



Community

We share God's love in our relationships.

POWER TEXT

"How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!" (Psalm 133:1).

KEY REFERENCES

- Matthew 5:21-26, 33-48
- *The Desire of Ages*, chap. 31, pp. 310-314
- *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, chap. 3, pp. 55-58, 66-78
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 8, pp. 62-65
- student story on page 52 of this guide.

OUR BELIEFS

- No. 14, Unity in the Body of Christ
- No. 12, The Church
- No. 22, Christian Behavior

OBJECTIVES

The students will:

- **Know** that God wants His love to be seen in all their friendships.
- **Feel** they want God's love to be part of all their friendships.
- **Respond** by seeking specific ways to express God's love to their friends.

More Secrets of the Kingdom



Because God
loves us,
we are able
to love our
friends and
our enemies.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

In a series of short topics, Jesus lovingly raises His listeners' sight above the commonly practiced behavior of the time to a higher standard. Speaking of how we relate to one another, He expresses a deeper, truly Christian lifestyle, characterized by love, understanding, and compassion.

This is a lesson about community.

Christians are called to a higher standard than anyone else. As they express their love for their friends as well as for their enemies, both are drawn more closely to the community of faith and the Savior who is at the center.

Teacher Enrichment

"Occasions of irritation to the Jews were constantly arising from their contact with the Roman soldiery. . . . With bitterness of soul they heard the loud blast of the trumpet and saw the troops forming around the standard of Rome and bowing in homage to this symbol of her power. Collisions between the people and the soldiers were frequent, and these inflamed the popular hatred. . . . Every day deepened in the hearts of the people the longing to cast off the Roman yoke. . . . The people looked eagerly to Christ, hoping that He was the One who was to humble the pride of Rome" (*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 69, 70).

"[Jesus] pointed His hearers to the Ruler of the universe, under the new name, 'Our Father.' . . . Even the people of Israel had become so blinded to the precious teaching of the prophets concerning God that this revelation of His paternal love was as an original subject, a new gift to the world. . . . The Jews held that God loved those who served Him—according to their view, those who fulfilled the requirements of the rabbis—and that all the rest of the world lay under His frown and curse. Not so, said Jesus; the whole world, the evil and the good, lies in the sunshine of His love" (*ibid.*, p. 74).


What are three things God has done for me for which I am grateful? How does focusing on these gifts from God impact the way I treat others—even difficult people?

Welcome



Welcome students at the door and direct them to their seats. Ask them how their week has been. Encourage learners to study their Sabbath School lesson regularly, and use several minutes to debrief students on the previous week's lesson.

Ask: **What was the most interesting part of the Bible story? What activity did you find most helpful? Which activity was the most fun?** Invite students to share their experiences and/or the handiworks they created for Sabbath School during the week.

(The leader should be familiar with the previous lesson to be able to direct the discussion.) This is also a good time to have students recite the power text.

Have students begin the readiness activity of your choice. 

Program notes

LESSON SECTION	MINUTES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS NEEDED
Welcome	Ongoing	Greet students at door. Ask about their week.	
1 Readiness	10-15	A. <i>Fill That Cup</i>	paper cup, paper, pens, whiteboard or chalkboard, markers or chalk
		B. <i>Practicing Empathy</i>	situation cards
 Prayer and Praise	15-20	See page 47. Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.	songbooks, world map, pushpins, offering plate/basket
2 Bible Lesson	15-20	Introducing the Bible Story	
		Experiencing the Story	Bibles, pen, paper (optional)
		Exploring the Bible	Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	10-15	<i>Scenarios</i>	
4 Sharing the Lesson	10-15	<i>Going the Extra Mile</i>	
 Closing		A. Prayer and Closing Comments B. Reminder to Parents C. Coming Up Next Week	

LESSON 4

1

READINESS ACTIVITIES

Select the activity or activities that are most appropriate for your situation.

A

Fill That Cup

Distribute pens and paper to each class member. Hold up a paper cup.

