

To the Teacher

The information below is to help you in teaching the lesson. DO NOT read this page to the students. Instead, teach the information in your own words. Be sure to finish the student's lesson as well. The Scripture references in parentheses are for additional study, to round out the information given in the lesson. Become familiar with these passages as well, to provide additional Scriptures to your students.

Lesson 11 – God Shows His Love (Teacher's Lesson)

Opening: Answer the opening question. Explain that love should be demonstrated. God demonstrates His love with His actions.

Study Notes:

Matthew 5:43-45

This passage in the Sermon on the Mount is sometimes misunderstood. The Bible never said that we should hate our enemies – this was an interpretation that came from the Pharisees. They also narrowed the definition of “neighbor” to basically say, “people that look like, act like, and believe exactly like me.” Also, God sending the sun and rain should not be understood as God blessing and cursing each one equally. The culture of that time was an agricultural culture, so the sun and the rain were considered blessings because both were necessary for the growth of the crops. God provides sustenance for all of His creation, even those who curse Him.

Isaiah 45:18

God created the earth to be full of people. Even though He waited until the sixth day to create human beings, we were not His last thought. God prepared the world for us. He had humanity in mind from the beginning – we were and are the crown of His creation.

Psalms 104:14

God provides for all of His creation, people as well as animals. His blessings are not only limited to those who serve Him dutifully. Verse 15 speaks of the wine that gladdens the human heart. You might want to explain that this verse is not a justification for drunkenness – there are many Scriptures that prohibit that (Ephesians 5:18, for example). Wine represents joy, lightness of heart, prosperity. God cares for us and often goes beyond meeting our needs to give us our desires as well.

Job 34:14-15

God gives us each life. He sustains all of life, and if He ever withdrew that support, all of life would die. Life itself is a gift from God.

Psalms 139:13-14

Here David speaks of the wonder of his own creation. Each human being is a miracle of God, “I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made.” We can understand something about the process of how a child grows in the mother's womb, but God is

active in creating a new life in ways we cannot understand. He also creates each life with a purpose and a plan (verse 16).

Summary: God confers blessing and the provision of life on all people. Even though we can receive many other blessings or difficulties, there are some blessings that God liberally gives to all.

Matching:

1-C, 2-G, 3-A, 4-H, 5-E, 6-B, 7-F, 8-D

God gives us all of these blessings, but we must remember to love the one who blesses more than the blessings. Material possessions (for example) are a gift of God, but when we love them more than Him, that is idolatry. The same can be said for whichever gift from God in this list.

Application: Put students in pairs or groups and pray together in gratitude for God's blessings.

Lesson 11 – God Shows His Love

When you care enough to send the very best

Why type of gift do you like to receive for a special, romantic occasion?

God Loves Everyone

A popular saying says, “We are all children of God.” As we have studied in a previous lesson, this is not literally true. We become children of God by receiving Jesus. However, it is true that all of us are God’s creation and He loves all of us, including those who decide not to follow Him. He demonstrates His love, through His creation, in many ways to all humanity. Read Matthew 5:43-45 and answer the questions below.

The Scriptures from the Old Testament say “Love your neighbor.” How did Jesus explain the true meaning of this passage?

Why did Jesus command us to love our enemies?

Read the following verses and write below each reference some of the blessings from God that are described.

Isaiah 45:18

Psalms 104:14

Job 34:14-15

Psalms 139: 13-14

The Wonder of You

Each person has been greatly blessed by God, no matter what the state of our relationship with Him. Some have been blessed in certain areas more than others, but all of us receive blessings from the Lord. Consider the verses below and match the blessing with the appropriate verse:

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| 1. Genesis 2:19 | A. Useful Work |
| 2. Matthew 10:29-31 | B. Emotions |
| 3. Ecclesiastes 2:34 | C. Intelligence |
| 4. Ecclesiastes 5:19 | D. The capacity to have a relationship with God |
| 5. 1 Corinthians 7:37 | E. The freedom to choose |
| 6. Luke 12:19 | F. The capacity for relationships |
| 7. Genesis 2:24 | G. Personal Worth |
| 8. John 1:12-13 | H. Material Possessions |

Are there other blessings that you can think of that God has given to everyone, independent of their relationship with Him?

Write a few things below for which you are especially thankful to God for right now. Take a moment in your group to pray and thank God for His blessings.

Out of all of these blessings, the greatest is the ability to have a relationship with God himself. God gives some blessings to all created beings, but the blessing of salvation, the greatest demonstration of God's love, is only for those who believe. Next week we will talk about how God demonstrated His love in salvation.

Scripture to memorize:

Your love, LORD, reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness to the skies.
Psalm 36:5