RESURRECTION STUDENTS

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

4-WEEK SERIES ON LOVING OTHERS

UNIT OVERVIEW

***Love* is complicated**. We know what it feels like to love something - an activity, a food or a place. This seems easy. We just love the thing. Done. I said it. So, I love it. It seems so much more difficult to love a person. Sometimes the people we love hurt us or say something that makes us feel uncomfortable. There are times we don't want to love the people we love. We want to believe we totally love people without conditions. Or at least we want to love them without having to remind ourselves to love them without conditions. It is tough though. And we also have trouble loving ourselves. Ugh. Why does this have to be so complicated?

Love is a choice. Not a feeling. When we think of it like this then we can simply make choices to love people in spite of what they believe and how they behave. We still have to have boundaries so we don't get hurt. But we can love others none the less. This unit will explore the choices we can make to love others more completely and more honestly.

TEACHING OUTLINE

1 **WEEK 1: The Good Samaritan**
Main Point: Stop and Notice What's in Front of You
Scriptures: Luke 10: 25-37

2 **WEEK 2: The Woman Who Annoints Jesus**
Main Point: Give Something Valuable
Scriptures: Luke 7: 36-50

3 **WEEK 3: Feeding 5,000 People**
Main Point: Multiply What We Give Together
Scriptures: Luke 9: 10-17

4 **WEEK 4: Zacchaeus**
Main Point: Love Changes Everything
Scriptures: Luke 19: 1-10

SUPPLIES

1
- 2 Posterboards or Easel Paper
- Markers

2
- Dodge/beach/playground balls

3
- Lots of Random Items for each group.
- Optional: Blindfolds

4
- Paper and Pens
- Dominos and other objects

DIRECTOR GUIDE | Week One
The Good Samaritan

Main Point: Stop and Notice What's in Front of You
Scripture: Luke 10: 25-37

Most of us have heard this story so many times it has stopped surprising us. A man gets robbed. A priest walks by. A Levite walks by. A Samaritan stops. We know who the hero is. We've known since we were seven. And that familiarity is exactly the problem, because we've spent so long admiring the Samaritan that we've stopped asking the question Jesus was actually answering, "Who is my neighbor?"

We are busy. We have school, work, expectations from teachers, friends and parents. There's a lot of pressure to go to the next thing and do what everyone else expects of us. That is this story. There's a long road in front of us with a destination far off in the distance. We have to stay on it. No distractions. In this story two people do what they were supposed to do. They kept going. One did not. The Samaritan saw the person right in front of them, stopped and did something to address that persons' greatest need at that time.

What do we get busy doing? What would it look like if we just stopped and noticed the people right in front of us? How does stopping and attending to someone show love?

LARGE GROUP GAMES

Active Game: Red Light/Green Light
This is an OG game almost everyone played as a kid. Have everyone line up on one side of the room. The leader announces either red light (stop) or green light (go). The first one to follow instructions and make it to the other side of the rooom wins.

Act Out the Scene: Luke 10: 25-37
Have students think of what the story of the Good Samaritan would look like today. Who would be the characters? What would they represent? Have them act it out.

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- 2 Posterboards or Easel Paper
- Markers

STUDENT CHALLENGE

Stop and Notice Someone that isn't in your circle of friends or family. Think about how you might respond to them. Then, if you have courage, respond that way!

SCRIPTURE

Luke 10: 25-37

TEACHING IDEAS

- **Set Up the Conflict or Problem**
  - We are busy people. Give examples of how we are busy or ask students what keeps them busy.
  - Tell a story about how busy you are and how important it is.
- **Paraphrase the Story of the Good Samaritan**
  - The Levite and Priest aren't bad people in the story. They were just busy. They had things to do.
- **What makes the Samaritan the hero?**
  - The Samaritan is unlikely.
  - The Samaritan stops.
  - The Samaritan reprioritizes their time to care for the person in need.
  - The Samaritan ensures the person in need is well taken care of.
  - The Samaritan leaves promising to follow up.
- **What is in front of us?**
  - Friends
  - Family
  - Surprising People - this is where we need to be ready to respond.
- **How do we convince ourselves to stop?**
  - Slow the pace in the midst of our busyness.
  - Be aware of those around us.
  - Approach others with empathy.
  - Get in the habit of stopping to respond.
  - Tell about a time when you were able to stop.

