

# MIGHTY MESSAGES

***“Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him.” (Proverbs 30:5, NKJV)***

The Bible is full of God’s amazing *Mighty Messages* - promises that He will always keep, and truths that will never fail. Young children are more than ready to receive God’s *Mighty Messages*. We have an opportunity and a responsibility to help children move along a path that starts with a general understanding of God (what nature reveals) towards a special, deeper understanding (knowing about God’s love, forgiveness, and the promise of eternal life). Knowing God exists is just the first step. Children need to and are capable of understanding what God did to demonstrate His love for us (*But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8, NIV)*).

In order to build this solid foundation, we must have a clear understanding of how young children learn and apply that knowledge to the methods we use to present God’s Truth to children. When we are aware of how young children learn, how the brain develops, and how to use different teaching techniques, we have equipped ourselves with the knowledge and tools we need to help children learn about and truly know God.

MONTH/WEEK	TOPIC	SCRIPTURE REFERENCE
February	Love One Another	<b><i>Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. (1 John 4:7, NLT)</i></b>
Week 1	God’s Love is Easy to Find	<i>For we know how dearly God loves us, because He has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with His love. (Romans 5:5, NLT)</i>
Week 2	Show God’s Love by Helping Others	<i>So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. (John 13:34, NLT)</i>
Week 3	God’s Love Overflows	<i>And may the Lord make your love for one another and for all people grow and overflow, just as our love for you overflows. (1 Thessalonians 3:12, NLT)</i>
Week 4	God’s Love Holds Us Together	<i>Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. (Colossians 3:14, NLT)</i>

# Mighty Message – February

## Love One Another

Key Scripture: *Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. (1 John 4:7, NLT)*

Literacy: *My Valentine for Jesus* by Laurie Lazzaro Knowlton

Flannel Fun: Love One Another

Dramatic Play: “Love a Friend” - Create a “Love a Friend” prop-box. You will need valentine’s day cards with envelopes, valentine’s stickers, heart stickers, alphabet stickers or alphabet stamps, valentine’s stamps, paper heart doilies, pipe cleaners, beads (that fit on the pipe cleaners), printed “coupon cards” (see Appendix), “prayer cards” (see Appendix), Bible book marks (see Appendix), Class Name Cards (see NOTE below), crayons, and pencils. The props in this box are all about enabling the children to show God’s love to their friends by writing/sending a card, making a picture, creating a coupon for hugs or smiles, making a bracelet, making a prayer card, or making a Bible bookmark. Most of these supplies are easy to find in January and February – check in stores and online (Oriental Trading Company usually has a great selection of secular and religious Valentine’s stamps, stickers, and supplies). Let the children create whatever they want for a friend (or lots of friends) to show love to that friend. In addition to pulling together the consumables, you will also need to print several copies of the “Coupon Cards”, “Prayer Cards”, and “Bible Bookmarks” onto white cardstock. (Reinforces creative expression, social/emotional development, sense of community, fine motor development, and literacy). NOTE: Class Name Cards are simply sentence strips with a child’s picture and name printed on the strip. Laminate the name cards, hole punch each one in the corner, and hold together using a binder ring.

Sensory Bin: “Love for My Friends” – Fill sensory bin 2/3 full with red and white shredded paper (usually found in the gift wrapping section of stores). Add 3-4 small, red, white, or pink gift boxes, and tongs or other “grabbers” that are developmentally appropriate. Add Valentine’s Day trinkets/gifts that are small enough to fit inside of the gift boxes – have enough variety to allow the children to “select” several items they would like to put in a gift box. Let the children play and dig through the shredded paper to find “gifts” to put in the boxes to share with friends at the sensory bin because God wants us to love one another. To encourage math and science, count the number of gifts a child places in a box or have them sort all of the different types of gifts into the boxes. Consider making a list of the items in the sensory bin (use pictures with the item names) and give the children a “checklist” for what to place in the gift box (this builds math, science, and literacy). (Reinforces: math, science, literacy, social/emotional development, the development of fine motor skills, and cooperative play.)

Note to Parents: Love originates with God. We can love others because God first loved us. In fact, He loved us enough to sacrifice His Son to save our lives. In this gracious act, God demonstrates that Love is not a feeling – it is a choice and an action. We show our love for

God in the choices we make and the actions we take. One of the biggest ways to show love to one another is by helping each other. God has prepared each one of us to help others and He will put people in our paths to which we are to offer help. If we keep our focus on God and others, we will see those in need of our help and be able to love one another just as God loves us.

