

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Love*

LESSON AT A GLANCE

Facilitator Notes:

- Sermon clips can only be found in the [NAC USA mobile app](#) and in the [link to the right](#).

I wonder...

- Why do I love God?
- Why should I love my neighbor?
- How do I show love to my neighbor?
- Why and how should I love my enemies?

I believe...

- We love God because He first loved us. (Catechism Q&A question 290)
- One of the greatest of the commandments is to love your neighbor. (Catechism Q&A question 155, 287)
- We must not close our eyes to the distress of others, but rather provide help. (Catechism Q&A question 155)
- Jesus commanded us to love our enemies and fulfilled this command in unparalleled fashion when He was on the cross. (Catechism Q&A question 174; Matthew 5:44)

Materials:

- IGNITE Bible
- Catechism Q&A
- Chief Apostle sermon clip 17, Love like Jesus loves <http://subsplash.com/nacusa/v/93b34o6>
- Paper hearts (2 per student-to write on), pens/pencils, dry erase board or chart paper, markers

References:

- Bible verses: Matthew 5:44, Matthew 22:37-40, Mark 12:30-31, Luke 10:25-29, Luke 10:30-37, John 3:16
- Catechism Q&A questions 57, 155, 174, 285 - 288, 290, 291

PRE DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS AND STUDENT (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)

Do you remember the song 'Jesus loves me this I know'? How has your understanding of His love evolved as you know more about Him? Join us tomorrow for small group at _____ when we'll have a discussion about love.

POST DISCUSSION MESSAGE TO PARENTS (TO BE SENT VIA EMAIL OR TEXT)

Facilitator Notes:

- Please feel free to customize and add local information as necessary.
- Consider including the Chief Apostle sermon clip if you didn't have time to watch it in youth group.

Dear Parents,
 This week the "I Wonder...." questions are about why I love God, why I should love my neighbor, how I show love to my neighbor, and why I should love my enemies. The students discussed how we want to love just as Jesus loved. At home, you can discuss a time when someone showed you love and how you felt as a result. As always, please feel free to let me know if you have any questions.
 Your Youth Leaders

SUNDAY SERMON REFLECTIONS(up to 10 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

- Allow 2-3 students to share their reflections. For larger groups, vary who shares from week to week.

- What Bible verse was used for the basis of last Sunday's sermon?
- What were some of the main takeaways? What did you learn?
- So far this week, how have you applied what you learned from the sermon last Sunday?
- Going forward, how will you apply what you learned from the sermon last Sunday?

HOOK(up to 15 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

- Allow 2-3 students to share their reflections. For larger groups, vary who shares from week to week.
- Write down the shared answers that relate to love on the left side of the board/chart paper, keeping room on the right for a separate listing during the lesson.

- How are you and how are you feeling today?
- Who would like to share their point to ponder or call to action from last week?
- Give everyone one paper heart and a pen or pencil. Tell them they have 60 seconds to write as many words as they can that relate to love. When the 60 seconds are up, have the participants name 8-10 words, and write them on the board/chart paper.

SET THE STAGE(1 minute)

Facilitator Notes:

- Preview the "I wonder" questions with the students.

I wonder...

- Why do I love God?
- Why should I love my neighbor?
- How do I show love to my neighbor?
- Why and how should I love my enemies?

LESSON(up to 25 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

- Write down the answers the students shared in the section on the right side of the board/chart paper for easy reference and comparison.

Today we are going to talk about God's love for us, which results in us loving Him. When we love God, then we will also love our neighbor, including our enemies. Discuss the following questions:

- Not including God – who are some of the most loving people that you know?
- How do those people show that they care? Write these characteristics on the right side of the board/chart paper.
- Would you say that the words on the right are the same or different from the words that we wrote down earlier (on the hearts/left side of the board)? Allow the students to compare/contrast the words they shared on the right side of the board/chart paper with the ones from the hearts.

- If students don't have specific examples, be prepared to share a specific example of how you know that God loves you (ex. you could see His hand in your life during a difficult circumstance).
- For the sake of preparing for the discussion, some full Bible passages are included in the facilitator guide. However, in the actual discussion with the students, it is encouraged that the facilitator look up the passages in a physical Bible along with the students to reinforce the importance of using one's Bible and Bible literacy.

Student Question #1 Why does God love us? How do we know? Discuss with the students.

- Make sure that participants are aware that God revealed Himself as the Loving One by sending His son for the salvation of all human beings. Read Catechism Q&A question 57 together & discuss.

Student Question #2 If God loves us that much, how do we respond? Discuss and make sure the points below are covered.

- We love Him back because of His love for us.
 - It is similar to the love parents have for their children. As they care for and raise their children, the children's love the parents in return.
 - We know Jesus loves us because He gave His life for us.

What are the 2 most important commandments?

- Ask a student, or multiple students, to read Mark 12:30-31
- *"And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength." This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." There is no other commandment greater than these."*

Jesus taught us much about love. He is our example of HOW to love others.

It is easy to love our friends or family though. Jesus taught to love those in need.

Ask a student, or multiple students, to read the Parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37 (not included due to length).