Say: **Think of a creative use for this cup. Do this on your own without talking to the person next to you.**

Allow one or two minutes for students to do this.

Say: **Now get into groups of four or five and tell the uses you thought of.** After they have reported to each other, have each group report their ideas while you write them where all can see.

Debriefing

Ask: **How many uses for the cup did you discover when you worked alone?** (Write the numbers on the board.) **How many uses for the cup did you learn from others in your group?** (Write the numbers on the board.) **Look at the numbers on the board. What do they tell you?** (You come up with more ideas when you do them with others.) **What does this tell us about our need for others?** (We benefit from working with others.)

Allow students who know the power text to say it either individually or in group:

“How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity!” (Psalm 133:1).

Have the entire class repeat the power text together. Allow visitors and students who don’t know it yet to read along. Affirm them for their effort. However, do not single out students by forcing everyone to say it, nor reprimand those who don’t know it. Sabbath School is a place where students need to feel comfortable and accepted as they grow in God’s grace.

Remember that

🔊 Because God loves us, we are able to love our friends and our enemies.

YOU NEED:

- paper
- pens
- paper cup
- chalkboard/whiteboard
- chalk or markers

B

Practicing Empathy

Prior to Sabbath School create several scenarios on separate situation cards. Here is a list of situations you may wish to consider:

1. Tomorrow I will be arriving at your town where I know no one and there is no public transportation directly to where I need to go. Could any of you help me find a ride from the train station?

2. My parents are working until very late this evening and I have nowhere to go after school. Could anyone help me find a place to go until my parents return from work?

3. I am your neighbor and I’ve just returned from the hospital where I had surgery. I don’t have enough strength to walk and take care of myself. Do you know of anyone who would be able to stay at my house and help for a few days?

Have students form groups and distribute one situation card per group. Ask group members to read the situation on their card and discuss solutions to these problems.

At the end allow someone from each group to share with the class the “situation” that was listed on their card and the solution they found to it.

Debriefing

Say: **What did it feel like to place yourself in the shoes of a person who desperately needs help? How did you feel when someone offered you help? How is this like or unlike the way God wants us to treat one another? How is this the way we treat our friends?**

If you have not done Readiness Activity A, review now with the students the power text, Psalm 133:1, as outlined in the previous activity.

“How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity!” (Psalm 133:1).

Say: **Remember that**

🔊 Because God loves us, we are able to love our friends and our enemies.

YOU NEED:

- situation cards



Prayer and Praise

Notes

Large empty rectangular box for taking notes.

Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). If they have given you permission, share one or two special items from students' Bible study during the week. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.

Suggested Songs

"Behold What Manner of Love" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 42)

"Friends" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 118)

"This Is My Commandment" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 116)

Mission

Use *Adventist Mission for Youth and Adults* (go to www.juniorpowerpoints.org and click on MISSION) or another mission report available to you. For the mission story, have a map of the world where the students can identify the location of the mission story and compare it to where they are. You could use pushpins to mark where the mission story takes place.

Offering

Say: **We show love to our friends, and to people we don't even know when we bring our tithes and offerings to Sabbath School.**

YOU NEED:

offering plate/basket

Prayer

Have students join hands and pray: **Jesus, together we come to this place. Please show us how to love each other today, and also how to love others outside this circle of friendship. Amen.**


* Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

2

BIBLE LESSON

Introducing the Bible Story

Say: **Our lesson for today discusses the importance of using our words wisely. It also has good advice on how to treat our friends and even our enemies. What are some general rules for good conversations that lead to positive relationships?** (respect, good listening skills, desire to build each other up not to tear each other down, protecting the rights and reputation of others, not gossiping, etc.)

 **Because God loves us, we are able to love our friends and our enemies.**

Experiencing the Story

Form four groups. Have each group read aloud in their own group, as follows: Group One, Matthew 5:21-26; Group Two, Matthew 5:33-37; Group Three, Matthew 5:38-42; Group Four, Matthew 5:43-48.

