

Lesson 16

Love In Action

TEACHER PREPARATION

KEY CONCEPTS

Love is and can be demonstrated by our actions and with our words.

When we act in loving ways, we can affect others for good.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

1. demonstrate love as an action word.
2. conclude that sometimes love hurts.
3. understand showing love to others builds relationships and friendships.

KEY TERMS

Justice: moral righteousness.

Mercy: an act of kindness, compassion; the power to pardon someone or relieve them of their punishment.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Love is an important character trait. Everyone wants to feel loved. Teachers are often some of the most important people in the life of a student. Students need to feel your love and care and be taught how to appropriately and respectfully show love to others. Dr. Gary Chapman, author of the book *The Five Love Languages*, shares five ways people often use to receive and give love. Depending on the age of your students, it might be helpful to share these thoughts with your students or you may choose to simply process them in your own mind as you relate to your students. In this lesson, you will be challenging your students to think of ways they can show love to people in their lives.

Five Love Languages

Words of Affirmation – Sometimes, we all just need to hear a word of encouragement! This may be your love language or the love language of

many of your students. We usually think of this as praise. It is a commonly held psychological thought that it takes 17 positive statements to erase one negative statement. If your students thrive on receiving a word of praise from you, negativity could crush their desires to work hard and do well in school. Be mindful of your words. Encourage your students to be thoughtful and positive as they verbally respond with love to others.

Quality Time – We live in a time-crunched world. We all have so many obligations and feel like there is never enough time to complete them. Often, the gift of time is a love language you or your students may respond to in their lives. Spending time with someone may be exactly what the person needs in order to feel loved. Realize some of your students may need to feel that you “are there” for them ... you have time to talk or listen to their concerns.

Receiving Gifts – This is not a focus on gifts costing money. Instead it is an emphasis on giving or making something special or thoughtful for someone. It could be as simple as a card or a pencil. Sometimes people feel loved when someone gives them a gift.

Acts of Service – Doing something for others or appreciating when someone does something for you is another way of sharing love. Performing an act of service is a great way to say, “I love you.”

Physical Touch – Appropriate hugs or touches on the arm or shoulder are often a sensitive way to share love. Sometimes you may be giving the only kind gesture a student receives the entire day.

We can appreciate all of these love languages as ways to share love with others at different times of our lives. Students need to be taught it is good to be loving to others and to appreciate love shown to them. They will learn the most by our example – how we treat our students within the confines of our classrooms. May they feel your love every day!

MATERIALS/PREPARATION

1. In **Exploring the Lesson**, your students will need journals and pencils.
2. In **Discovering the Lesson**, you will need a paper towel or napkin, a red marker, pen, a bowl of water, the students' journals or a piece of paper, paper for hearts and a pencil or crayons and markers.
3. In **Applying the Lesson**, either prepare a paper tree for the wall and 100 paper leaves or bring in an empty large container and prepare 100 paper hearts for the activity.
4. For **Going Deeper**, each student will need a piece of paper and a pencil.

LESSON

BEGINNING THE LESSON

[Say to the students:] When we left Hector, Dugan and Trish, they were in the Court of Justice. The Director's voice had taught them a good lesson about how important it was to forgive others. Do you remember what happened to the stones hanging around their necks? What did the stones represent? *[As they forgave each other, the stones disappeared. They represented the burden unforgiveness can cause in our lives.]* Let's see if our friends are still in the Court of Justice today.

READINESS (5 minutes)

[Read to the students:] **Chapter 16 — After the Defendant's Box**

The Librarian gestured for the children to join her by the judge's bench. Dugan started to jump over the railing surrounding the Defendant's Box, but he stopped himself and opened the gate for his friends. This was not a place for shortcuts or climbing over things.

As they stepped away from the place of the accused, Trish took a deep breath, "Feels a lot better on this side of the Defendant's Box!"

"It sure does!" added Hector.

"Everything in the library's courtroom evokes a strong feeling," said the Librarian, "because everything here stands for something of great importance. How did you feel when you stepped into the Defendant's Box?"

"Scared," said Trish.

"Guarded," said Hector.

