



Sunday School Superintendent

March, April, May 2017



SPRING QUARTER



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Editorials

BY A. KOSHY MUTHALALY

God's Wonderful Love

In this new quarter for spring, we will look at the wonderful love of God. Love is a difficult concept to define and explain. But God shows us how His love is seen in the real world through our real-life experiences. God's divine love is so unique and so wonderful that there is nothing in this world like it. No human love can compare! The Bible is filled with God's love for us.

In the first unit, we will explore the nature of God's love for us. Lesson 1 will take us on a journey that explores the source of all love, which is God Himself. God is the essence of love, and He sets the pace for us.

In the second lesson, we will look at the intensive nature of God's love as it overflows toward sinful mankind, of which we are all a part. We begin to understand how much our God really loves us. We learn about His extensive grace toward us.

Lesson 3 shows us how to respond to God's love for us. Maintaining right relationships with others is an appropriate response to God's love for us. In fact, we learn that right relationships with people around us are an indication that we truly love God.

Lesson 4 takes us into the Old Tes-

tament, where we see the extent of God's love showing itself in mercy toward us. We learn that He is gracious and slow to anger because He loves us so much.

Lessons 5 through 9 in the second unit take us through the work of God's love. We learn that what God did for us at the cross is the demonstration of His love for us. In lesson 5, we see God's devoted care. He loves us like a shepherd who cares for his sheep, attending to every detail. We will explore more of this in lesson 9 as well.

In lesson 6, we learn about God's saving love for us that was demonstrated when Jesus died for us on the cross. God sent Jesus to be our Saviour. Everyone who chooses to trust Jesus and what He has promised will be accepted into heaven.

Lesson 7 takes us into the Easter narrative: Jesus rose from the dead, proving that He was victorious over death and sin. It was indeed a demonstration of love triumphant. There is no other event like this in history!

Lesson 8 shows us that God extends His love to us even to the point of reconciling us to Himself. As chil-

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dren of God, we learn the heartwarming truth that nothing on earth or heaven can separate us from His love for us.

God's love brings the vile sinner close to our loving God in reconciliation.

In lesson 9, we conclude the second unit of the quarter by looking at how Jesus declares Himself to be our Good Shepherd. He knows each one of us by name. This is comforting to the child of God. We learn how our God gently shepherds us into His kingdom.

Lessons 10 through 13 take us on a journey with the Prophet Jonah through the most dramatic experiences of his life. In many ways Jonah was just like us. He needed both discipline and restoration. And through it all, he needed to see the loving ways of God with His children.

In lesson 10, we learn how God disciplined Jonah when he disobeyed. This kind of discipline is a direct outcome of God's love for His people.

This is the same way He deals with each of us when we stray from Him in disobedience. He also loves us so much that He brings us back to Himself after a period of chastening and discipline.

Lesson 11 shows us how God's love protects us from harm and evil despite our disobedience to Him. We should be thankful that God is our Protector and our Deliverer. It takes time for us to understand God's dealings with mankind, especially when He seeks to protect us. Jonah had to endure being in the fish's belly for a time before he learned this important lesson. We can learn from Jonah's experience.

Lesson 12 shows us that God never gives up on those who are lost. His love pursues us to the very end. God's love never gives up on us as He waits patiently for us to repent and return to Him.

In the final lesson of this quarter, we see that God's love is all-embracing. God loves all people in this evil world—even those who are least likely to respond to Him. This gives us all hope. God's love does not quit on us. He constantly works on winning us back to Him.

The topic of God's love is inexhaustible. Do all you can to help your Sunday school communicate how deep, how vast, and how rich this love is. As the songwriter penned, "Could we with ink the ocean fill/And were the skies of parchment made/Were every stalk on earth a quill/And every man a scribe by trade/To write the love of God above/Would drain the ocean dry/Nor could the scroll contain the whole/Though stretched from sky to sky" (Lehman).

God shows us how much He loves us through the lives of real people in His Word. Pray that your teachers and students will see more clearly how much our God loves each of us!

(Editorials continued on page 31)

The Source of All Love

Lesson: I John 4:7-19

Read: I John 4:7-19

TIME: about A.D. 90-95

PLACE: probably from Ephesus

GOLDEN TEXT—"Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another" (I John 4:11).

SELECTED HYMNS (Adults)

"I Love to Tell the Story" (Hankey)
"O Perfect Love" (Gurney)

SELECTED HYMNS (Juniors and below)

"O, How I Love Jesus" (Whitfield)
"Jesus Loves Me" (Warner)

A PRAYER TO KNOW GOD'S LOVE—"Let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God" (I John 4:7).

SUPERINTENDENT'S SPECIAL

Ravi Zacharias told the story of Dr. E. Stanley Jones, missionary to India, who was once confronted by a man who told him that he could not make

sense of the cross or the love of God. Not long after that, the man had an affair and then confessed to his wife, who only reiterated her love for him. His internal response was, "Now I know what it means to see love crucified by sin." Only God could help someone love like that!

This kind of love may be rare, but we see it throughout history, from the loving ways of the early church to Jim Elliot's love for the natives in Ecuador.

Our lesson this week shows us that it is impossible for us to love others on our own, especially those whom we dislike. But when we understand that God is the source of all genuine love, it becomes easy to let Him love others through us, for we cannot love this way on our own!

GUIDING THE SUPERINTENDENT

In this quarter we explore the nature of God's love. There is no other love like this in the whole universe. We are called to love one another in the same way that our God loves us. Love is a concept that is not easy to understand. It has to be

demonstrated to us. This is what our God did for us. Now we know because we can experience it for ourselves. When Jesus came down to us, perfect love became visible. We now understand what God's love truly is.