



OVERVIEW

Junior	Showcase 1	Showcase 2	Showcase 3	Showcase 4	Showcase 5
Title	Showing Christ's Love	Showing Christ's Holiness	Showing Christ's Compassion	Showing Christ's Humility	Showing Christ's Faithfulness
References	Matthew 1:18–25; Luke 2:1–11 (Jesus Is Born)	Matthew 4:1–11 (Jesus Is Tempted)	Mark 6:30–44 (Jesus Feeds over 5,000)	John 13:1–17 (Jesus Washes Feet)	Matthew 27:27–31, 39–46, 50; 28:1–8, 18–20 (Jesus Is Crucified, Then Rises to Life)
Focus	Christ's love in us	Christ's holiness in us	Christ's compassion in us	Christ's humility in us	Christ's faithfulness in us
Memory Verses	"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).	"It is written, 'Be holy, for I am holy'" (1 Peter 1:16).	"Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd" (Mark 6:34).	"I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you" (John 13:15).	"You shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8).
Games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ani-motion Relay Don't Mess with That Llama! Flutter & Catch Luggin' Llamas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timber! Avoid Temptation Built Strong Beaver Balloon Bop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compassion Fill-up Playful Dolphins Sharks & Dolphins Dolphin Splash 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elephant Trunk Soccer Crazy Critter Races Savanna Sling-it Soaker Wash 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Penguin Relay Keep That Egg Safe Creature Corners Keep It Up
Snacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Llama Wool Yummy South America Llama Crackers Andes Trail Mix 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beaver Lodge Cookies Beaver Cup Santos's Apple Tree 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fishing with Dolphins Dolphin Compassion Sea Snack Mix Fish in the Seaweed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animal Cracker Dip Elephant Memory Mini Elephant Ears 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Polar Ice Sandwiches Penguin Swim Cheese Icebergs Faithful Penguins
Crafts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jesus Is Born! Festive Clover the Llama Fluffy Llama God Sent His Son 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Backstroking Beaver Jesus in View Memory Box Eager Beaver Love God's Word Follow the Trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Color Your Own Dolphin Beads & Bubbles Jellyfish Diving with Dolphins Floating Sea Turtle Dolphin Friend 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colorful Critter Necklace Elephant Smile WildLIVE! Memo Board Boldly Live for Jesus Follow the Leader Elephants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ice Skating Penguin Penguin on a Roll Good News Hearts Jesus Always Loves Us

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RegularBaptistPress.org • rbpVBS.org

© 2024 Regular Baptist Press • RBP33661 • ISBN 978-1-64213-977-8

Joshua Mason, Creative Manager • Carrie Augsburg, Writer • New King James Version

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JUNIOR

TEACHER BOOK



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Showing Christ's LOVE

Matthew 1:18–25; Luke 2:1–11 (Jesus Is Born)

MEMORY VERSE

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

EXTRA CREDIT VERSES

Matt. 1:21; 1 John 4:7, 8; 1 John 4:9, 10

TOPIC

Christ's love in us

THEME

Jesus came to save us so we might know and share His love.

DESIRED STUDENT RESPONSE

Students will respond to the revelation of God's love by loving others.

TAKEAWAY

I can know and show God's love because He loves me.



- Greet students with enthusiasm. Get to know each student.
- Make sure you have a completed registration card (30208) for each student.
- Distribute nametags (33633) and WildLIVE! Passes (33634).
- Open the class time with prayer.

TIP ►

Inflate the balloon before class, then let out the air. This stretches the balloon so it inflates more easily during the experiment.

TIP ►

Before class, do a quick online search to get familiar with captivating creatures that live in South America. Examples include alpacas, capybaras, collared peccaries, glass frogs, guanacos, llamas, long-wattled umbrella-birds, matamatas, Patagonian maras, pink fairy armadillos, sloths, and spectacled bears.

IDEA ►

For added variety during Welcome time, you could set up stations and run more than one welcome activity at the same time. Students either rotate between activities or choose their favorite.



Option 1: Fill It Up

Materials

- Empty water bottle; 4 Alka-Seltzer tablets; ½ cup water; 1 balloon.

Before class: Break up the Alka Seltzer tablets and drop them into the bottom of the bottle.

DISPLAY: Show the deflated balloon. **ASK:** Do you think I can inflate the balloon without using my mouth? **ACTIVITY:** Pour the water into the bottle, then quickly place the neck of the balloon over the top of the bottle. Watch the balloon expand. Explain that the tablets are in the bottom of the bottle and that adding water released carbon dioxide bubbles, which filled the balloon. *Optional:* Set up two bottles with materials. You and a helper conduct the same demonstration simultaneously.