"Guilty," added Dugan.

"And what happened next?" continued the Librarian.

"We eventually confessed and forgave each other," said Trish.

“What happened to the stones of guilt hanging around your necks?” asked the Librarian.

“They just disappeared!” said Dugan.

“Really?” replied the Librarian. Her gaze drew their attention to the pile of stones now sitting on the judge’s bench.

“How did they get up there?” remarked Hector.

“This is a Court of Justice,” said the Librarian interrupting their thoughts. “Justice rewards the good and punishes the bad. It never ignores wrong.”

“But we weren’t punished,” puzzled Dugan.

“So, there must be more to it,” added Trish.

“And what might that be?” probed the Librarian.

“We stepped into the Defendant’s Box carrying the weight of our guilt, but then it was taken away,” said Hector. “But not by us.”

“That is called Mercy,” said the Librarian. “When you are not made to pay for your mistakes, you have received mercy.”

“Like the time I accidentally broke the window while playing ball too close to my grandparents’ house and they didn’t punish me?” offered Dugan.

“Yes, that would be an example of mercy. They had every right to make you pay, but they didn’t,” said the Librarian. “What do you think motivated them to act that way?”

“Well ... I think it was because they love me!” responded Dugan.

“Exactly so,” said the Librarian. She went over to the judge’s bench, picked up one of the stones and threw it as hard as she could. The stone sailed out of sight. In the distance, they heard something break and then a cry.

“Why did you do that?” yelled Trish.

“People often think their offense was little more than an accident,” said the Librarian. “That they simply tripped and failed to take the right path; that they fell short of what they knew they ought to have done. In reality, every offense causes harm. Someone always absorbs the hurt. In the case of the broken window, your grandparents bore the cost of replacing it.”

“But love doesn’t always let you off of the hook when you do something wrong,” stated Trish. “I remember the time my friends and I made a giant slingshot, and I decided my little sister’s favorite doll would

make the perfect volunteer to be launched! That doll sure went a long way over the cliff before it crashed!”

“What did your parents do?” asked Hector.

“Plenty!” said Trish. “I had to apologize to my sister, replace the doll I destroyed and I couldn’t play with my friends for a whole weekend.”

“What do you think motivated your parents to act that way?” asked the Librarian.

“The same thing Dugan said — I know, now, it was love,” replied Trish. “At first, they were really mad, especially Mom, but she sat me down and explained how much I had hurt my little sister and that love doesn’t act that way. Then, she said she and Daddy loved me and didn’t want me to be the kind of person who went around doing hurtful things just because my friends thought it would be fun.”

“Your parents are wise and taking the time to explain their actions is extraordinary,” said the Librarian.

“But why did the stones end up on the judge’s bench?” asked Hector.

“To keep them from being thrown at you,” replied the Librarian.

“I don’t understand,” said Dugan.

“Love absorbs the hurt so you won’t have to,” replied the Librarian. “That is why the Director said ‘Forgiveness is the most costly thing in the world.’ Underneath forgiveness and running all through the Court of Justice is a heart of love. Love, real love, is so much more than a warm or even overwhelming feeling,” she added. “Love doesn’t ignore or forget the hurtful things you do. It steps between you and those hurtful things, so you aren’t the target of the stones your actions create.”

“We made those stones?” said Hector.

“Yes,” replied the Librarian.

“And if love didn’t come to our rescue,” followed up Trish, “those same stones would be thrown at us.”

“Quite right,” smiled the Librarian. “I hope you have learned how much we need love in our lives. Now, why don’t you head back to the Map of Wonders and relax awhile. You are going to need your rest because soon, we will begin to face the major factory where these deadly stones are produced. We are about to confront addictions, the ***DreamBreakers*** that can grow out of our unchecked appetites.”

“I don’t understand,” said Dugan.

“Of course, you don’t!” said the Librarian.

EXPLORE (5 minutes)

[Say to the students:] Hector, Dugan and Trish are beginning to understand what real love is. What did they learn in our story today about love? Love can be wonderful and make us feel good, but sometimes love also hurts. Sometimes we become sad when we love someone, but they don't treat us kindly. We want to be loved but they are unloving to us. Sometimes we are sad because we love someone and they are not with us anymore. We miss them and it hurts.

