



WEEK FIVE – DECEMBER 2018 – PRETEEN (456)

Bible Story: *I Will Follow // 1 John 4:9–12*

Key Question: *How will you love others?*

Memory Verse: *“God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son. Anyone believes in him will not die but will have eternal life.” – John 3:16 NIV*

Life App: *Compassion – Caring enough to do something about someone*

Basic Truth: *I can trust God no matter what*

Summary: We finish our month on compassion in 1 John 4:9–12, where we read about God’s great love for us when He sent Jesus to pay the price for our sins. John reminds us that no one has ever seen God, but when we show love to others, people see God through us.

8:50–9:00 | 10:20–10:30 | 11:50–12:00 – FREE PLAY

9:00–9:10 | 10:30–10:40 | 12:00–12:10 – PRESERVICE ACTIVITY

1. Just for Fun

Move: an activity that increases the oxygen in the brain and tap into the energy in the body

What You Need: Large candy cane

What You Do:

- Sit in a circle.
- Place the candy cane in the center of the circle on a smooth, hard surface such as a clipboard or uncarpeted floor.
- Gently spin or flip the candy cane.
- When the candy cane stops spinning, invite whomever the end is pointing at to briefly share the best part of his or her Christmas break.
- For a second round, let the group share the worst part of their Christmas break.

Lead your group to the Large Group area.

9:10–9:45 | 10:40–11:15 | 12:10–12:45 – LARGE GROUP

OVERVIEW:

Key Question: *How will you love others? Showing God’s love to others is an important part of following Jesus. We want to help preteens figure out a plan for how they can show compassion to others and help them realize how much God loves them.*

9:45–10:05 | 11:15–11:35 | 12:45–1:05 SMALL GROUP

1. Take a Snapshot

[Application Activity]

Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: “12 Months” Activity Page; bells; painter’s tape

What You Do:

- Stand in a circle around the grid containing the “12 Months” cards.
- Explain that the students will take turns tossing a bow or bell onto one of the months then share a way to show compassion to someone during that time of year.
 - For example, if January is cold in your area, an act of compassion might be to make a cup of hot chocolate for someone.
- Tell them that the goal of the game is to work together to get at least one bow or bell on each month.
 - Students can move around the grid to get a better aim as long as they stand at least four feet from the edge.
- Remind students of holidays that are celebrated in certain months such as Valentine’s Day in February or Thanksgiving in November.
- Encourage creative ideas that are not only tangible gifts but also acts of kindness, helping others, encouraging words, and sharing their time

What You Say: “Every day, all year long we have opportunities to show compassion. With a little creativity and a willing attitude, each of us can share God’s love every single day with others. Telling others that God loves them means so much more when you also show them God’s love. When you make the first move to do something thoughtful, put someone first, or say something encouraging or when you’re just there for someone who’s having a rough day, you’re sharing the heart of God with them. That’s something that can be done anytime, all year long—not just at Christmas.”

2. Bible Story Extension

[Bible Story Review]

Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: Bibles; “Discussion Symbols” Activity Page cut apart

What You Do:

- Provide Bibles or let students use a Bible app to look up 1 John 4:9–12.
- Ask someone to read 1 John 4:9–12 aloud to the group.
- Place the “Discussion Symbols” where everyone can reach them.
- Unpack 1 John 4:9–12 by inviting students to choose one of the “Discussion Symbols” then share their thoughts, ideas, or questions based on the card they chose.
 - ARROW POINTING UP – Share something these verses tell us about God.
 - ARROW POINTING DOWN – Share something these verses tell us about people.
 - A LIGHT BULB – Share something you learned from this verse that you didn’t know or had forgotten.
 - AN EXCLAMATION MARK! – Share why this verse is exciting to you.

- A QUESTION MARK? – What do you not understand or want to ask about this verse?
- ARROW POINTING TO SIDE – Share something this verse tells you to do.

3. Discussion Questions

[Application Activity]

Connect: an activity that invites kids to share with others and build on their understanding

What You Need: N/A

What You Do:

- ASK
 - Why do we help people?
 - Why do we sometimes not help people? Can those ever be good reasons or are they just excuses?
 - Can our motives/reasons/intentions ever be selfish even when we're doing something to show God's love to others? Explain.
 - Do you think that being a kind person means that someone is a follower of Jesus? Why or why not?
 - If someone is kind to you first, it's usually easy to be kind back. What has God done to show kindness and compassion to you first? How can you show kindness back to God?

4. Make It Personal with Prayer

[Prayer Activity]

Reflect: an activity that creates space for personal understanding and application

What You Need: Wide ribbon; pens; sticky notes from “Bible Story Extension”

What You Do:

- Provide a few minutes for students to pray silently or out loud.
- Encourage and challenge them to . . .
- Thank God for the way He loves them based on what's written on the paper ring they chose.
- Pray for God's help to show love in the week ahead.

What You Say:

“Dear God, we want to thank You for loving us every day and always. Help us to love You in return and to show Your compassion to others—even when it's not Christmas, even when it's not easy, and even when others don't love us back. In Jesus' name, amen.”