Without Jesus’ love, our lives are like this flat, empty balloon. But when we believe in Jesus and allow His love to fill us, we can show His love to other people.

Option 2: Pack-a-Llama

Materials

- Plenty of interlocking blocks; objects to use as “packs” on the llamas’ backs (e.g., large washers, flat stones, fishing sinkers, other blocks); tape for each group; 1 measuring tape.

Before class: Divide the interlocking blocks for groups of three students to work together.

Llamas aren’t only known for spitting! They’re also known as great pack animals on mountain trails. They can carry heavy loads while navigating rocky terrain. You might not guess that’s true just by looking at them, but their actions prove it. God loves you—but did you know He did more than just say He loves you? He proved it in a way that cost Him a lot. He sent His Son, Jesus, to take the punishment for our sins.

ACTIVITY: Divide students into teams of two or three. Instruct them to work together to make a pack llama with their interlocking blocks. Once their llama is completed, they will test how high they can “pack” it. They may use the tape if necessary to secure their pack so it doesn’t fall over. The llama must be able to stand under the weight of the pack. Use the measuring tape to measure its height. The group with the tallest pack before the llama collapses or falls over wins!



Introduction

Materials

- 3 paper llamas (cut out); marker; tape.

Before class: Write one of these worldly definitions for love on the llamas: (1) Love is a feeling. (2) Love shouldn't cost anything. (3) Love is something you fall into. Post the llamas at the front for your class to see.

Look at these lovely llamas! On their sides, I have written ideas about love.

ACTIVITY: As you read each llama, ask students to vote on whether that llama's definition of love is correct.

These llamas may be lovely, but not one of their definitions for love is what God's Word, the Bible, tells us about love.

God's Word tells us that love cost God a lot. Because He loved the world, He gave us His only Son, Jesus Christ. And because God showed His love, you and I can have the very best gift in history!

Let's go on location in the Bible to discover more about this amazing love and what it means for you and me.

Explore the Bible!

Materials

- Bible; lesson 1 visual packet and CD (33607) or visual book PowerPoint download (33607EB); scenarios for a game of Would You Rather from the director resources CD (33602); whiteboard; dry-erase marker.

Before class: Mark Micah 5:2 in your Bible so it's easy to find quickly.

Who are a few of the most important people who ever lived? Help me think of names.

ACTIVITY: Students give examples of important people. Be ready with prompts if they need help getting started (e.g., George Washington, Harriet Tubman, Abraham Lincoln, Marie Curie, Genghis Khan, Cleopatra). Be aware that students may also say names from popular culture—real or fictional.

Those are important people—but not a single one of them (*[or if Jesus was named] but only one of them . . .*) is the most important person in history. At VBS we're going to be learning about Him. This person (*[or if Jesus was named] Jesus*) didn't look very important when He came into the world. He was just a baby like any one of us. But He was willing to give up His importance.

Do you ever wonder if anyone loves you? Because Jesus came to earth, you can always count on this—God loves you more than you can imagine!

TIP

Open in prayer and teach with an open Bible.



Lesson 1 Visual 1



Lesson 1 Visual 2

TIP ►

Don't force any students to read the verse if they are unwilling to do so. If no students volunteer, read the verse yourself.



Lesson 1 Visual 3

TIP ►

Nazareth and Bethlehem are about ninety miles apart. On foot, the journey would take at least four days. It probably took Joseph and Mary longer because of Mary's condition—at least a week, maybe ten days.

DISPLAY: Show visual picture 1 or PowerPoint visual 1.

Before God created the world, before you and I existed, God loved us. The Bible says He loved even His enemies. God showed His love in the greatest way by sending His unique Son, Jesus, to earth to be our Savior. And Jesus, God the Son, showed His love by being willing to go from Heaven to earth.

DISCUSS: Ask students to think of bad things people think, say, or do (*if necessary, provide a few examples*). Write the ideas on the board. **ASK:** Do you think it's possible for any of us to live perfectly? **SAY:** Not one of us has lived a perfect life—we all are sinners. Only one person has ever lived a perfect life, and that's Jesus Christ Himself. (*Erase the sins on the board.*) When God sent Jesus to earth, He knew the sins we would commit, but He still chose to send Him! That's amazing love.

