
GOD IS LOVE

SERIES: SANCTIFIED

Join us throughout the month of August as we learn how God SANCTIFIES us when we choose to live for Him. We will be going through the books of 1 Corinthians, James, and Revelation.

REMEMBER VERSE

1 THESSALONIANS 5:23—May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

SCHEDULE

All Services

0:00—0:10	Welcome/Check-In
0:10—0:15	Transition to Large Group
0:15—0:30	Large Group (B100)
0:30—0:35	Transition to Small Group
0:35—1:05	Small Group (Lesson/Activity/Respond)
1:05—1:15	Dismiss

NOTES

LEADER RESOURCES

SERIES OVERVIEW

CURRENT WEEK: God Is Love

Letter to the Corinthians

WEEK 2: God Is Wisdom

Letter from James

WEEK 3: Jesus Is Invincible

Return of Christ

WEEK 4: Remember & Celebrate

ZONK!

EQUIP

Located about 50 miles west of Athens, Corinth was one of the most important Greek cities in Paul's time. After preaching at Athens, Paul stopped in Corinth, where he spent more time than in just about any other city.

The extreme pagan nature of the city can be seen in the presence of Greek, Roman, and Egyptian temples. The city was so debauched that the name "Corinth" became a synonym for sexual immorality. A famous temple to Aphrodite stood atop the hill where 1,000 temple prostitutes once were housed. Standing at the crossroads of two major harbors, the city saw its share of sailors, who helped give the city its reputation. Just as famous was the temple of Poseidon, the Greek god of the sea, upon whom worshippers thought their commercial enterprise depended. Also present were temples to Apollo, Hermes, Venus, Isis, and a Pantheon dedicated to "all the gods."

One temple of note was the shrine to Asclepius, the Greek god of medicine and healing. When visiting the museum at Corinth, one can view hundreds of terracotta ritual offerings that had been presented to Asclepius in hopes of cures and healings. Included in these offerings are clay copies of particular body parts that petitioners wanted healed, including limbs, hands, feet, and other parts. Worshippers hung these offerings around the temple. This helps unearth a motive for Paul's extended discussion of parts of the body in 1 Corinthians 12, where he explains how we're all parts of Christ's body and individually members of it.

This wholly pagan environment, where false, empty forms of love ran rampant, gave Paul a perfect opportunity to explain what true love is really like. These pagan substitutes weren't love. God is love.

ENCOURAGE

"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails." 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a

Many people find 1 Corinthians 13 to be one of the most moving passages in the Bible. Take some time to savor the beauty of these words. If you have time, try memorizing them so they become rooted in and to your soul. Pray God will consume you with His Holy Spirit so fully that you can't help but love as He does, without envy, competition, selfishness, resentment, boasting, pride, anger, or malice. Pray you'll be filled with the strength to persevere in relationships, be kind when you don't feel like it, trust others, hope for others' success, have patience, and give kindness. Pray God will give you the ability to model His love for others in ways that would be impossible without the supernatural strength of the Holy Spirit.

WELCOME

Some fun ideas to welcome kids as they check-in to your room at the beginning of service.

Invite the kids to color on the provided coloring page or work on the provided activity page.

As kids arrive, feel free to ask them this week's Connect Question. Feel free to write the question on the board and encourage some fun dialogue before you start your lesson.

QUESTION: Have you ever been part of a team? If so, what was your role?

RESPOND

A chance for kids to respond to what God is putting on their hearts through creative expression.

God's love is perfect. He is always patient, kind, and forgiving! Because His Spirit lives inside of us, He helps us love others in that way too, even if it's hard.

INSTRUCTIONS: Hand each child a piece of cardstock and a white crayon. Have them write a phrase (or multiple) about God's Love. (i.e. God is Love, Love is Patient, God Loves Me/You). Then, have them paint over the crayon and all around with water color so that their message stands out against the color.

SUPPLIES:

- Card stock
- White crayons
- Water color

REFLECT

A chance to reflect on what kids have just learned about The Big God Story.

In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul compared the church to the human body. Because the human body functions as a whole, each part is important to the other parts. When one part suffers, all of the parts suffer. When all of the parts of the body work together, the entire body works as one healthy unit.

- What were some reasons Paul wrote the letter to the Corinthian church? *1 Corinthians 1:10-17, 5:1-13; 6:1-20*
- In what ways did Paul compare the church to a human body? *1 Corinthians 12:12-13*
- How can you become a part of the body of Christ? *Romans 10:9*
- How do you know we're all a part of the body of Christ? *1 Corinthians 12:12-14*
- Have you ever hurt your hand? How did your arm feel? How does being connected to each other work?
- What do you think the church would be like if every member modeled love for everyone else?
- What do you think the most loving church ever would look like? *1 Corinthians 13:1-7*

BLESS

A powerful way to bless the kids and parents by sending them off with a benediction.

INSTRUCTIONS: Invite the parents into your room at the end of the service to say one last prayer together with the whole family. Instruct them to find their child and sit/stand by their side. Explain what their child learned today and read the verse below. Pray together and then dismiss.

