



## WEEK THREE – FEBRUARY 2019 – PRETEEN

**Bible Story:** *Never Gonna Give You Up* • Matthew 5:43–47

**Key Question:** *When is it hard to love others?*

**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:** Jesus brought His followers to a mountain to explain to them what it means to live as part of God’s kingdom. During that message, He said something surprising about love. In Matthew 5:43–47 Jesus said: *“You’ve heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor. Hate your enemy.’ But here is what I tell you. Love your enemies. Pray for those who hurt you.”* Jesus wanted to be sure that love is bigger than we think, and everyone deserves love.

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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:** “Pairs of Opposites” Activity Page

**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 teams of three or four kids to sit in a circle.
- Give each team a set of “Pairs of Opposites” cards, asking them not to look at what’s written on the cards.
- Direct kids to place the cards face down in two even rows in the middle of their circle.
- Explain that the cards contain words that are opposites, and kids will be playing a matching game with the cards.
- Tell kids to take turns flipping over two random cards.
  - If the words on the cards are opposites, that player keeps the cards.
  - If they aren’t, he turns them back over and it is the next player’s turn.
  - The first team to get all of the cards matched is the winner.
- If you have a more active group, consider this alternate game:
  - Give each kid one of the “Pairs of Opposites” cards, making sure both pairs of cards are given out.
  - Ask kids to not say or show what is written on their card.
  - At the same time, everyone will each act out what is on their card as they watch the rest of the group to find their “match” (the kid who is doing the opposite of their own action)

**What You Say:**

*“When we follow Jesus, there will be times when He asks us to do the opposite of what our natural response might be. For example, He will tell us to be joyful even in hard times or to put others first instead of ourselves. Living for Jesus sometimes means doing the opposite of what we feel like doing. In Large Group, we’re going to learn about something God helps us do that’s the opposite of what we might normally want to do.”*

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

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## LARGE GROUP

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### OVERVIEW:

**Key Question:** *When is it hard to love others?* Loving others won't always be easy. Preteens are very aware that there are people they don't get along with or who don't get along with them. We hope they start thinking about those moments when it's more difficult to show love to them. When they're aware of those moments, they can pray about a better response than the one in their head. Hopefully, they'll choose to show love.

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## SMALL GROUP

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### 1. Take a Snapshot

#### [Application Activity]

*Imagine: an activity that promotes empathy and facilitates biblical application through role-play*

**What You Need:** Index cards; pens

#### What You Do:

- Set up two teams.
- Ask Team One to write down 10 things that people do that make them hard to love, one example on each index card.
  - *Instruct kids not to include anyone's name.*
- Ask Team Two to write down 10 things people do that show love, one thing on each index card.
- Bring teams together when everyone's finished.
- Invite someone from Team One to read one of their cards.
- Ask Team Two to share an action described on one of their cards that might be a helpful or loving way to respond in that situation.
  - If none of their cards fit the situation Team Two described, brainstorm as a group what a loving response might be.
- Continue in the same manner by having Team One read a card and Team Two respond with ideas written on their cards.
- Encourage kids to share experiences they have had in which a loving response has diffused a tense situation or helped turn an enemy into a friend.

#### What You Say:

*“Throughout our lives, we will encounter lots of situations in which we are teased, annoyed, or treated unfairly by someone. As a follower of Jesus, we can (and SHOULD) respond differently from those who don't know Jesus. When we come face to face with those who are hard to love, it's an opportunity to remember that every person matters to God. He doesn't hold back His*

*love from people who treat others badly or give His love only to people who are nice. God made each of us in His image, and that means we matter to Him. God’s plan is to help each person come to know, love, and follow Jesus. When you show love to an enemy, you’re reaching out to them the way God does.”*

## **2. Discussion Questions**

### **[Application Activity]**

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

**What You Need:** N/A

### **What You Do:**

- Ask:
  - Loving an enemy isn’t easy. Why is it worth the effort?
  - Why do you think every person matters to God?
  - Jesus showed love to everyone, but He still had enemies. What can we learn from His example?
  - What should you do if you are being bullied? What about if you see someone else being bullied?
  - If you can’t stop someone from being unkind to you, what should you do? How do you love that person without letting them continue to hurt you?
- Close it in prayer

### **What You Say:**

*“Dear God, we know that You love us no matter what. Even if we never loved You in return, You would still continue to love us. Help us this week when we struggle to love those who are difficult. Remind us of the things we learned today and the way You want us to treat others because they matter to You. In Jesus’ name, amen.”*