MENTOR GUIDE | Week One
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ACTIVITY

Take two sheets of easle paper or posterboard. On one draw the outline of stop sign (hexagon). On it, have students write what they need to stop doing in order to notice people and their situations. On the other write the word "GO" in large letters in the middle of it. On this one, have students write how they might respond to others in ways that communicate love and caring.

OPENING QUESTIONS

Mentors: Choose the one that will work best for your group!

- Are you busy? What are all the things you do during one week? List on the whiteboard if you want to see the immense volume of busyness.
- How does it feel to be busy?
- What would it look like if you took a few moments out of every day to not be busy?

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

MIDDLE SCHOOL

- When you have a choice between doing what is good (but it takes time) and what is not so good (it is easier), what do you choose?
- What distracts you from what you are "supposed to do?"
- What can you do to communicate you care to someone in need? How is this love?

HIGH SCHOOL

Use some of the middle school questions as well.

- Think about a time when someone needed help or encouragement, but you were busy with something else. What made it difficult to stop?
- What can you tell yourself so that you are able to more easily stop and offer help to someone?
- How does "just" stopping communicate love?
- What happens for you on the inside when you stop to help someone?

STUDENT CHALLENGE

Stop and Notice Someone that isn't in your circle of friends or family. Think about how you might respond to them. Then, if you have courage, respond that way!

DIRECTOR GUIDE | Week Two
The Woman Who Annoints Jesus

Main Point: Give Something Valuable
Scripture: Luke 7: 36-50

Most students don't have much to give. Wait. Full stop. Just because they don't have a full-time job doesn't mean they don't have much to give. This story is about a woman who gave generously. We don't know much about her other than she was a "sinner," someone who had the reputation as being far from God. She had enough resources to own perfumed oil. Other than those two things, we don't know much about her. So, we assume based on her reputation that she likely had very few resources - perfume and her reputation.

And maybe that is what is most valuable to us - our reputation. When all of our things are stripped away, we are only left with who we are. And we are incredibly valuable to God. Students have a reputation. They care deeply what people think about them and often calculate their behavior to get particular responses from certain people. Well, maybe we all do that!

Often, we look at this story from the perspective of someone in the room. What if we could understand what it was like to be the woman, to love so deeply that she would risk everything to show love to Jesus.

LARGE GROUP GAMES

Active Game: Straddle Ball
Small groups stand in a circle with their feet apart and touching the feet next to them. Using a dodgeball or beach ball, students try to hit the ball under other student's legs. If a ball goes between your legs you get a point, the student with the least amount of points win.

Screen Game: Blurt
Students will be shown a category and then given a random letter to think of something that fits into the right category. The first person to blurt out the answer wins!

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Dodge/beach/playground balls

SCRIPTURE

Luke 7: 36-50, Mark 14: 3-9

TEACHING IDEAS

- **Opening: What is the most valuable item you own?**
  - Phone, car, bike, game console
  - Tell the item that is most valuable to you and what you would do if you lost it, broke it or gave it away
- **Read the Scripture**
  - Explain that an alabaster of perfumed oil is worth a full year's salary - likely her most valuable possession.
  - What is more valuable than that for her? Possibly, who she is, her reputation.
  - But she's a sinner and everyone knows it. Her reputation is shot.
  - That's why she is in this story. She is giving literally everything she has and everything she is to this moment with Jesus.
- **What would it be like to be that woman in that moment?**
  - We all have the opportunity to be like her. Not pouring perfume on people. But to love other people so completely that we sacrifice our reputation to do it.
- **The ending is beautiful.**
  - Jesus basically says that she is the example of incredible love.
  - He tells her (the sinner) that her sins are forgiven.
  - Your most valuable thing is not what you have. It is who you are. And when you give who you are to loving others well, it changes everything.

STUDENT CHALLENGE

Find a situation where you think there isn't enough love and care being shown and find a way to show love. And do it without caring what people might think.

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OPENING QUESTIONS

Mentors: Choose the one that will work best for your group!

- What is the most valuable thing you own?
- How easy or difficult would it be for you to give it away to someone else?

ACTIVITY "Would You Risk It?"

See Next Page

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Do you care what people think about you? Your teachers? Your parents? Your friends?
- What kind of reputation would you like to have with each of those groups of people?
- Do you think the woman cared that people thought she was a "sinner?"
- Why did Jesus say that her breaking the alabaster of perfume was an act of love?
- What would it look like for us to show love like that for others - where we give everything?

HIGH SCHOOL

Use some of the middle school questions as well.

- What does it look like and feel like to lay your reputation on the line for someone else?
- In what situations might you be willing to risk your reputation for someone else (showing love)?