## **Week 4: God's Love Holds Us Together**

***Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. (Colossians 3:14, NLT).***

Morning Message: *God's love holds us together. What are some things that we use every day to hold things together?* Encourage the children to think about products/items we use to hold things together (i.e. tape, glue, rubber bands, paper clips, etc.). Make a list of their responses on a big sheet of paper that you can leave on the wall for the week to read and add to as the children come up with more ideas.

### Classroom Extensions

- Art Activity "Hold the Glitter!" – You will need construction paper (darker colors would work best), glitter, several glue sticks, (3) empty plastic shoebox containers (to catch the extra glitter), (3) bowls (to hold the glitter), and (3) plastic spoons (to scoop the glitter). Let the children draw a design on the construction paper with the glue stick. With the paper still flat on the table, let the children scoop out glitter with a spoon and sprinkle the glitter onto the construction paper. Then help the children carefully hold the paper over the shoebox container as they tip the paper to shake off the extra glitter (older children should be able to do this by themselves). Remind the children that the glue help hold the glitter onto the paper just like God's love helps hold us together. NOTE: Let the children be as independent as possible with their creations – paper, glue sticks, and glitter are very inexpensive supplies and mess is easy to clean up. (Reinforces fine and gross motor development, color recognition, following instructions, creative expression, and cause and effect.)
- Block Center "Hold On!" – You will foam blocks (if you do not have foam blocks then typical wooden blocks will work too), shaving cream, and several jumbo craft sticks (used to spread the shaving cream). Move your block center outside or use a tabletop in the classroom. Give the children the shaving cream as the "mortar" and craft sticks as the "spreaders" to layer and stick the blocks together as they make structures. Discuss how the mortar (shaving cream) holds the blocks together just like God's love holds us together. (Reinforces fine and gross motor development, cause and effect, creative expression, and cooperative play.)
- Literacy/Writing Center "Stick Together" – You will need alphabet stickers (quite a bit so that the children do not run out of letters), white construction paper, and class name cards. Class Name Cards are simply sentence strips with a child's picture and name printed on the strip. Laminate the name cards, hole punch each one in the corner, and hold together using a binder ring. Keep the Class Name Cards in the literacy/writing center all of the time as a reference for children and their writing. Let the children "spell" their names and names of their friends on the paper with the stickers to remind them that God's love holds us together just like all of the names are held together on the paper. (Reinforces fine motor development, letter recognition, and pre-literacy development.)
- Circle Time "My Hands..." – Do this finger play with the children. It helps develop fine motor muscles, pre-literacy skills, and reinforces the importance of showing God's love by taking care of each other. Remember to say the rhyme with rhythm (you might have to practice a few times before teaching the children).

## “My Hands...”

By Melissa McKenzie

I have two hands *(Hold hands up.)*

One... and ... two *(Put one hand in front of you and then the other.)*

God gave them to me *(Bring both hands to your chest.)*

So I can help you. *(Point your index fingers out at your friends.)*

My hands are strong *(Make a “muscle” with your arms.)*

To help you hold. *(Squeeze your hands together.)*

They can warm you up *(Rub palms of your hands together.)*

When you’re cold. *(Rub arms like you are shivering.)*

My hands can clap *(Clap your hands.)*

To encourage you. *(Keep clapping.)*

They can even wave *(Hold hands up high and wave.)*

To say “How do you do?!” *(Keep waving.)*

But the favorite thing *(Hold up 1 finger.)*

My hands can do. *(Hold up both hands.)*

Is press together *(Put palms of hands together – like you are praying.)*

As I pray for you. *(Keep hands together. Say a short prayer thanking God for all of your friends.)*

Game: “Hold Us Together!” You will need a big bag of O’s and scarves (1 per child/adult). The children will be threading the O’s onto the scarves. Make sure to model how to do this before passing out the scarves/O’s. Say “We are going to play a little game to help us remember that God’s love holds us together. Do you want to play a game?!” *(Allow responses.)* “Yeah! I was hoping you would! So here is how the game will work. We are going to pretend that these O’s” *(Get an O out of the bag.)* “represent us – like these O’s are all of the people in this school, in this town, in this world! Good thing we have a lot of O’s because that’s a lot of people. Now, if I took this whole bag of O’s and dumped them out onto the floor, would the O’s stay together or spread out all over the place?” *(Allow responses.)* “Right! They’d spread out all over the place because nothing is holding them together. But...if we pretend that this scarf” *(Get a scarf.)* “is God’s love, then I can use God’s love to hold us together – just like this.” *(Thread the O onto the scarf – do this slowly and deliberately, showing the children each step you take in successfully threading the O onto the scarf.)* “Now I’ve got God’s love holding onto one of us, but the Bible says that God’s love holds ALL of us together. So.... Let me see if I can hold some more of us together with God’s love. Remember, the O’s are all of the people in the world and the scarf is God’s love.” *(Get another O and thread it onto the scarf, and then another one, and another one until the scarf is full. Be intentional in showing the*