What did the Librarian tell the children about why the stones were on the judge's bench? Dugan told about a time when his grandparents showed him mercy and he didn't suffer for the wrong he had done. He said his grandparents loved him. Trish also told a story about doing something wrong to her sister. Her parents loved her and forgave her, but she had to complete some acts to help make up for what she did wrong. How did both of those situations show love and mercy? How do you know when someone loves you? *[Discuss all of these questions as appropriate for the age of your students.]* I would like for you to write in your journal or draw a picture of someone who loves you and how they show their love to you. *[Allow time for your students to do this. If a student doesn't think they have someone who loves them, then have them write or draw a picture of what being loved would be like.]* I would like for some of you to share your thoughts or pictures with the class. *[Choose several students to tell about the person in their life they drew or wrote about and how the person shows love to them.]*

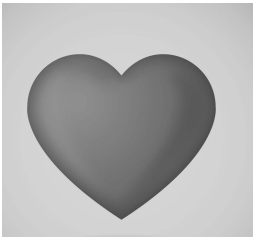
DISCOVER (20 minutes)

[Say to the students:] Using a pen I am going to draw an empty heart close to the bottom of this paper towel *[or napkin]*. This represents our hearts. When we fill our hearts with love *[color in the heart with a red marker]*, it brightens up our lives. Many people live around us. *[Represent others by drawing several empty hearts close around the red heart.]* I am going to show you what happens when your heart is filled with love. *[Place the bottom of the paper towel in water. As water soaks into the paper towel, it will absorb to the red heart. The water will cause the red ink to spread. Quickly, the other hearts should be covered by the red ink.]* This experiment demonstrates when you spread love, it affects others around you.

In your journal, I want you to write down the names of five people you would like to show love to this month. It might be your mother, father, grandparent, an elderly neighbor, a storeowner in your neighborhood, etc. It can be anyone in your life you would like to honor with an act of love. I am going to give you a few minutes to think about what you can do for each of the people on your list that would show them you care. Then, I would like to give you an opportunity to volunteer to share one of your ideas with the class. You might hear a good idea from someone else that will help you think about how you can show love to others.

[Give the students time to make their list, think about the ways they want to show love and share one idea with the class.] Now, I am going to give you some paper to cut out five hearts. On each heart, write the words: “Just because I love you.” As you complete your acts of love over the next month, you can leave this heart with the one to whom you are showing love. You may even want to do something for someone on your list and leave the heart as a surprise. For example, you may want to pick some flowers or draw a picture for someone. You could leave it at their door along with your card, knock on the door and hide. Imagine their surprise when they open the door and find your “love gift” and card. I am sure they will feel loved!

APPLY (10 minutes)



*[This project is called “100 Acts of Love.” It will be a continuation of what was introduced in the **Discover** section. You will be inviting your students to write down when they complete an act of love for someone in your class, in their home or in their community. The goal is to work together to complete 100 Acts of Love for others.*

Once you complete 100 acts together, you may want to start again and keep the count going for the year. See how many Acts of Love your students can complete this year! You could enhance this project in several ways: tape paper together and draw a large leafless tree to tape on the wall and have them write each Act of Love on a cut out leaf to put on the tree; or have a large container with paper hearts in a basket beside it and invite them to write their Act of Love on a heart and put it in the container.]

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[Say to the students:] You will see I have drawn a tree (or have this empty container) in the front of the room. We are going to see how fast we can complete “100 Acts of Love” as a class. Every time you do something for someone else in this class, in your home, or in your community showing love to them, I would like for you to write it down on a leaf (or heart) and put it on the tree (or in the container). We will count them at the end of each week and when we reach 100, we will celebrate! *[Think of a fun way to celebrate ... maybe a few extra minutes of recess or some extra reading or talking time in class. Give the students time to share what it felt like to do these “100 Acts of Love.”]* Then, we will start over! I would like to see how many Acts of Love we can complete by the end of the year! How many do you think we can do? *[It would be fun for them to guess and at the end of the year, review their guess and use their math skills to see how close their estimate was to the actual number.]*