STUDENT CHALLENGE

Find a situation where you think there isn't enough love and care being shown and find a way to show love. And do it without caring what people might think.

“Would You Risk It?”

Goal: Help students understand the woman's extravagant act as an act of courageous love rather than simply an act of generosity.

Write each challenge on a small piece of paper. Give each person in your group one challenge. Tell them you expect them to do this challenge sometime this week. Ask them to imagine what that might look like. Have them share how they will do this. Then, ask for feedback (see the questions below).

Level 1 — Easy:
Give someone a genuine compliment.

Level 2 — A Little Risky:
Thank someone who doesn't usually get noticed.

Level 3 — Socially Risky:
Sit with someone you normally wouldn't sit with.

Level 4 — Vulnerable:
Tell someone, “I'm glad you're my friend.”

Level 5 — Really Risky:
Apologize to someone you've hurt.

Level 6 — Sacrificial:
Give up something you really want—your time, your plans, your place in the group—to help someone who needs you.

Afterward, ask:

- Why did the challenges get harder?
- What made something “risky”?
- Was the risk about losing something physical, or losing something about how people saw you?
- Why might someone choose to do something generous even when other people might judge them?
- What do you think the woman in the story risked by expressing her love so openly?

DIRECTOR GUIDE | Week Three
Feeding 5000 People

Main Point: Multiply What We Give Together
Scripture: Luke 9: 10-17

Imagine being there. You, along with over 5000 people, are walking out to the countryside to listen to a rising star you have heard about. Everyone is so excited! It is late in the afternoon, and dinner is a few hours away. Some may have brought some snacks. Most didn't. Dinner time comes. And the followers of Jesus, rather than sending everyone home, ask people to sit in groups for dinner. Jesus blesses the food they have (which isn't much) and everyone eats. There are leftovers!

Usually, this story is taught because of the miracle of the meal and the surprise of extra food. What if it was more about the generosity and love the people showed one another? What if it is about taking large groups of people and creating community? What if this story is about focusing our attention on God and the abudance God offers us and not about making up what seemed like poor meal planning?

Our love can best be expressed in what we give to one another. This story shows the unlimited impact our giving can have on the pople around us and how our generosity communicates our faith in ways that tangibly effects others.

LARGE GROUP GAMES

Active Game: Many People, One Team

Put the teenagers into groups of five. Give each group a simple task they can complete in 3–4 minutes—for example, build the tallest tower possible from paper and tape. Here's the catch: each group gets different supplies. One group might get lots of paper but almost no tape. Ask:

- "What happened when you kept your resources to yourself?"
- "What can we accomplish together that we couldn't accomplish separately?"

The point isn't simply that someone gave something away. Sharing what we have can create something that wouldn't have existed otherwise.

Screen Game: Beat the Clock: Football

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Lots of Random Items for each group.
- Optional: Blindfolds

SCRIPTURE

Luke 9: 10-17, Mark 4: 31-32

TEACHING IDEAS

- **Crowds and Other Things Are Overwhelming**
  - Tell the story about something that is overwhelming to you. Describe how being overwhelmed overpowers something else that might be valuable.
  - A hungry mob of 5000 could have turned out poorly.
- **Crowds Become Community**
  - Jesus had the disciples divide the crowd into groups of 50. Why?
  - Community forms when we are intentional.
  - Jesus blesses the food but is also blessing the community that is formed to eat the food.
- **Community Multiplies Love, Making Something Small Amazing**
  - We don't know why there was leftover food. Often, we think it was because Jesus magically made more food.
  - It could also be because the people were generous with what they had.
  - They all gave a little and ended up with a lot.
  - Explain the parable of the mustard seed.
  - God uses the imagery of small things making a difference over and over again - Zaccaeus, woman touching the hem of his clothes, the mustard seed, 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish.
- **Choose to love in small meaningful ways**

STUDENT CHALLENGE

Get with a group of people and decide to do something for somebody else. Be creative and experience the idea exploding into something even better than the one you started with.

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OPENING QUESTIONS

Mentors: Choose the one that will work best for your group!

- How do you do in large crowds? Concerts? Sporting Events?
- What is something else that overwhelms you and distracts you from something good?

ACTIVITY "The 5000 Person Problem"

Have the ten teenagers scatter around the room. Tell them: "You're 5,000 people who came to hear Jesus. You don't know most of the people around you. It's getting late. You're hungry. Nobody really knows what to do." Give them 2 minutes to figure out how they could organize everyone into a community where nobody is left out. Discuss the strategies they came up with and why they think those strategies are important.

