

Love each other like the members of your family. (Romans 12:10a)

Love in Action – Romans 12:9-18

Prepare to Wonder

In today's story, Paul explains what love should look like for both the church and others in the community. Paul calls for a sincere love without pretending. He says we should hate evil and cling to what is good. We should love one another like family. We also should show honor to one another. Paul says we should be enthusiastic in serving the Lord. We are to find happiness in hope and stand our ground when we are in trouble.

Paul also addresses how to deal with people who are different from us. We are to bless people who harass us, as Jesus taught, and not curse them. We are to treat one another as equals and not think of ourselves as better than anyone else. We are to befriend those who have no status and not have an inflated idea of our own intelligence. We are not to seek revenge on those who have wronged us, and we are to show respect for the beliefs of those who believe something different from us. Most importantly, we are to live in peace with everyone. We are called to love.

But love can be hard. It might seem impossible to demonstrate this kind of love. How can we possibly always be loving? This story shows many ways to love. We can't always show perfect love, but we can choose one way we will offer our very best love. Love is not about perfection. Love is a practice. Help children see ways they can practice being a person of love and how to share that love with others. The main point you'll want your children to take away is that "we want to seek to" live in peace with everyone.

Spiritual Practice for Adults

This week take time to reflect on your relationships. Are you loving others the best you can? Are there people with whom you desire to connect in a more loving way? Are there people with whom you have an ongoing conflict that could be resolved by choosing a more loving approach? Are you ready to take action in these situations? If so, choose a first step. If not, talk to God about it in prayer until you're ready. And remember, sometimes choosing the loving way can also mean setting boundaries and asking God to show you the most loving way forward.

Welcome to Wonder

Prepare Ahead: As a family, create a Wonder Table. Find a small table or area in your home. On the table, place a candle, a plant or flower, and any other special items you want to include.

Tip: Use this space while engaging in the lesson.

- Gather together near your Wonder Table.

WONDER together

- How would you define *love*?
- What are some ways you show love?

CONTINUE to wonder

- How do you think a person who loves you should treat you?
- Is it always easy to love? Why or why not?

PRAY together

- Dear God, thank you for sharing with us what love looks like. Amen.

SING together

- Use your Annual Music CD or download the song, "A Strong Wind" (<https://www.cokesbury.com/Celebrate-Wonder-Annual-Music>).
- Play the song, "A Strong Wind"
- Sing and celebrate.

Wonder with Me

Supplies: CEB Bible, Wonder Cube (Digital Class Pack), optional: Celebrate Wonder Bible Storybook

READ the Bible story

- Read the Bible story: Romans 12:9-18.
- Roll the Wonder Cube. Take time to answer a few of the questions.

WATCH the Bible story

- Visit <https://www.cokesbury.com/Celebrate-Wonder-Video> to download and watch today's Bible story, or watch on www.amplifymedia.com.

SHARE the Faith Word

- Faith Word: LOVE—Love means a closeness and connection we feel with God and others.

WONDER: What does Paul tell us about love?

Love Banner (Collaborative Art)

Supplies: large white paper, markers, crayons, hanging supplies (appropriate for your door)

Prepare Ahead: Write the words You Are Loved in large print on your white paper.

SAY: Let's make a banner for our door to show others they are loved.

- Put the large paper where you can work on it together.
- Decorate the banner together with words and pictures that remind you of love.
- Display the banner on your door for others to see.

Spiritual Practice—Exploring Love Through Service

Supplies: Celebration Chart (Digital Class Pack), optional: Celebrate Wonder Family Activity Book

- Gather near your Wonder Table.

SAY: Today's Bible story reminds us of the importance of love.

- Have everyone make a heart with her or his hands.
- Have everyone look through his or her heart.
- Repeat the following:

SAY: I see love all around me. Love is in you, and love is in me.

- Repeat this practice several times.

SAY: Amen.

- Find a time to read together the *Celebrate Wonder Family Activity Book*.