

Got Fruit?

Love

Ready (*Plant the seed*)

“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart with all your soul and with all your mind’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’.

-Matthew 22:36-39

Set (*Get the conversation started*)

Last week we learned that when we choose to follow Jesus and have a relationship with him, God gives us the gift of the Holy Spirit. Within that gift, grow the fruit of the Spirit. The first of those is love.

In our verse this week, God gave us His greatest commandment. It is easy to follow the first part- to love God with all our heart, soul and mind; it’s the second that can prove to be a bit more difficult: loving others. As an athlete playing team sports, you have the unique privilege of sharing love with your teammates. Teammates protect one another and help each other up. They lose together. They win together. The Bible says, “Two are better than one, because they have good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity the one who falls and has no one to help them up.”-Ecclesiastes 4:9-10.

Teammates are bonded together by love for each other, their team and their sport. But Jesus does not command us to only love our friends, in Matthew 5:44 he says, “But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.” God wants us to love all our neighbors. That means, when you take the field, you not only must have the love of your teammates to strengthen you, but you must also love your opponent to honor God. You must love them when they don’t play fair. You must love them when they win. This is part of the commandment.

“We love because he first loved us.” 1 John 4:19. When we were lost in sin, separated from God, He sent His son to die for us. He loved us that much. His love is a powerful love. It is an unconditional love. Because of His love, we can love others. We can love both friends and enemies.

Grow (*Take it away*)

- What are three things that you love? How does your love for God differ from your love for friends or your things?
- In what ways can you show love to the opposing team?
- What can we do when we find it hard to love someone?

Pray

Heavenly Father, we thank you for loving us and sending your son for us when we didn’t deserve it. Please soften our hearts to others. Help us to love when it’s hard. We know we can love because you first loved us. Let your love flow from us so that we may show others of its greatness. Amen.

Overtime (*Optional visual with talking points using attached diagram as time allows.*)

Read 1 Corinthians 4-8

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

-Discuss how each of the characteristics of love can be displayed on the field.

What is Love? On the Field.
1 Corinthians 13:4-8

