

# FAMILIA

## WEEK 4 (HYBRID)

### BIG IDEA

In God's family we love each other.

### Bible

I John 3:16-18, 4:7-12; John 15:9-17; I Corinthians 13:4-7

## WHAT?

### ACTIVITY | Rapped In Love

- Welcome to the final week of *Familia*, where we're talking about the people we (supposedly) love more than anyone else — our families.
- But "love" is an interesting word, right? We might say we "love" our families, but we also say we "love" tacos, or Simone Biles, or naps. So let's see what else you "love."
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this activity, you'll need [note cards](#), a large bowl, and a black marker. On each note card, write a variety of randomly selected words (cheddar, money, bread, mommy, nobody, gossip, circus, tsunami, tacos), and place the cards into the bowl. To play, either split students into groups or bring a few students to the front of the room to compete in a freestyle rap contest. Have each player or team to draw at least six words from the bowl and then rap for 30 seconds about love — using all of the words they drew from the bowl.*

### ACTIVITY | Love It or Hate It

- That was a good start, but I think we still need to break down the word "love" a little bit more.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Before your teaching time, collect a variety of objects or photos for students to give their opinions about, and prepare five different pieces of paper, each with a phrase written on it ("Love It," "Kind of Love It," "It's Okay," "Don't Love It," and "Hate It"). Prepare a selection of five different items or photos per student you'd like to participate. For each round, have a student come to the front and give them all five pieces of paper. Reveal an item or photo, one at a time, for them to label with their opinion. They can only label each item once and once the label is placed, it cannot be moved. See if they can make it through the reveal of all five items and still stand by their opinions at the end. Try including items like . . .*
  - *Pizza.*
  - *Money.*
  - *A phone.*
  - *A picture frame of a family.*
  - *Baby animals.*
  - *Textbooks.*

- *Vegetables.*
- *Ice cream.*

## VIDEO | A Clip from Your Favorite Cheesy Love Story

### Here is the video URL

- Now we're getting a little closer to narrowing down what "love" means. But even among the people we "love" most, there are different kinds of love, right? I mean, it would be pretty weird if we told *everyone* we loved them like this . . .
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *As a teaching tool, play a short clip from a movie or show you personally "love," where one character is expressing their love for another in a way that's a little cheesy, melodramatic, or over the top. Play or more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)*
- Maybe you've said or done something like this during an epic prom-posal, but real love isn't usually like a romantic comedy. Whether we're talking about a crush, a friend, a parent, or a relative, you might have some questions about what it means to really "love" someone.
  - Is love a feeling? Or is it something you do? Is it both?
  - Can you love someone without always *feeling* like you love them?
  - If all you do is *feel* like you love someone, does that make it true?
- Maybe these seem like questions that don't really matter, but I promise they do! When it comes to our families we need to talk about what it means to "love" them.

## SO WHAT?

## DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share. The starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them if you're working only with middle schoolers.*
  - **What's something you really love right now?**
  - **What are some ways people make you feel loved with their words? What about with their actions?**

## VIDEO | A Clip from a Sign Language Tutorial

### Here is the video URL

- For the last few weeks, we've been learning to say "family" in different languages as a reminder that there are thousands of ways to say (and be) "family."
- As a reminder that love is so much more than just the words you say, let's learn the word "family" in what might be a new way for some of you.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *As a teaching tool, play a short clip from a video [like this one](#) (2:06-2:10) of someone demonstrating how to say "family" in American Sign Language. For more information on how to legally use copyrighted material for educational purposes, [read this!](#)*
- When it comes to our families, "love" isn't just a word we say or hear. It's something that must translate into action.

## STORY | Talk about a time you struggled to show a family member love through your actions.

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Tell a personal story from your own life (or have a volunteer or student tell a story) about a time when you struggled to show a family member you loved them with your actions. Maybe you learned you could communicate love to a parent by making dinner, or cleaning up, or getting home on time. Or maybe you learned a sibling needed you to love them by spending time with them, talking to them at school, or not teasing them in front of your friends. Share what you learned and how choosing to show them love in that way (or failing to show them love in that way) impacted your relationship.*
- Even if we speak the same language as our family members, it doesn't mean we all communicate in the same way. For one person, "love" might best be expressed through words. But for others, "love" might mean being thoughtful, helping out around the house, or hanging out together.

## SCRIPTURE | I John 4:7-12

- When Jesus was on earth, he spent a lot of time with his followers, but one of the disciples he spent the most time with was John.
  - John saw Jesus teach, heal people, perform miracles, and do ministry. He was even there when Jesus died and later after he rose from the dead.
  - After Jesus left earth, John was part of the first wave of Jesus-followers who created the first church communities where people could worship and learn about Jesus together.
  - As the church grew, John began writing letters to God's family of believers about how they could turn their love for Jesus into action.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read I John 4:7-12.*
- According to John, we can't fully understand what it means to love apart from God. The origin and definition of love comes from God.
  - God invented love and gave us the ability to feel love. But God went a step further by demonstrating love for us through Jesus.
  - We were so loved that God came to earth as Jesus, suffered and died, forgave us before we ever asked to be forgiven, and made it possible for our relationship with God to be restored.
  - Just like Jesus loved us with his actions, John tells us to love each other with our actions.
  - And here's the really cool part. Even though you and I can't see God with our eyes, we can show each other what God is like by the way we love each other.
- John tells us not to just *say* we love each other. He tells us to prove we love each other with our actions.