Have each group write a short summary of their passage, using modern circumstances. Each summary should begin with "You have heard it said . . ." and contain "But I tell you . . ." For instance, "You have heard it said that you shouldn't murder anyone, but I tell you that if you are angry with your little brother you probably are not a citizen of the invisible kingdom." Allow time for each group to report to the class.

YOU NEED:

- Bibles
- paper
- pencils

Accommodation for students with special needs

Allow students who experience difficulty with writing and spelling to express verbally their observations, while another group member records their answers in writing.

3

APPLYING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:

- Bibles

Exploring the Bible

Say: **Much of what Jesus talked about on the mountain was not new. It was all in the Torah, the books of the law, that made up the Jewish Bible at the time. What was new was the way that He interpreted these sayings. The scribes, Pharisees, and teachers of the law interpreted the law in a way that was troublesome and unclear. Jesus interpreted the law correctly because He was the author of the law. Let's look at some of the Old Testament texts on which the Sermon on the Mount was based.**

Staying in the same groups, have the students find and read: Group One, Exodus 20:13; Group Two, Leviticus 19:12; Numbers 30:2; Deuteronomy 23:21-23; Group Three, Exodus 21:23-25; Leviticus 24:19, 20; Deuteronomy 15:7-11; Group Four, Leviticus 19:18; Deuteronomy 23:2, 3, 6; Leviticus 19:2. When they finish, ask: **What comparisons did you find between your first set of verses and your second set?**


Give each group time to report. The students in Group Four will probably say that they couldn't find a verse that said to hate your enemy.

Say: **The words "Hate your enemy" cannot be found anywhere in the Old Testament, but the teachers of the day taught that hating your enemy was OK. How do you think those teachers and others like them felt when they heard Jesus' teaching?** (jealous, angry, resentful) **How would you have felt?** (confused, hopeless, relieved, happy).

Scenarios

Ask: **Tell me about a time someone treated you unfairly.** When the situation is shared, for example: someone said something unkind about me to another person, then say: **I know I have been guilty of gossiping at times. Has anyone else here done that before? No matter what we have done God loves us. Since God loved us even when we talked bad about someone else, can we practice that same kind of love? Now we are able to love our friends and our enemies.**

Say: **Tell me about another situation when someone wronged you.** (Repeat several times, making the point that we ourselves have experienced God's love and forgiveness no matter how badly we behaved. Because of that we get to pass along that grace and mercy to others.)

 **Because God loves us, we are able to love our friends and our enemies.**

4

SHARING THE LESSON

Going the Extra Mile

Ask students to form groups of three or four. Have them share how they have gone the extra mile for a friend in need and how they have sought to implement the attributes of God's kingdom in their everyday experiences (i.e., was a peacemaker in a disagreement among peers).

If there are students who would like to share in front of the entire group, have them talk about their experiences. Close by referring to the blessings that Jesus promises to everyone who lives according to these values of His kingdom.

Say: **Let's say together our power text,**

"How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!" (Psalm 133:1).

Closing

Prayer and closing comments:

Ask God to show your Sabbath School members that He is the only one who can give them the power to love their friends and enemies the way He asks them to: through His grace.

Reminder to parents:

Say: **Check out the student Bible study guide to find Parents' Pages for your use in family worship, or however you wish to use them to spiritually guide your children. You may listen to the podcast of the lesson online at www.juniorpowerpoints.org/podcast.php?channel=1.**

Coming up next week:

Say: **A friend borrows bread in the middle of the night. God wants us to help our friends even if it is inconvenient.**

Notes

Student lesson

More Secrets of the Kingdom

Have you ever heard a sermon so radical that it made you want to change right away, but it made other people angry? Many in Jesus' audience had that experience as He finished telling them about the invisible kingdom. Imagine again one of the boys your age who was there.

The boy watched the Pharisees as Jesus talked. They listened with stony faces. *I guess they don't agree with what He's saying*, he thought.

That day the boy heard so many great things. He learned from Jesus that as a true child of the heavenly Father, he needed to treat friends and strangers with love and compassion. Even when he didn't feel like it, God would enable him to love others.

