



Authorised Mess — 1 CORINTHIANS

Your details

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Bible book	1 Corinthians
Theme of session	Growing in faith, hope and love.
Notes	<p>Mainly from 1 Corinthians 13, especially 13:13, but drawing on 1 Corinthians 3:6–8.</p> <p>This was part of a series of four sessions: (1) new beginnings—based on Zacchaeus, (2) growing in faith—based on The Parable of the Sower, (3) growing in hope—based on Jesus dying for us, (4) growing in love—based on 1 Corinthians 13.</p> <p>'Love' was on the Sunday nearest to Valentine's day. Love begins with God. God sent Jesus to show his love for us. We can have a new beginning by turning and following Jesus. Then we need to grow—in faith and hope and love. Love is not just a feeling but is very practical and can be hard work. But, in the end, love is the most important thing.</p>

Session details

Categories of activities to get a mix	Activity name	Instructions	Resources needed	Reason for doing this activity
Younger participants	Flower tree with love words	<p>Colour and decorate the flower shapes and attach to a pipe cleaner.</p> <p>Root the pipe cleaner in a lump of clay and then place in a plant pot to make a tree.</p>	<p>Flower shapes with the words: Love is...; God is love; patient; kind.</p> <p>Pipe cleaners, pens/pencils/crayons, air drying clay, small wood pulp plant pots.</p>	<p>Talk about how it takes time for love to grow and develop. Making the tree reminds us that God is love and that God's love is patient and kind, and gives us faith, hope and love.</p>



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Older participants	Felt heart	Pull off a handful of wool fibres. Add a tiny amount of washing-up liquid and warm water. Rub between your hands to felt the wool and gradually shape into a heart shape. (Placing the wool in a heart-shaped cutter and poking it is another way of making a heart shape.)	For wet felting—different coloured wool tops (available from craft/wool shops). Washing-up liquid, warm water.	Talk about how love can be hard work and takes patience, but soon it takes shape!
Each family	Sunflower height chart	Cut out a strip of paper 2 m by 0.5 m. Mark out the chart in 10-cm divisions along the full length of the strip. Now decorate by painting sunflowers with long stalks and freestyle flowers.	Long strips of construction paper—red or brown, pens, rulers, paint—yellow and green, brushes.	Talk about growing—what we need to grow as people, and what we need to grow as God's people.
Girls	Woven heart	Cut slits in the heart shape and then weave the strips of ribbon into the heart shape.	Heart shapes in red card, ribbon scraps of different colours.	Talk about ways of showing love like making this heart for someone special.



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Boys	Giant construction	Encourage building together to make something amazing!	Borrow a giant construction game from local resources centre eg Quadro, Toobeez.	Talk about how we can work together to build something more easily than we could do by ourselves – love in action!
Word-based	Heart decoder	Draw/doodle all over the printed sheets with red felt pens to hide the verse. Make a decoder by sticking the red cellophane over the heart frame. Use the decoder to read the message.	Red cellophane, red felt pens, glue, card heart shapes with large heart shape cut out of centre to make a heart frame. Sheets printed with 1 Corinthians 13: 4. Adapted from: http://catholicicing.blogspot.com/2010/02/st-valentine-craft-and-card.html .	Talk about how sometimes it's not so easy to see what love looks like. Make a very clever heart decoder to read the hidden message.
Food-based	Love biscuits	Decorate the biscuits with hearts using the icing. Give to someone you love.	Pink, red and white icing in tubes, biscuits.	Talk about ways of showing people that you love them.
Explores global aspect of faith	Postcard messages	Draw a picture on the postcard and write a message. Send to children the church sponsors.	Postcards, pens/pencils.	Talk about how God wants us to love even people we can't see.



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Opens up great art	Group collage	Encourage as many people as possible to contribute to a huge collage—make flowers and leaves to add to the outline of a tree drawn on the lining paper. Add the captions to finish.	Lining paper, large tree outline, tissue paper cut into circles (different colours), leave shapes in green paper, glue. Captions for collage: God gives us new life; God helps us to love.	Talk about how we grow in faith, hope and love as we work together, and learn how to grow more like Jesus.
Quiet	Reflective activity	Have a look through the basket and think about ways you could use the objects to show love by being kind.	Basket of household objects, such as a watering can, tea towel, duster, washing-up liquid and so on. Card with instructions.	Talk about love being kind, and what that looks like in action.
Really messy	Handprint heart picture	Make a heart picture by overlapping the print of each hand.	Paint in two colours, trays, paper.	Talk about how love sometimes means getting your hands dirty!

Celebration suggestion

Song ideas

- ✿ 'God's love is big' from *Great Big God* CD, Vineyard Records. For details, see <http://greatbiggod.com/>.
- ✿ 'A new commandment I give unto you' from *Complete Mission Praise 1*. For details, see www.eden.co.uk.
- ✿ 'For God so loved the world' from John Hardwick CD, *34 Songs For All Occasions*; John Hardwick music book, *50 Songs For All Occasions*; John Hardwick DVD, *Action Packed Praise*, with actions/signs. For details, see <http://www.johnhardwick.org.uk/>.



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Ask for ideas on how we love people. Talk about how hard it can be sometimes. Talk about how Paul wrote that love was the basis of everything, and it looked very practical. Then use pictures to illustrate. We used *All These Things* by Susie Poole (Pupfish, 2011)—a lovely book based on 1 Corinthians 13. Sometimes it's hard to love each other, because we are all different, and have different strengths and weaknesses. But God has brought us together. And we love because God has loved us first, by sending Jesus.

Prayer

Give everyone a heart post-it as they come in. For prayer time, put the heart on the palm of your hand and then hold it against your heart. Thank God for his love for us. Now bring your hand down and look at the heart on it and say sorry for times when you have not received God's love and have not loved other people. Finally, hold the heart out and think about giving love away, and ask God to help you show love to someone. Pray for people and places where we want God's love to be shown.

Meal suggestion

- ✿ Pasta and tomato sauce with salad of carrot and cucumber sticks.
- ✿ Love biscuits (made in the activity).

Faith in Homes suggestion

Think about the practical ways in which you can all grow in God's love and show love to others.

- ✿ What does being patient or kind look like in your home?

You could perhaps each decide to do one thing in the next week.

A prayer to use at home: Loving God, thank you for loving us and sending Jesus. Help us to grow in your love. Help us to be patient and kind and to show your love to other people. Thank you for all the people that are important to us, help us to say 'I love you' and help us to say 'thank you'. Amen