



## WEEK ONE – FEBRUARY 2019 – PRETEEN

**Bible Story:** *You're the Inspiration* ▪ John 15:12–13

**Key Question:** *What makes you feel loved?*

**Memory Verse:** *“Here is what love is. It is not that we loved God. It is that he loved us and sent his Son to give his life to pay for our sins.” – 1 John 4:10 (NirV)*

**Life App:** *Love—Choosing to treat others the way you want to be treated*

**Basic Truth:** *I should treat others the way I want to be treated.*

**Summary:** We start the month with something Jesus said in John 15:12–13: *“Here is my command. Love one another, just as I have loved you. No one has greater love than the one who gives their life for their friends.”* Jesus proved this to us when He put us first by giving His life for us. If we say that we follow Jesus, then we should show others how much we love them.

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## PRE-SERVICE ACTIVITY

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### 1. Get Your Head in the Game

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

**What You Need:** N/A

**What You Do:**

- Welcome kids and spend time engaging in conversation and asking about their past week
- Invite kids to place their offerings in the *For Everyone* box on the wall near the main entrance
- Invite kids to give their answers to the following questions then share why they chose one answer over the other.
  - Would you rather be first in line at an amusement park or first among your friends to get a cool phone?
  - Would you rather be first to give a report in front of the class or first to sing a solo in front of the church?
  - Would you rather miss the first day of school or the last day of vacation?
  - Would you rather be the first player chosen on a team or first to score a winning point in a game?
  - Would you rather be first to show kindness to someone or first to receive it?
  - Would you rather be first to jump into a cold swimming pool or last?
- Add other questions as needed keeping the theme of being first.

**What You Say:**

*“Most of the time it’s pretty great being first. That is, unless it’s something you don’t want to do. In Large Group, we’re going to hear about something Jesus did first, best, and longest. It was something He chose to do even though it wasn’t easy. Let’s go to Large Group to find out what it was.”*

***Lead your group to the Large Group area.***

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## LARGE GROUP

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**OVERVIEW:**

**Key Question:** *What makes you feel loved?* Preteens are becoming more self-aware. We start with this question because when kids start to understand the times when they feel loved, they’ll be more aware of how their actions can help someone else feel loved.

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## SMALL GROUP

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### 1. Take a Snapshot

#### [Application Activity]

*Play: an activity that encourages learning through following guidelines and working as a group*

**What You Need:** Paper, pens, dictionaries (or devices with internet access or a dictionary app)

#### What You Do:

- Give each kid a dictionary or let them use an online dictionary or app on their phones (or yours).
- Ask them to find a random word in the dictionary that they think most of the group would not be familiar with. They will need to keep their word a secret.
- Distribute paper and pens.
- Invite kids to write a description of the perfect friend and include the word they picked out from the dictionary in the definition.
  - When finished, take turns reading their definitions to one another.
  - Challenge the group to see if they can figure out the meaning of the chosen word based on how it's used in the description.

#### What You Say:

*“It’s not easy to describe a true friend—especially with a random word from the dictionary attached—but we know a friend when we meet one. Friends make us feel loved. They often put us first, and we do the same for them. The fact is love didn’t start with us. We love others because God loved us first. We are able to love others because God put that ability within us. He will always love us first, best, and most. His love drove Him to sacrifice His only Son on our behalf to make the relationship between us right again. Love is part of who God is and how He interacts with the world.”*

### 2. 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:
  - What’s something you love ALL of the time?
  - When do you feel most loved?

- Think (silently) of someone you CHOOSE to love even when you don't feel like it. It's probably someone in your family or maybe a friend you tend to have drama with. What do you do to show love to that person when you don't FEEL love toward them?
  - ***[Make it Personal] (Share your own answer to this question, especially if kids seem to be stuck for answers. If you can share without being gossipy or overly negative and talk about a typical situation in which it's hard to feel love toward a particular person, do so. Kids don't need to know all the details, but it's good for them to know their leaders struggle with the same things they do!)***
- If you don't really like someone, is it fake to be nice to them? What is okay or not okay about that kind of love?
- What can you do to help you show genuine love to others?

### 3. Verse to Take With You

#### [Prayer Activity]

*Explore: an activity that extends learning through hands-on experimentation and discovery*

**What You Need:** Bible, balloons, hex nuts

#### What You Do:

- Give a balloon and hex nut to each of the kids.
- Show the group how to push the hex nut through the opening of the balloon until it drops into the bottom.
- Instruct kids to blow up their balloons but not over-inflate them, as they will easily burst.
- Inflate one balloon for yourself, but don't add a hex nut to it.
- Instruct kids to tie off the end of the balloon.
- Demonstrate how to grip the balloon at the knotted end and swirl it in a circular motion. The hex nut may bounce around at first, but it will soon begin to roll around the inside of the spinning balloon and make noise.
- Set the balloons aside.
- Spin the empty balloon in front of the kids pointing out that there's no sound coming from it. The obvious reason is that it's empty. There is no hex nut inside.
- Remind kids that in order for us to love the way God does, He needs to be living inside of us.
- Look up and read John 13:34–35.
- Ask:
  - According to John 13:35, how will people know that we are followers or disciples of Jesus?
  - Why should Jesus followers be the most loving people of all?

- If we don't love others does, that mean we're not followers of Jesus? Why or why not?
- Remind your group what it means to be a follower of Jesus by explaining that God loved us first, best, and forever.
  - He wants a relationship with us, but sin keeps that from happening.
  - God gave His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for our sins.
  - Jesus made a way for our sins to be forgiven by taking the consequences we deserve.
  - When we believe that Jesus died in our place, God forgives our sin and gives us the promise of having a relationship with Him forever.
  - He gives us the Holy Spirit inside of us to help us live for God and love others.
- Encourage any questions kids may have about what it means to know Jesus. Before leading any kids to take steps toward salvation, consider what you know about their families and if parents would want to be present for those moments/conversations.
- Close in prayer

**What You Say:**

*“Dear God, thank You for the love You show us every day. You care for us, listen to us, and are always with us. No one will ever love us more than You do. Help us to not be afraid to show Your kind of love to others—even if we don't receive anything in return. Help us be okay with being the first—or maybe the ONLY one in the group to think of others. In Jesus' name, amen.”*

***As adults arrive to pick up, don't forget to hand out this month's content overview to each parent!***