What was Jesus asking the people to do? Discuss and make sure to cover the following points:

- Take **notice** of those in need around us.
- **Act** on the need of those around us.

Who was the neighbor to the man attacked by bandits in this parable?

- The one who showed him mercy.

Who is our neighbor? Discuss and make sure the points below are covered:

- Anyone we come in contact with.
- Anyone who is in need. (Catechism Q&A question 287)

Read Catechism Q&A question 286 together. Is it easy to show mercy to all of the people around us? What do we need to do in order to be merciful/help our neighbor?

- Be aware that there is a need.
- Stop to help.

Student Question #3 How can we show our love for our neighbor within the congregation? What is our responsibility? (Catechism Q&A question 290)

- Being present and listening to them
- Ask them if there is something they would like you to pray for

- Memorize some Bible verses that may be used to comfort or offer hope when in conversation with them
- Share with them what you're learning in the divine services and small groups
- Our willingness to help those in need should be especially evident.

Student Question #4 What happens when we "love one another" in the congregation? (Catechism Q&A question 291)

- Love for one another enables us to accept our brother and sister as they are and protects against irreconcilability, prejudices, and contempt.
- Love is a power that strengthens the cohesion in the congregation, awakens empathy and understanding for one another, and promotes willingness to help one another.
- Jesus even wants us to love our enemies, and when we have love in the congregation, we are able to love those we may not have liked so much.
- Ask a student to read Matthew 5:44
 - *"But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you."*

We must always keep this in mind: When Jesus was on the cross, He interceded for **all** those who had brought Him to the cross, fulfilling the commandment to the greatest extent. We also want to love **all** to the fullest extent possible, those who are a part of our congregation and those who are not. (ref. Catechism Q&A question 174)

Break into small groups (2-3 people) and discuss a time when someone showed love to you. Answer these questions:

- What did they do?
- Did you recognize their love for you right away?
- How did you feel when you knew you were loved?
- Are you good at demonstrating love for others or is it an area that needs growth in your life?
- How can you demonstrate love for your neighbor this week? Whom will you love?
- How is love more than just doing things or buying stuff for each other?

- Encourage the students to contemplate both those who are easy to love (family and friends) and those who are more difficult to love (difficult people or even enemies).
- Encourage the students to think about how they would show love to both the "easy" and "difficult" people in their lives.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?(up to 15 minutes)

Facilitator Notes:

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Wrap up the lesson

If time allows, watch the Chief Apostle sermon clip 17, Love like Jesus loves.

Close with the "I Believe..." statements

- As you review each statement, stop and check in with the group to be sure there are no misunderstandings or misconceptions.
- Allow the students to state an "I Believe..." statement for each of the "I Wonder..." questions in their own words.
- Remind the students that on their Confirmation day, they will or have already promised and committed to surrender themselves to the Triune God.

I believe...

- We love God because He first loved us. (Catechism Q&A question 290)
- One of the greatest of the commandments is to love your neighbor. (Catechism Q&A question 155, 287)
- We must not close our eyes to the distress of others, but rather provide help. (Catechism Q&A question 155)
- Jesus commanded us to love our enemies and fulfilled this command in unparalleled fashion when He was on the cross. (Catechism Q&A question 174; Matthew 5:44)

A Point to Ponder....

- Jesus is our example. We want to transform our nature to be loving like He was, selflessly and without judgement.

A Call to Action...

- This week, look for a specific way you will show love to someone. Whom are you going to show that love to? How are you going to show that love? Be prepared to share an experience of how you showed love to someone and what happened as a result. How did you feel? How did the other person feel? Do you feel like you loved like Jesus loves? Was the task difficult or easy?

Weekly Reflections

What Bible verse was used for the basis of last Sunday's sermon?

What were some of the main takeaways? What did you learn?

So far this week, how have you applied what you learned from the sermon last Sunday?

Going forward, how will you apply what you learned from the sermon last Sunday?

Point to Ponder.....

Call to Action.....

Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Love*

<p>Have you ever wondered...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Why do I love God? ➤ Why should I love my neighbor? ➤ How do I show love to my neighbor? ➤ Why and how should I love my enemies? 	<p>I believe...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We love God because He first loved us. (Catechism Q&A question 290) ➤ One of the greatest of the commandments is to love your neighbor. (Catechism Q&A question 155, 287) ➤ We must not close our eyes to the distress of others, but rather provide help. (Catechism Q&A question 155) ➤ Jesus commanded us to love our enemies and fulfilled this command in unparalleled fashion when He was on the cross. (Catechism Q&A question 174; Matthew 5:44)
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1. Why does God love us? How do we know?

2. If God loves us that much, how do we respond?

3. How can we show our love for our neighbor within the congregation? What is our responsibility?

4. What happens when we "love one another" in the congregation?

Point to Ponder: Jesus is our example. We want to transform our nature to be loving like He was, selflessly and without judgement.

Call to Action: This week, look for a specific way you will show love to someone. Whom are you going to show that love to? How are you going to show that love? Be prepared to share an experience of how you showed love to someone and what happened as a result. How did you feel? How did the other person feel? Do you feel like you loved like Jesus loves? Was the task difficult or easy?