

Choose to Love



BIG IDEA

Because Jesus loves us unconditionally, we can choose to love others the same way.



LEADER GOAL

Help students understand that loving others is not something we have to wait until we're "ready" to do. Jesus has already shown us what love looks like, and He invites us to share that love today. Encourage students to recognize that God also helps us grow through community by placing wise people in our lives to guide, encourage, and teach us.



BEFORE STUDENTS ARRIVE

- Review John 13:34 and Proverbs 13:20a.
- Prepare to discuss unconditional love and learning from community.



WELCOME + CONNECT

LEADER SAYS

"Welcome back, everyone!"

Last time, your challenge was to do something kind for someone in your community. Did anyone have the opportunity to do that?

What did you do, and how did it make you—or the other person—feel?"

(Allow students to share. Celebrate even simple acts of kindness, reminding them that small acts of love can have a big impact.)

"Today we're going to meet another traveller on the Yellow Brick Road and discover what Jesus teaches us about love."



LIVE SPARK

CHOOSE LOVE TODAY

GRAB

A clock or timer labelled “THE PERFECT TIME.”

IDEA

We can spend a long time waiting until we feel completely ready to love or help someone. Jesus invites us to choose one wise, ordinary act of love today.

SPARK

Because Jesus loves me, I can choose to love others today.



DO / SAY

[Hold up the clock or timer labelled “THE PERFECT TIME.”]

“Okay. I need to help with something... but I’m waiting.”

[Look closely at the clock.]

“This is supposed to tell me when the PERFECT time arrives.”

[Wait a beat. Check it again.]

“Still nothing.”

“Have you ever done that? Maybe not with a clock, but you think: ‘I’ll help when I have more time.’ ‘I’ll encourage them when I know exactly what to say.’ ‘I’ll include them when it feels less awkward.’”

“Sometimes waiting sounds reasonable... until it becomes an excuse.”

“The Tin Man thinks he needs a heart before he can love. But even before he gets what he thinks he is missing, his choices show that he already cares about his friends.”

“Jesus says, ‘Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.’ He doesn’t tell us to wait until everything feels perfect.”

“Love can look simple: listen, make room, encourage someone, help with a task, or tell the truth with kindness.”

“That is our Spark this week: BECAUSE JESUS LOVES ME, I CAN CHOOSE TO LOVE OTHERS TODAY.”

“Not someday. Today, in one small, healthy action.”

“So here is something to think about: What is one loving action you could choose today? Let’s get started.”

THEN

Move directly into “The Tin Man - Choose to Love.”



STORY CONNECTION

THE TIN MAN — CHOOSE TO LOVE

LEADER SAYS

“As Dorothy and the Scarecrow continue down the Yellow Brick Road, who do they meet next?

The Tin Man!

The Tin Man believes he's missing something important.

He thinks,

'If only I had a heart... then I'd be able to love people.'

He believes something is holding him back.

Sometimes we think the same way.

Maybe we tell ourselves, 'When I'm older, then I'll help people.' 'When I'm more confident, then I'll be kind.' 'When I have more friends, then I'll include someone else.' 'Or when life gets easier, then I'll start following what God wants me to do.'

Have you ever caught yourself thinking, 'If only...'?

The truth is, many of us wait for the perfect moment before doing what we know is right.

But Jesus teaches us something different.

He says:

JOHN 13:34

'So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other.'



STORY CONNECTION

"Notice what Jesus doesn't say.

He doesn't say,

'Love people once you've got your life together.' 'Or after you've become more successful.' 'Or when people are easy to love.'

He simply says,

'Love each other as I have loved you.'

Jesus loved people who were different from Him.

He loved people who made mistakes. He loved people who were hurting. He loved people who didn't deserve it.

That's what unconditional love means.

It means loving someone without making them earn it.

It doesn't mean we ignore unhealthy behaviour or pretend everything is okay. Sometimes loving someone also means telling the truth, setting healthy boundaries, or helping them make wise choices.