DISPLAY: Show the left side of visual picture 2 or PowerPoint visual 2.

If we were to imagine an appropriate setting for the birth of God's Son, what would that be? Maybe Jesus would be transported from Heaven to earth by angels. Or He'd be born in a palace. Instead, Jesus was born like all of us.

But at the same time, His birth was very different. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph. In their culture, an engagement was as binding as a marriage, but they weren't married yet. And then it became obvious that Mary was pregnant.

Joseph didn't know what to do! He and Mary weren't together yet, so this situation was very serious. Joseph did not want to shame or embarrass Mary, so he decided to secretly divorce her.

But God loved Joseph and Mary. In His kindness, God sent an angel to Joseph to reveal God's plan to him.

READ: Invite a student volunteer to read Matthew 1:20, 21. **DISPLAY:** Show the right side of visual picture 2 or PowerPoint visual 2.

Joseph was relieved. Mary had done nothing wrong! Mary's pregnancy and Jesus' birth were different because God had miraculously given Mary this wonderful baby. Joseph decided to follow God's plan.

And what a Baby this would be! Do you remember what the angel told Joseph about the baby's name? (*Read 1:21b again.*) He would be called "Jesus," which means "Savior" or "the Lord saves." That's a wonderful name for what this baby would grow up to do.

DISPLAY: Show visual picture 3 or PowerPoint visual 3.

Then the Roman emperor called a census. That meant all the Jewish men had to be counted, probably so the Roman government would have a list of everyone who needed to pay taxes. Each man had to travel back to his family's hometown to be counted.

So Joseph and Mary took a long journey—probably at least a week—to Joseph's hometown, Bethlehem. This trip would not have been easy, but God was in control.



Sure, the Roman Empire was cruel, but God loved this family and He had a reason for allowing the Roman government to take a census. He was allowing them to be moved to the very city that He had promised would be the Savior’s birthplace!

DISPLAY: Show visual picture 4 or PowerPoint visual 4. **READ:** Micah 5:2, then invite a student volunteer to read Luke 2:6 and 7.

While they were in Bethlehem, Mary gave birth to Jesus! She wrapped Him in cloths and laid Him in a manger, or animals’ feeding trough. Joseph and Mary may have stayed in that place with animals because the city was crowded with travelers arriving for the census.

Jesus is God the Son. He had come from Heaven, where He had lived eternally in the comfort of the Father’s presence. But God the Son chose to leave that perfect place. He submitted Himself to being made a man and to being born in such lowly circumstances. That’s true love!

ACTIVITY: Play a game of Would You Rather with the scenarios from the director resources CD. **SAY:** None of these scenarios is comfortable. We like to be comfortable. We like our own bed, house, food, and other stuff to be the way we want it. But Jesus gave all of that up. He became a man and lived with us as a man, even though He is also God. That’s amazing love!

READ: Invite a student volunteer to read Luke 2:8–11.

Angels revealed this awesome news to shepherds who were watching their sheep in nearby fields. God had promised to send a Savior—Christ, the promised Messiah—to save all of us from our sins.

Jesus Christ is truly the most important person in history. One reason is that He was willing to become unimportant to show His love for God the Father and us by coming to earth. Jesus set aside His own comfort and feelings and put others before Himself. He submitted to the Father’s plan for Him to be born as the Savior of the world!



Lesson 1 Visual 4

TIP

A definition of *love*: “Choosing to help someone because you care, expecting nothing in return, not even love or help.”

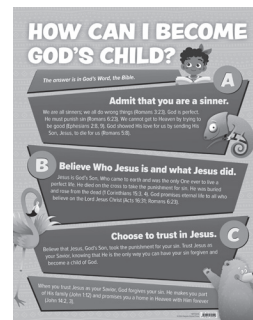
Decision Time

Materials

- Bible; salvation poster (33636).

Jesus did not come to the earth to live “the good life.” He came because He loved us and knew we have a huge need. All of us are sinners—that means we naturally choose our own way instead of God’s way.

But Jesus came so that one day, after He grew up, He would die to take the punishment that my sins and your sins deserve. We must trust in Jesus for salvation from punishment. When you trust in Jesus, God makes you forever safe from sin’s punishment. Will you trust in Jesus for salvation today?



Salvation Poster (33636)

TIP ▶

Christian students will hear the gospel repeatedly during VBS. Ask them to participate by praying for those who need to trust Jesus for salvation.

