

LET'S TALK ABOUT LOVE

Goal:

We're together in love!

Scripture Verses:
1 Corinthians 13:4

Faith, hope, and love are all integral aspects of being in a relationship with God and with other people. The greatest of these is love, which should be at the heart of all we do. Help kids discover how important faith, hope, and love are to them.

Choose Your Opening

Option 1: Trading for Love

(For this activity, prepare three placards, each with one of the following words written on it: "Faith", "Hope", and "Love". Hide the placards under three upside-down boxes.)

Select a child to play Let's Make a Deal. Ask the contestant to choose a box. After the contestant reveal the word under the box, have the rest of the group describe what the contestant has won (that is, define the word). Then ask if the contestant wants to keep their prize or trade it for another box. If they trade, give the first prize to another child and have the first contestant choose one of the remaining boxes. Continue until all three placards have been revealed and defined by the group.

Discuss the following questions:

- *Which prize do you believe is most valuable? Why?
- *Which of these prizes do you value most in your relationships with others?
- *What are the roles of faith, hope, and love in relationships?

Say: Today we're going to explore why each of these three qualities is important and why love is the most important of all.

Option 2: Hymnbook Love Look

(For this activity, collect paper, pencils, and a hymnal for every three students.)

Give each child a hymnal, paper, and pencils. **Say:** Use the next five minutes to go through the hymnal and define the words "faith", "hope", and "love" using only what you find in hymn lyrics. For example, you might find a hymn that defines faith as "trusting God". See how many definitions you can find for each word, and list them on your paper.

After 5 minutes, call time. Have the kids tell about their findings. Choose one familiar hymn that was used to define one of the words, and have kids sing it together.

Then **Ask:**

- *Which word was most difficult to define using the hymns? Which was easiest?
- *Why are there so many songs about love?
- *Which of the three characteristics—faith, hope, or love—is most important in your life?
- *Why does the Bible give top priority to love?

Say: Today we're going to explore faith, hope, and love, and we'll see why love always comes out on top.

THE BIBLE EXPERIENCE

Love: Apply Within

(For this activity, collect or create generic employment applications, pencils, and Bibles.)

Give each child a pencil and an employment application. **Say:** We're going to complete these applications to fill the job openings for "love", "faith" and "hope". Imagine that you're completing this application as one of these three characteristics. Fill out the sections as you imagine love, faith, or hope might complete them. For example, in the "name" space, you might list other names love might go by. Or in the "address" section, you might describe where faith is found. Or you might list things hope is most known for in the "experience" section. Choose one of the three words (without telling anyone else your choice), and complete the application.

Allow enough time for the application to be filled out. Then call time. Have each child tell what they stated on the form. Ask someone in each group to read aloud 1 Corinthians 13:4-8.

Ask:

- *What do these applications tell you about faith, hope, and love?
- *What does the Scripture passage add to your definitions of love?
- *Why is love so important in your relationship with God?
- *What happens when you have faith but not love? Hope but not love?
- *What makes love the most important characteristic of all?



Penny Graph

(For this activity, you'll need thirty pennies for each student)

Have kids sit on the floor, as far away from each other as possible. Give each child thirty pennies. **Say:** Use your pennies to make a graph illustrating how well you're doing with each of the three characteristics—faith, hope, and love. No one else needs to see your graph, and you don't need to tell anyone which of the three columns is which. But you must use all of the pennies, making a longer line of pennies for the area you're doing best in and a shorter one for the area you need to work on. Begin by making a graph of how much love, faith, and hope you have in your current relationship with God.

Give kids a couple of minutes to make their graphs then **Say:** Think about your graph and what it tells you about your relationship with God. Then move the pennies around, if necessary, to show what you'd like your graph to look like.

Allow time to move the pennies. Now **Say:** It's important to have all three characteristics of faith, hope, and love in our lives. But the Bible tells us that love is the most important of all, and it explains what true love is all about. Let's express that kind of love to one another as our closing.

Choose Your Closing

Option 1: A Penny for Your Thoughts

(For this activity, give each student a handful of pennies)

Have each person walk around the room and give a penny and a "loving thought" to at least three other people if possible. Explain that the loving thoughts must be personal, honest expressions of love toward the other people. For example, someone might say, "I give you this penny of love because you've been a great example of love in my life" or "I give you this penny because I really care about you."

When kids have finished trading pennies, close by having someone ask God to help them seek more faith, hope, and love in their relationships with God and with others.

Option 2: A Penny Message

(For this activity, give each student a handful of pennies)

Have each person to around the room and silently express their love for one another in creative ways using pennies. For example, someone might approach a member of the group and spell out the word "love" using his or her pennies. Or another might simply give the pennies (and a hug) to someone else.

Give kids a few minutes to express their love, then have everyone work together on a "picture of ultimate love" by organizing the pennies on a table into a large cross-shape. Have someone close by thanking God for showing us what love is all about through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.