

Faith Family Worship Guide – Week 39

MEMORIZE

1 Corinthians 13:7 – Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

READ

Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-13.

Spiritual gifts, no matter how exciting and wonderful, are useless and even destructive if they are not ministered in love. The main evidence of maturity in the Christian life is a growing love for God and for God’s people, as well as a love for the lost. It has well been said that love is the “circulatory system” of the body of Christ. Few chapters in the Bible have suffered more misinterpretation and misapplication than 1 Corinthians 13. Divorced from its context, it becomes “a hymn to love” or a sentimental sermon on Christian brotherhood. Many people fail to see that Paul was still dealing with the Corinthians’ problems when he wrote these words: the abuse of the gift of tongues, division in the church, envy of others’ gifts, selfishness, impatience with one another in the public meetings, and behavior that was dishonoring the Lord. The only way spiritual gifts can be used creatively is when Christians are motivated by love.

Questions:

What is love?

Why is love so important to spiritual gifts?

How is the love of God different from the world’s understanding of love?

Bottom Line: The only way spiritual gifts can be used creatively is when Christians are motivated by love.

SING

When we think about spiritual gifts, it is often tempting to focus more on “becoming better at the gifts” rather than on the one from whom our gifts come, Christ, and the ones for whom our gifts are given, the body of Christ. It becomes about our effort and our betterment; it becomes pride. As you sing this week’s song, “Lead Me to the Cross”, let it be a reminder of our dependence on Christ and the Holy Spirit to do what we cannot do and become what we cannot become by our own merit and power.

Lead me to the cross
Where Your love poured out
Bring me to my knees
Lord I lay me down
Rid my of myself
I belong to You

May the Holy Spirit continue to change our hearts from inward adoration to outward love for our brothers and sisters in Christ, for the lost and the poor. Praise the Lord for His love for us!

Visit our website for a link to this song: www.brookhills.org/gathering/this_week.html.

SUGGESTIONS

These suggestions were created by the age-group ministry leaders as a way to help parents better communicate the biblical truths discussed in the Family Worship Guide. These suggestions are intended to help parents facilitate God-centered discussions with their children. Parents should prayerfully use these suggestions, and any other means necessary, to help their children discover the truths of God’s word and worship Him together.

Preschool

- Before you begin open your Bible to 1 Corinthians 13:7.
- Read the verse to your preschooler.

- Remember Paul wrote the book of Corinthians. Paul loved God very much and wanted others to love Him too. Paul wrote this letter to the people and reminded them to love each other just like God loves us. He said that when you love someone, you are kind to them and don't remember the things they have done wrong.
- Now, teach your child a new activity such as riding a bike, catching a baseball, jumping on one foot or snapping.
- Talk about how it can sometimes be hard to learn something new. You may want to give up, but if you try hard you will learn something new. Think about this: When a person or friend isn't nice or doesn't act like they love us, we may feel like giving up and no longer loving that person. But 1 Corinthians 13:7 tells us that loving someone means never giving up. God loves us this way. Even when we do wrong, He loves us and never gives up on us.
- Remember: God loved us so much that He sent His one and only Son to earth to die on a cross so that we could have eternal life. God wants us to choose to follow Him and to love Him more than anything.
- Conclude your family time by praying and thanking God for loving us and ask Him to help us love others.

Children

- Grab some markers, construction paper, and a Bible.
- Sit down with your child and read through 1 Corinthians 13. You may want to take turns reading, allowing your children to practice reading out loud.
- Ask them to draw a big heart on a piece of construction paper. Then write down all the descriptions of love that can be found in this passage.
- Remind your child that this chapter comes right after Paul tells us about spiritual gifts. Ask them if they remember what spiritual gifts are and what their purpose is.
- Make sure your child understands that God gives spiritual gifts to His children, and that these gifts are to be used to build up the body of Christ. You may want to give them a few examples of spiritual gifts.
- Ask your child to think of a time when someone served them. Have them think about the attitude of the person as they served. Were they loving as they served? Were they impatient and irritable? Remind them of all the descriptions of love they wrote on the piece of paper.
- Ask your child how they would feel if someone served them, but didn't show love to them as they did so. Would it be as meaningful?
- Explain that what Paul is saying in this chapter is that without love, we won't really be able to serve well, or use our spiritual gifts as God wants us to. Without love, our service doesn't mean anything. Emphasize that love helps us use our gifts in the way God intended.
- Emphasize that it doesn't matter how many good things we do, our acts of service are useless if we do not love others as we do these things.
- Look back at the heart your drew and all the descriptions of love your wrote down. Tell your child that as Christians love and serve others, they show the world a picture of true love.
- The world tells us to do what makes us happy and look after ourselves first. Explain that Jesus showed us that real love is putting others first and serving others, just as Jesus first served us by dying for our sin. (1 John 4:7-12).
- Take a few minutes to pray with your child, thanking God for loving us first, and asking Him to help us love others and serve others.
- Post the drawing of the heart somewhere visible. Encourage your child to look at it throughout the week to remember what it means to show true love.

Students

- Intro
 - How do we typically use the word "love"?
 - How do you think our culture defines love?
- Discussion
 - Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-13.
 - Make a list of the ways you see love defined in 1 Corinthians 13.
 - How is this list different from the ways we typically identify love?
 - Why does love matter? Read verse 1-3 again.
 - Consider the context that this passage is in. What has Paul been talking about in 1 Corinthians 12?
 - Paul teaches that our spiritual gifts and our role in the body of Christ must be founded in love. Why? What is the result if it is not?
 - Walk through the "Read" portion above.
 - Here we are again reminded of why spiritual gifts must be motivated by love.
 - What does it mean to be motivated by love?

- What other things can sometimes take the place of love in motivating us?
 - How can we guard ourselves against these unhealthy motivations?
- Thinking about your life, what would it look like if your actions were motivated by love?
 - What would your attitude be like?
 - What would characterize your interactions with other people?
 - Is there an area of your life that needs to change because they are motivated by something other than love?
- How can your family encourage one another to be motivated by love?