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

MIDDLE SCHOOL

- What is an act of kindness someone has done for you recently? How did it make you feel?
- What is an act of kindness you have done for someone else?
- What effect does a large group of people have on how kind we are for others?
- What would happen if a large group of people decided to show love through their actions? What might the group be able to do that one person couldn't do as well?

HIGH SCHOOL

Use some of the middle school questions as well.

- How does something overwhelming distract you from what you want to be doing or what you feel like you should be doing?
- Why did Jesus ask the Disciples to gather the crowd into groups of 50 people?
- How might we be more effective at overcoming our distractions when we are supported by other people who want to treat others kindly? What would our impact be?

STUDENT CHALLENGE

Get with a group of people and decide to do something for somebody else. Be creative and experience the idea exploding into something even better than the one you started with.

DIRECTOR GUIDE | Week Four
Zacchaeus

Main Point: Love Changes Everything
Scripture: Luke 19: 1-10

We want to believe that love changes things. But do we? Does it?

We compete at a lot of things. We compete in sports, in grades, in social standing with our friends and in our school. The nature of competition often produces jealousy and/or anger that flashes when we don't win or aren't well thought of by others. So, where is the love in all of that? And why don't we choose love when we are in those situations.

And does love really change things? Why do countries go to war instead of loving one another? Why do we have such a hard time resolving our own conflict?

Zacchaeus gives us a glimpse of the possibility of love. This social outsider set himself up with material wealth. Obviously, that wasn't enough. He needed Jesus. What he received was likely more than he had hoped for. After one meal with Jesus, he changed everything. He gave half of his possessions to the poor and repaid four times the amount of money he took from people as a result of the taxes he charged. One meal with Jesus. Kindness and love that Jesus showed him, changed Zacchaes and as a result, the community around him, literally everything.

LARGE GROUP GAMES

Active Game: What Would Make You Change?
Give each teenager a piece of paper. Ask them to privately finish this sentence: "I would have a really hard time changing _____ about myself if someone just told me I was doing something wrong." They don't have to share what they wrote. Then ask: "What might make someone actually want to change?" Maybe love changes people because love reaches places that punishment, competition, and shame can't.

Screen Game: Squirrel Mayhem
A ridiculous game of memory and luck!

SCRIPTURE

Luke 19: 1-10

TEACHING IDEAS

- **What is Love?**
  - Care and Kindness
  - Acts of Service
- **Ordinary Actions Lead to Incredible Change**
  - Acknowledging Someone
  - A Meal
  - Conversation
- **Jesus Sees Us. Do we see Jesus?**
  - Effort of Zacchaeus in climbing the tree.
  - A belief that something inside of us will change
- **Look What Changes**
  - Rosa Parks and civil rights
  - Jesus and being kind
  - Find a modern day video of change
  - Matthew's Ministry
  - Adam Hamilton
- **What Will You Change?**

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Paper and Pens
- Dominos and other objects

STUDENT CHALLENGE

Choose to love in small ways and then be aware of the effect that has on people and situations around you.

MENTOR GUIDE | Week Four
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OPENING QUESTIONS

Mentors: Choose the one that will work best for your group!

- Name one way you have experienced love in the past month.
- How have you shared love with other people?

ACTIVITY "The Domino Effect"

Set up 10 dominoes, blocks, cups, or other objects in a line. Tell them, "Each of these represents a person. We're going to see how one person's decision can affect everyone else." Knock the first one over so there is a chain reaction. Then reset them. This time, have the first teenager do something symbolic—perhaps give another person a high-five, say something encouraging, or invite someone into the group. That person then does the same for someone else, continuing around the circle.

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

MIDDLE SCHOOL

- What are some ways you can show love to other people? People you know? People you don't know?
- What prevents you from showing love to others consistently?
- What small things can you do to show love to others

HIGH SCHOOL

Use some of the middle school questions as well.

- Do you think that love changes everything? Why? How?
- On a scale of 1-10, what effort do you put into loving other people well? What makes you choose this number? Why didn't you choose a lower number?
- Zaccaeus made some effort to see Jesus and accepted Jesus's bold invitation to come to his house. What bold effort might you make that is not your normal way of behaving?
- How might you be more aware of people and situations around you?

STUDENT CHALLENGE

Choose to love in small ways and then be aware of the effect that has on people and situations around you.