The boy thought about the beggar boys in the marketplace. Their clothes were ragged and dirty. He felt uncomfortable around them and tried to avoid them. *Maybe I can help them somehow*, he thought.

Jesus continued talking about how a person's actions tell others much about the condition of the heart. "You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment" (Matthew 5:21).

The crowd listened closely as Jesus explained what He meant. The Pharisees' stony expressions turned to frowns.

"Therefore, if you are offering your

gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift" (verses 23, 24).

The boy thought about the argument he'd had with his friend. He hadn't felt much like talking to God, either. Later when they settled the issue, he didn't have that empty feeling anymore.

Jesus then instructed that we need to get rid of anything that causes us to sin, though that thing may be very precious to us. Nothing should be allowed to interfere with God's plan for our life.

Looking at his father, the boy thought, *He chose to quit doing certain things he said were keeping him away from God.*

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy,'" Jesus continued. "But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. . . . Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (verses 43-48).

The boy glanced at Mother. Sometimes she would take food to a woman whose husband had died. Other times she provided clothes for people who had lost everything when their house burned down. It never mattered to her whether she knew the people.

"Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen

by them," Jesus warned. "But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you" (Matthew 6:1, 3, 4).

He thought about his mother's actions. She never made a big deal about what she was doing for others.

That's a lot different than other people I've seen, he thought. *The Pharisees always make such a commotion.*

The boy reflected on Jesus' teaching. Now he understood that as a child of the heavenly Father, he must show those who don't know Him what being Jesus' follower truly means. If people would see him treating others with love and respect, they might ask questions about why he acted that way. Then he could tell them about God and what He has done in his life. But if he was careless in his actions, then he would not be a mirror of God's love. Those who don't know Jesus wouldn't recognize anything different in his life. Then he would lose the chance to tell them about God and what He has done for him.

Later the boy said to his parents, "Jesus said so many things today. I don't know how I can do everything He said."

"Remember, you can't do any of it on your own," Father reminded him. "God gives you the power."

The boy's face lit with a beaming smile. "I like that idea!" he said.

KEY REFERENCES

- Matthew 5:21-26, 33-48
- *The Desire of Ages*, chap. 31, p. 310-314
- *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, chap. 3, pp. 55-58, 66-78
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 8, pp. 62-65
- Our Beliefs nos. 14, 12, 22

POWER TEXT

“How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity!” (Psalm 133:1).

POWER POINT

Because God loves us, we are able to love our friends and our enemies.



Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 33.

Sunday

READ Read Matthew 5:21, 22 and the story, “More Secrets of the Kingdom.”

THINK What are some ways you can live in unity at home and at school?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Praise God for the way He loves and cares for you.

Monday

READ Read Matthew 5:23-26.

THINK Why is it important how we treat others?

PLAN In your Bible study journal, list things you can do to overcome anger (take a walk, count to 10, etc.).

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God’s forgiveness for the last time you acted out of anger at someone.

Tuesday

READ Read Matthew 5:27-32.

THINK According to Philippians 4:6-8 what are some ways you can keep your thoughts pure?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask for the peace of God to guard your heart and your mind.

Wednesday

READ Read Matthew 5:33-37.

THINK Have you ever made a promise that you were unable to keep? Has someone done the same to you? How did you feel in both situations?

ASK Ask an adult to share what helped him/her keep the promises made to God and others.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you keep your promises.

Thursday

READ Matthew 5:38-42.

THINK What is verse 41 saying? What are ways you can go the extra mile for someone?

DO Give more and go further for a friend today.

REMEMBER Because God loves us, we are able to love our friends and our enemies.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray for the grace to love your friends and your enemies.

Friday

READ Read Matthew 5:43-48.

THINK According to this passage, what is the mark of a true Christian?

ACT List or draw three kind things that you can do to show love to a person who treats you like an “enemy.” Do those things in the next few days.

SAY Tell your family the power text from memory.

PRAY Ask God to give you the grace and power to make peace with your “enemy.”