1 JOHN 4:7-8 – Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

BLESSING: May you know the amazing, huge, wonderful love of God. May His love lead you to love and care for others.

NOTES

This script serves as an outline of what your storytelling might sound like. Items written in italics are cues for the storyteller and are not meant to be read out loud. You are fully encouraged to make it your own and add a personal touch.

The script serves as an example, however if you would like to teach based on the script and are in need of any supplies mentioned, we would be happy to supply those for you! Storytelling images mentioned will always be provided in your basket each week, but if you need any other supplies for your lesson, contact a Grove KIDS Staff member beforehand so we can supply it for you! You are also welcome to bring in your own props if you would like!

RESOURCES PROVIDED

- None

STORYTELLING

We've been learning about a person who writes many letters to different churches? Who is it? *Invite kids to respond.* That's right—Paul! He loved Jesus so much that he told anyone he could about Jesus. He traveled to many places and helped start many churches. And he often wrote to those churches to remind them about what was true, to help them live for Jesus, and to remind them that God is love. *Write "God Is Love" in the middle of the whiteboard.* Let's take a minute to thank God for loving us and sending us Jesus to set us free from sin! *Lead the children in a Prayer of Release to pause, be still, and ask the Holy Spirit to quiet their hearts and minds.*

One of the churches Paul wrote to was in a city called Corinth. *Invite kids to turn to 1 Corinthians 12 in their Bibles so they can follow along.* Corinth was a beautiful city with lots of money and people. *Ask a volunteer to come up and write "Corinth" somewhere on the board and another volunteer to draw several stick figures.* Many people traveled through the city and liked to stop and talk about all kinds of things. Many people in Corinth also worshipped false gods. Because of this, the Christians in Corinth sometimes had a hard time. They weren't like the other Corinthians—they followed Jesus when no one else did. Have you ever followed Jesus at a time when no one else did? *Invite kids to respond.* Amazing! Sometimes following Jesus is hard. But it's worth it! Jesus died for our sins, and He cares for us so much. We can always remember that the Holy Spirit is with us and will encourage us because God is love. *Ask a volunteer to write "Holy Spirit" on the board.*

Paul heard that the Corinthian Christians were arguing and fighting, so he decided to write letters to the Corinthians. Fighting with others who follow Jesus isn't good because God calls us to be united and to love one another. Also, if the other Corinthians saw that all the Christians were fighting, they wouldn't understand that God is love. Paul wrote a letter to the church at Corinth to remind them of the truth. *Ask a volunteer to write "Paul's letter" on the board.* He told them that he was thankful for them and that God had made them a holy people who could live for Him.

In his letter, Paul reminded the Christians that the Holy Spirit lived inside of them and gave them gifts so that they could love and serve one another. *Ask a volunteer to read 1 Corinthians 12:4-6.* We're all different kinds of people. What are some things you're good at? *Invite kids to respond.* Wow! God has given us some amazing gifts, and many of us have different gifts. We can use these

gifts to serve God and love each other. *Invite a few volunteers to come write some of their gifts on the board.* Paul wanted the Corinthians to remember this—instead of fighting and arguing, they could use their gifts to love because God is love. *Point to "God Is Love" on the board.*

Paul then helped the Corinthians understand what he was saying by giving them a good way to think about unity—or working together. Paul told the Corinthians that they were all a part of one body because they were all Christians. *Volunteer reads 1 Corinthians 12:12-14 aloud.* A body has many parts. We have arms, legs, eyes, and ears. Each part of our body is really important to us. We see with our eyes, we walk with our legs, we hear with our ears, and our arms lift things. All the parts of the body are important and have different jobs. *Ask a volunteer to draw a stick figure to represent "one body" on the board.* You see, some of the Christians in Corinth thought they were more important than others. They thought their gifts were better or that they had more important jobs. But Paul reminded them that God has given everyone gifts, and every part of the body is needed.

Then Paul wrote about one of the most important things—love. Because God is love, we can love one another. We may have lots of gifts and talents—we could be great at sports or singing or school—but if we don't love God and others, it doesn't mean anything! Paul reminded the Corinthians that God is love, and that love means that we do certain things for each other.

Invite the kids to look at 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Wow! Look at this list that describes what love is. Let's go over it together. Paul said that love is patient. Love is also kind. Paul said that love doesn't envy, or get jealous. And it doesn't boast or brag, and it doesn't get proud. Paul reminded the Corinthians that love isn't unkind to others, it isn't selfish, doesn't get mad easily, and doesn't keep track of what others have done wrong. Then Paul said that love rejoices in what's true. It protects others, trusts, hopes, and keeps going, even when things are tough. Wow! What an amazing list of love. And do you know what? God is love, and He has shown us what love looks like in all of these ways.

What a wonderful letter Paul wrote to the Corinthians! This letter still helps us today. It reminds us not to fight or argue with one another. Instead, we can use our gifts to serve each other and serve God. And, most importantly, it reminds us that love is the most important thing. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we can love each other because God is love!