

Date Used: _____

Group: _____

LOOKING FOR LOVE

Topic: Christian love

Purpose of this Session:

Love is something we talk about often but the subject still confuses many young people. They often think it is some kind of gushy, sentimental emotion you have toward someone else rather than an act of obedience to God. This TalkSheet will help you find out what your students think about love. It will also give them a chance to talk about practical ways they can put love into effect.

To Introduce the Topic:

Most of today's popular music deals with romantic love. Begin this session by listening to a song together or by watching a music video that deals with love.

Another lead-in is to have the students make an "I Love. . ." bumper sticker — with a red heart instead of the word "love" — and complete the sentence any way they wish. Have each person share their "love" with the rest of the group.

The Discussion:

Item #1: Have the students share their choices and explain why they chose them. Save your comments for later.

Item #2: Young people often believe love is finding something about another person that is lovable and only then can they love that person. Christian, or agape, love says we don't look for a lovable quality, but we love in spite of lovable characteristics. Talk about this concept of love with your group.

Item #3: Have the students share their reasons for their answers. Make this a fun activity.

Item #4: Go through this list and see how many selected each one as an example of Christian love. Discuss those in which there is not complete agreement. Brainstorm additional examples of love and talk about them in terms of practical ways to demonstrate Christian love.

Item #5: Have the students share what they learned from reading this passage. Focus on the idea that we love others because God loves us all.

To Close the Session:

Challenge your students to look at people the way Christ did. Every person is a child of God, created in the image of God, and is someone for whom Christ died. Our culture teaches using people and loving things, but the Christian way is just the opposite.

Help your students see that love is not a feeling or an emotion, but a decision we make. The Bible doesn't ask that we "like" our neighbor, but it does command us to love even those we don't like. That is the mark of the Christian — that we love others as we love ourselves.

Outside Activities:

1. Have each group member choose one person they think is difficult to love. During the week, they can try to express love in some fashion to this person.
2. Have your students visit elderly congregation members to clean their yards and homes as expressions of love.