SHARE (5 minutes)

[Say to the students:] Dr. Martin Luther King, a famous African American who encouraged love and kindness, said these well-known and celebrated words: “Life’s most persistent and urgent question is: ‘What are you doing for others?’” Have you ever heard the words, “Pay it forward?” We are going to teach others how to ‘pay it forward.’ When you do some of your Acts of Love, you may hear someone say, “That is so kind of you ... thank you. What can I do for you in return?” I want to encourage you to tell them to ‘pay it forward.’ Invite them to do something loving and kind for others as their way of showing appreciation for your loving deed. If we all ‘pay it forward,’ love will be multiplying throughout our school, our homes and our community!

ENDING THE LESSON

[Say to the students:] You have learned a lot about how important love is in our world. We need to always be looking for ways to give love to others. Books have been written and songs have been sung about how love makes the world go around. It is a reminder of how cherished we all feel when we feel loved.

GOING DEEPER (optional)

[Ask a student to read the passage, or for younger students, read the passage to them.]

Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous, it does not brag, and it is not proud (*1 Corinthians 13:4, International Children’s Bible*).

[Create a chart on the board. You may want to ask one or more students to help you by writing the words in the appropriate locations. At first, your chart will include only the words from the verse and look like this:]

Love Is (Does):

Love Is (Does) Not:

Patient

Kind

Jealous

Brag

Proud

[Ask your students to help you fill in the chart by saying:] **Notice the verse from the Bible lists two things of what love is and three things love is not. We’re going to fill in the opposites on our chart. Let’s start with the first one. What is the opposite of being patient?** *[Let one or more students respond.]* **What kinds of things might an impatient person do or say?** *[Let one or more students respond.]* **An impatient person might yell, nag or act frustrated with someone who is slower or doesn’t understand something quickly.** *[Let the students decide what word or words need to be written on the board.]*

Now, what actions or words would be the opposite of being kind? *[Let one or more students respond.]* **An unkind person might criticize annoy or bully another.** *[Let the students decide what word or words need to be written on the board.]*

[Continue the discussion with the opposites of jealous (be happy for another, congratulate them, rejoice in their success, say kind things about them to others, etc.); brag (praise others, let others tell of your good

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character or success, etc.); and proud (be humble, willing to do jobs no one else wants, not trying to draw attention to yourself, etc.)]

[Say to the students:] **Each of you please take out a piece of paper. On the top part of the paper, I'd like you to write down one of these five good qualities (the ones on the left side of our chart). Write down a strong quality in your life, one where you often behave in the right way. This is just for you. You will not have to show it to me or anyone else, unless you choose to. [With younger students, you may want to give them the option of drawing a picture or maybe a face representing the good quality.]**

Now, turn the paper over. On this side, I want you to write (or draw) a quality you want to work on. You can either choose a good quality from the left side you want to develop or a bad one from the right side which you want to become less like.

Take this paper home with you. Pray God will use your good qualities to bless others and help you improve in the areas on the other side of the paper.

PARENT-TEACHER CONNECTION

In this lesson, we focused on how love can be demonstrated by our actions and with our words. We discussed when we act in loving ways, we can affect others for good.

Questions you might ask your child:

1. In the story, the Librarian said to Dugan, “In reality, every offense causes harm. Someone always absorbs the hurt. In the case of the broken window, your grandparents bore the cost of replacing it.” What do you think the Librarian meant when she said this? (Even “accidents” hurt and someone absorbs the pain.)
2. Do you remember how mercy is often an expression of love? (The Librarian said, “When you are not required to pay for your mistakes, you have received mercy.”)
3. Can you think of a time when you received mercy from me or someone else in our family?
4. Can you think of a time when you showed mercy to someone else?
5. What are some other ways besides mercy people have demonstrated their love to you?
6. What are some ways you have demonstrated your love to someone else?
7. What might be a way we could demonstrate our love to you?

Parents, after your child has responded to these questions, please share with your child the answers you would give to questions 3–7.