ACTIVITY: Use the salvation poster to share the gospel. Ask students to bow their heads and close their eyes. Invite students who want to learn more about how to trust Jesus as their Savior to look up at you. Assign workers to counsel and pray with responding students.

Maybe you have already trusted Jesus and have become a child of God. That's wonderful! Another wonderful truth is that those of us who trust Jesus don't have to wonder how to live, because Jesus perfectly showed us the right way. Are you being like Jesus by loving other people as He has loved you? Do you only love the people who are kind to you? Or do you reach out toward those who are unkind and hard to love? We should love others even when we don't feel like loving them or when we think they don't deserve our love. Remember that Jesus has loved you that way!



From a Different Perspective

Materials

- Basket; paper.

Before class: Write names of people involved in today's Bible lesson on slips of paper. Make duplicates of names as necessary to have enough slips for your class. Place the slips of paper in a basket.

ACTIVITY: Divide the class into small groups. Have each group choose a name from the basket and discuss today's Bible lesson from that person's perspective. What fears or uncertainties might that person have had? What might he or she have been feeling? After several minutes, have groups share their ideas.

Sometimes when we read an account in Scripture, we forget that the people in it were real people with real lives, fears, and joys. Jesus was a real person too. He was fully God, but also fully man. He was born into a real family, and He experienced emotions like we experience them.



Scripture Memory

**“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life”
(John 3:16).**

God loves everyone! He proved it by sending His only Son, Jesus, to earth. Jesus lived on earth, fully God and fully man, then He died for our sins and rose again. Those who trust in Jesus for salvation will be forgiven of their sins and will spend eternity with Him!

DISPLAY: Show the verse poster (33666) or the PowerPoint of the verse from the director resources CD (33602). **ACTIVITY:** Say the verse a few times with the students. Cover or remove the poster before the memory activities so students can't look at the words.

Option 1: Leading Llamas

Materials

- 2 llama cutouts from the director resources CD (33602); 2 sets of the first letter of each word in the verse; removable adhesive putty.

ACTIVITY: Attach the two llamas to a classroom wall with room behind both llamas for students to line up the letters. Use the adhesive putty to place one set of letters, in no particular order, around each llama. Divide students into two teams. Students on each team will race to put the letters in the correct order behind their team's llama and then say the verse together. The first team to finish wins. After both teams have completed the verse, scramble the letters and play again.

Option 2: Passing God's Love Around the World

Materials

- Inflatable globe or ball with a world map printed on it.

Before class: Inflate the globe. For a large class, gather multiple globes so each group can have a globe.

ACTIVITY: Divide students into groups of eight to ten and give a globe to each group. Students toss the globe back and forth. As students catch the globe, the group should say the next word of the memory verse.



Apply It Now!

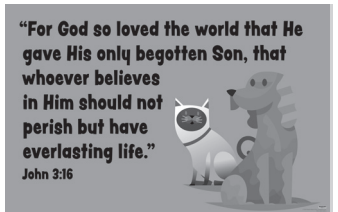
Option 1: Love in Action

Before class: With the VBS director and pastor, decide on an appropriate way for your students to show God's love to people in the community or church (e.g.,



◀ TIP

Hold your Bible open as you teach the verse, emphasizing that the verse is from the Bible.



Verse Poster
(33666-1)



TIP ►

One option is to have students save toward the missions project, Operation Care (free poster download, 33717EB; free project download, 33865EB; free video download, 33866EB).

collecting nonperishable food items, writing cards for the elderly or for public servants, creating a care package).

ACTIVITY: Tell students about your chosen project. Throughout VBS, students can show Jesus' love by contributing to the project (e.g., bring nonperishable food items from home with their parents' permission). At the end of VBS, take the students' gift to the people you chose. Ideally, this will be just before the last day of VBS so you can tell the students how much their gift meant to those who received it! Or mail a report with photos after VBS as a way to stay in touch with students.

Option 2: Capturing God's Love

Materials

- Paper; marker.

Before class: On separate slips of paper, write or print the following scenes.

1. Someone at school last year bullied you between classes. You're sure you will be in the same classes again next year. How can you show your classmate God's love?
2. Your parents keep telling you that you should be a good example for your younger siblings. But you're tired of that role. How can you show God's love to your siblings and parents?
3. Your friend invites you over to play video games but won't let you choose which games to play and keeps choosing ones you don't like. How do you show God's love to that friend?

ACTIVITY: Divide your students into small groups. Give each group a scenario and ask the group to think through how to show God's love. If time allows, have students share their solutions with the entire class.