

● I want you to think of three individuals that you have a hard time loving. Don't say their names, but get a strong picture of them in your mind. Wait about 20 seconds.

● What are some specific actions you could take to let God love those three persons through you?

As members respond, have someone write their ideas on the chalkboard.

● Pass out pencils and small sheets of paper.

● Look at the list of actions we have developed. From that list, choose one action that you will take this week to show God's love to one of the three persons you have trouble loving. On the piece of paper I gave you, write down the name of the person, the action you will take, and when you will take it.

## Making It Personal

### Acrostic poems

● Give each person a pencil and a copy of the LOVE acrostic shown below (duplicate Item 2).

L \_\_\_\_\_  
O \_\_\_\_\_  
V \_\_\_\_\_  
E \_\_\_\_\_

● Have members turn the acrostic into a poem about God's love for us, our love for God, and our love for others. For example:

*Let us love one another, for love is from God.*

*Others are worth loving, no matter how odd.*

*Value them highly: He died for them, too.*

*Even though they're not exactly like you.*

## Wrapping It Up

- Have members get into small clusters of three or four persons.
- Encourage them to share in their small groups the action they plan to take and when they plan to take it. Suggest that they not share the name of the person upon which they will take the action.
- After each person in the group shares, ask that they spend some time praying for each other. Ask groups to leave quietly when they finish so they will not disturb groups that are still praying.



### Faith at Home

Lead your family to think of some specific persons who are hard to love and some specific loving actions they can take toward those persons.

# Teacher's Toolbox

*Getting your class into God's Word  
and God's Word into your class*

ExcitingBibleStudy.com

Bible Series

1 John 4:7-21

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**HOW TO USE TEACHER'S TOOLBOX:** Make a four-page folded teacher's leaflet from the first two sheets by printing two-sided (or by putting the blank sides together). The other two sheets are for duplicating, displaying, distributing, or otherwise using as called for in the lesson plan.



**Faith at Home** – A specific application of today's Bible passage to family life, to be used for individual reflection, family discussion, or class activity.



## Getting Started

### Playing catch

- In advance, make three name signs, using markers on 8½ by 11 sheets of paper:
  - GOD
  - ME
  - OTHERS
- Bring to class a beach ball, basketball or other large ball. Ask three members to help you with a demonstration.
- Arrange the members in a triangle in front of the class. Tape one of the signs on each member so the rest of the class can clearly see each sign.
- Give the ball to the member labeled GOD. Ask him to throw it to the member labeled ME.
- **The Bible says that "love comes from God" (1 John 4:7). God has**

**shown His love for us by sending His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him.**

- Hand the ball back to GOD and ask him to throw it to ME again.
- **Some people never respond to God's love. He keeps loving the person, but the person never returns the love.**
- Hand the ball back to GOD again and ask him to throw it to ME. This time, have ME return the ball. Ask them to continue tossing the ball back and forth until you tell them to stop.
- **Many of us in this room have responded to God's love by repenting of our sins and trusting Jesus as Savior and Lord. Now that we are Christians, we show our love for God through worship and service.**
- After a few seconds, ask the class, **What is wrong with this picture?** Wait for someone to point out that OTHERS is being left out of this game of catch.
- **Our Bible passage today says, "This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another....We love because He first loved us. If anyone says, 'I love God,' yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother."**
- Ask GOD and ME to begin including OTHERS in their game of catch, with each person making sure they throw the ball to each of the other two.
- **Since God loves us, we love Him and we love others also. Our love of others helps them to respond to God's love by loving Him and loving us. This is God's plan. Our passage tells us that "God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him."**
- Take the ball and ask the participants to sit down. Move into a study of the Bible passage.

## Exploring God's Word

### Finding answers

- Give each person a pencil and a copy of the following, without the answers that are supplied below in parentheses (duplicate Item 1).

### Dig In!

Dig into 1 John 4:7-21 and find the answers to the following questions.

1. Why should we love one another? (love comes from God)
2. What is true of a person who does

not love? (that person does not know God)

3. How did God show His love for us? (He sent His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him)
4. How should we respond to God's sacrificial love? (love one another)
5. What is true of us if we love one another? (God lives in us and His love is made complete in us)
6. According to verses 13-15, what is the role of each of these in a person's salvation?
  - the Father (sent His Son to be the Savior of the world)
  - the Son (the Savior of the world, must be acknowledged)
  - the Spirit (given to us as evidence that we live in Him and He in us)
  - the person (must acknowledge that Jesus is the Son of God)
7. What is true of the person who lives in love? (he lives in God and God in him)
8. What does love give us on the day of judgment and what does it drive out of us? (gives us confidence, drives out fear)
9. What is true of the person who claims to love God but hate his brother? (he is a liar)
10. What command has the Lord given us? (Whoever loves God must also love his brother)

- Have members form groups of two or three and work on the questions together. Allow five minutes. Then call out each question, letting

volunteers from the class give the answers.

### Concordance search

- Bring to class three exhaustive concordances of the Bible. (Or duplicate the pages of an exhaustive concordance listing "love" references. Or make sure at least three members have concordances in the backs of their Bibles. There are more than 350 verses containing the word love, but abbreviated concordances found in the backs of Bibles may only list a few.)
- Divide the class into three groups. Provide paper and pencils for each group. Ask them to scan the list of verses containing the word "love" and find ten verses that tell about:
  - Group One: God's love for us
  - Group Two: Our love for God
  - Group Three: Our love for others
- Allow ten minutes for work. Then call for reports.

### Group discussion

- **Some people are easy for us to love. Others, we have real difficulty loving. What makes it hard for us to love some people?** Let the class discuss this for a few minutes.
- **Do you think it is possible that some people find us difficult to love? Why would that be so?** Wait for responses.

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