But it does mean we continue treating people with dignity, kindness, and compassion because that's how God has treated us.

The amazing thing is that we don't have to wait until we're perfect before we can love others.

You can encourage someone today. You can forgive someone today. You can include someone today. You can choose kindness today.

Jesus has already shown us what love looks like.

Now He invites us to share that same love with the people around us."



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

"Let's talk together."

1

Why do you think the Tin Man believed he needed a heart before he could love others?

2

Have you ever found yourself thinking, "I'll do that when..."?

3

Why do you think God's love is described as unconditional?

4

What's one practical way you can show Jesus' love this week?

5

How can one small act of kindness make someone's day better?



SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

COMMUNITY — LEARNING FROM COMMUNITY

“Last week we started talking about community.

Who remembers some of the things we learned?”

(Allow students to respond.)

“We talked about how God created us to live in community—not just so we could receive encouragement, but so we could encourage others too.

Today we're learning another reason community is such a gift.

God uses other people to help us grow.

There's an important word that helps us understand this.

That word is wisdom.

Wisdom isn't just knowing lots of information. Wisdom is knowing how to make choices that honour God and care for other people.

You can know something is true, but wisdom helps you live it out.

One of the ways God gives us wisdom is through the people He places in our lives.

Think about the people who have helped teach you something important.

Maybe it's a parent. A grandparent. A teacher. A coach. A K2K leader. A pastor. An older sibling. Or a trusted friend.

God often uses people like these to encourage us, answer our questions, challenge us, and help us grow.

The Bible says:

PROVERBS 13:20A

'The one who walks with the wise will become wise.'

“When we spend time with people who love God and want what's best for us, we often grow because of their example.

That doesn't mean those people are perfect. Everyone makes mistakes. But God can still use them to help us learn. One of the wisest things we can do is ask questions. Sometimes we think asking for help means we're weak.

Actually, asking for help is often a sign of wisdom.

None of us has to figure life out on our own.

God has given us community so we can learn, grow, and support one another.”



STUDENT REFLECTION

"Today we've talked about loving others the way Jesus loves us and about learning from the people God places in our lives. Let's reflect together." Prompt: What's the difference between knowing something and making a wise choice?



THIS WEEK - YOUR CHALLENGE!

"This week, your challenge is to learn something from someone in your community. Ask a parent, grandparent, teacher, coach, leader, or another trusted adult a question about life, faith, or something they're good at. Be curious. Listen well. Remember, God often teaches us through the people He's placed around us."



CLOSING PRAYER

"Let's pray together. Dear God, Thank You for bringing us together today. Thank You for loving us unconditionally through Jesus. Thank You that Your love doesn't depend on us being perfect, but is a gift You freely give. Help us love others the way Jesus has loved us—with kindness, patience, compassion, and grace. Thank You for the gift of community and for the people You've placed in our lives to encourage us, teach us, and help us grow in wisdom. Give us humble hearts that are willing to learn, ask questions, and encourage others as we continue growing together. Thank You for this group and for everything You're teaching us this year. Amen."

Connection Activities



ACTIVITY 1 | SHARK TANK

Instructions:

Give ridiculous opportunities.

Examples:

- Start a penguin taxi service.
- Sell underwater bicycles.
- Open a restaurant run entirely by cats.

Groups have 2 minutes to pitch why it's a great opportunity.

Afterward everyone votes:

- Good idea?
- Bad idea?



ACTIVITY 2 | FOLLOW THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD

Supplies

- Yellow construction paper
- Scissors
- Glue stick
- Markers
- Large sheet of blue or green construction paper

Instructions

Give each camper 5-6 yellow brick cutouts.

Glue them in a winding path across the page.

On each brick, write or draw:

Brick 1: My name Brick 2: Something I love Brick 3: Something I'm good at Brick 4: Someone who helps me Brick 5: One dream or goal I have Final Brick: One way I want to follow Jesus this week Decorate the page with poppies, emeralds, rainbows, or ruby slippers.