide paper hearts around the room with LOVE quotes them. The quotes should be sayings such as, JESUS LOVES ME, LOVE ONE ANOTHER, JESUS LOVES THE LITTLE CHILDREN, LOVE AS I HAVE LOVED YOU. To begin the game, the teacher will say something like "All children wearing something RED, run and find a heart and bring it back to your circle" or "Children who have shoe strings, run and find a heart." The game continues until all the hearts have been found. Let children tape their hearts to a large poster and begin discussing today's lesson and what each heart says and how it applies to each child with examples from the children!

HEART BOOKMARKER: Let each child draw and cut out a medium size heart out of construction paper. Write today's Bible verse or words from today's lesson and decorate with stickers and a ribbon at the top. Stick in their Bibles after finding today's Bible verse in their own Bibles (John 13:34)

PAPER PLATE LOVE HEARTS: Each child can be given a paper plate to lightly color and then draw or glue hearts around the edges of the paper plate. Write today's Bible verse in the middle section of the paper plate. LOVE can be drawn in the middle of each heart around the outer edge of the plate, making sure to use a different bright colored marker each time.

HEART PUPPETS: Children can tape together 2 matching hearts with enough room at the bottom of the heart to slip their hands or a couple of fingers into the heart to make a heart puppet! One heart can be the JESUS puppet and the other hearts can be the disciples. Have fun telling the story together and then all the heart puppets can say the Bible Verse together at the end.

PIN THE LOVE ON THE HEART: Put a large heart-shaped poster on the wall. Blindfold the children as they come to the poster and try to tape or pin the word LOVE on the heart. Discuss what it means to follow Jesus and have his love 'in our hearts'!

FOLLOW "LOVE" GAME: Children will line up and the leader will begin to walk with others following, until the teacher blows a whistle or calls out LOVE, etc. Everyone must stop and the leader will say, "I am a follower of Jesus" or will recite the Bible verse. Then that 'leader' will go to the end of the line and a new leader will begin the walk until the whistle blows again. If possible, let each child have an opportunity to be the leader, even if two lines have to be formed to do the exact same thing.