## SCRIPTURE | John 15:9-17

- How do we do that? I told you a moment ago that John spent a lot of time with Jesus as one of his closest disciples. That means John was there as an eyewitness for many of Jesus' biggest moments.
- The Gospel of John is the retelling of much of Jesus' life through John's eyes. In it, we can read the story of what Jesus said and did in the days and hours leading up to his death.
  - In John, we see Jesus knew his death was near, but instead of spending his time thinking about his own comfort or safety, Jesus spent his time comforting his disciples.
  - Before he was arrested and taken away to be killed, Jesus gave his closest friends some parting words, including these . . .
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read John 15:9-17.*
- Do you see how love is part of everything Jesus says here?
  - Because of God's love, Jesus loves us.
  - Because of Jesus' love for us, we can love others.

- When we love each other, we demonstrate our love for God.

## DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share. The starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them if you're working only with middle schoolers.*
  - **When you love someone, what are some of the things you usually do to let them know? Do you think that usually gets the message across?**
  - **How does God use words to let us know we're loved? How do God's actions let us know we're loved?**

## SCRIPTURE | I John 3:16-18

- Let's take a look at one more thing John said, from the same letter we read from a moment ago.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read I John 3:16-18.*
- Jesus gave everything for us, so we should be willing to give anything for each other. It's not enough to say we love each other with our words. We have to love each other with what we do.
  - Jesus never intended his followers to be identified as Christians by what we put in our TikTok bios or social media captions.
  - Instead, Jesus wants his family to be identified by the way we love one another.
- God's family is a big, diverse, global, multicultural family, but the shared DNA of God's family is love. We can love each other because we are loved by God. **In God's family we love each other.**

## NOW WHAT?

## DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share. The starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them if you're working only with middle schoolers.*
  - \* **What do you think — if you *feel* love for someone, is it always true that you love them? Why or why not?**
  - \* **Why do you think the Bible puts such a big emphasis on our actions toward other people and not just our beliefs about God?**
  - \* **What are some specific ways we can "lay down our lives" for the people in our families?**

## 3 WAYS TO LOVE LIKE JESUS

- Now does this mean we should be reckless and not value our own lives at all? Um, no. We're not supposed to start running around like a vigilante Batman, but what if we tried to love others (especially our families) with these three steps . . . ?
- **LOVE WITH YOUR WORDS.** I'm sure we can all think of moments when our words toward our family members have been less-than-loving. It might even happen later today, but the next time you're tempted to be unloving with your words . . .
  - Stop. Before you react, pause, think about what you want to say, and then pause a little

- longer. If it's not something that needs to be said, don't say it. But if it is, say it lovingly.
- Your words carry a lot of weight. The things you say to your family have the potential to do a lot of harm. But if your words are chosen with love they have the potential to do a lot of good too.
  - If loving your family with your words is hard, start small.
    - "I love you."
    - "Thank you."
    - "You're funny."
    - "Something I like about you is . . . "
    - "I thought it was nice when you . . . "
    - "I appreciate it when you . . . "
  - Whatever you decide to say, remember to always be real with your words. Love is honest and authentic, not manipulative.
  - **LOVE WITH YOUR ACTIONS.** Remember your words won't have any weight if your actions don't back them up. To love your family well, you'll need to find out what "love" means to them. But you can always start by asking, "How can I put them first?"
    - Would they feel loved if you helped around the house more?
    - What if you spent more time with them?
    - What if you invited them to do something fun?
    - What if you complained a little less or started conversations a little more often?
  - **LOVE THROUGH FORGIVENESS.** Forgiveness can be hard — especially when it's family. Sometimes it feels good to be angry and be petty. Sometimes we like the attention we get or the drama we can start when we've been wronged.
    - But here are two questions: how often do you make mistakes or do something you regret? (Probably pretty often.) And when you do, how often is God willing to forgive you? (The correct answer is "every single time.")
    - I know forgiveness isn't always easy, but sometimes we refuse to forgive even when forgiveness would be easy. Maybe that's because we're being selfish, or stubborn, or difficult. Whatever the reason, if you're holding onto unforgiveness when you could easily let it go . . . let it go. Cancel that debt. Imagine you stamped it with a giant "paid" stamp.
    - If God can forgive us eternally, we can forgive each other — even if we sometimes have to forgive each other repeatedly. That's what love would do.

## DISCUSSION

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Break for discussion. If you have more than ten students, split into groups so everyone can share. The starred questions are designed for high schoolers, so you may want to skip them if you're working only with middle schoolers.*
  - **Read I Corinthians 13:4-7. Which of these qualities do you most struggle with at home? How could that quality help you better love your family?**
  - **\* When we're struggling to love our families, what do you think God would want us to do? What do you think God wants to do for us?**
  - **This week, who is someone you're going to love like God loves you? How will you do that?**