*children how to put more O's onto the scarf without pushing the other O's off.) "Now look! I've got a lot of us held together! I've got a whole lot of O's – people – and a whole lot of scarves – God's love. Are you ready to start holding us together with God's love?!" (Allow responses. Pass out a scarf to each child and then dump the O's onto the floor all around the room – you want to make the point that the O's/people aren't held together because they need God's love. Let the children play, threading the O's onto the scarves. Watch for those struggling and guide them to success. When all of the O's are off of the floor and onto scarves, make a point of how God's love is holding everyone together. If you want to play again, just let the children push the O's off of the scarves and start all over.)*

*(When you finish...thank the children for using God's love to hold everyone together..)* "Wow – you all did a fantastic job of using God's love to hold everyone together. I'm so glad that God has given us His love so that we can love others because God's love holds us together. Thanks God!"

### Mighty Message

Supplies: water-gel (available at [www.stevespanglerscience.com](http://www.stevespanglerscience.com)), two paper cups (9 oz. Dixie cups work well), bottle of water (lukewarm to room temperature – NOT cold/hot), and a Bible.

Prep: Put a bookmark in your Bible at Colossians 3:14.

Draw a cross on one of the paper cups (or on a piece of paper that you tape to the cup).

Put 1 teaspoon of water-gel powder into the cup with the cross on it.

NOTE: It would be a good idea to practice this science experiment before doing it in front of the children. While it is easy, the way you pour the water into the "cross cup" and the temperature of the water matter. Doing either of these wrong will result in the water not completely transforming into a solid in the cup which would not only diminish the lesson but would also result in a child being covered in a watery, goopy mess.

What to do: Say, "We have talked a lot about love over the last few weeks. God never hides His love from us. We can show God's love to others. And...God's love overflows – it never runs out! Well, today I want to tell you one more really special, really amazing, really important thing about God's love. Do you want to hear something really special, really amazing, and really important about God's love?!" (Allow responses.) "Well, I'm going to need my favorite book because the Truth about God's love is in my favorite book. Do you remember which book is my favorite book?" (Allow responses.) "Yes! The Bible. The Bible is special. The Bible is different than any other book because the Bible is filled with God's words. God put His Truth, His important messages for us, in the Bible. God always tells us the truth so that means that we can trust everything and anything that we read in the Bible to be true! Do you know how we can see God's Words?" (Allow responses) "That's right – we just open the Bible and then we can see God's words! Okay, if you're ready, I am going to open up my Bible and then we will be in the same room as the Word of God. Are you ready?" (Allow responses) "Alrighty –

1 - 2 - 3!" *(Open your Bible to any page and be very excited to have the Word of God right there with you!!!)* "There it is – the Word of God – right here with us. Isn't that awesome?!" *(Allow responses)* "I love that we can open up our Bible any time and read God's words to learn more about God's Truth, don't you?" *(Allow responses)*

"Well, inside of the Bible, back here in the book of Colossians" *(open your Bible to your bookmark)* "God tells us that love, ONLY the love that comes from Him, is what will hold us all together. Even if we are super nice to other people, even if we forgive someone when they hurt us, even if we help other people – if we do all of that without God's love then it's going to fall apart. God says we need to wrap it all up, hold it all together with His love. We need God's love to be able to love each other. We need God's love to hold us all together."

"Let me show you what I mean." *(Stand up and go to the table with the bottle of water and two cups. Hold up the water bottle.)* "See this water bottle?" *(Allow responses)* "It's full of water – just regular water." *(Open the water bottle and take a quick drink to show the children that there is nothing special about the water.)* "To show you what I mean about loving others with God's love, I want to pretend that this water stands for all of the people we love. As we name the people whom we love, I will pour some of this love" *(hold up the water bottle)* "into this cup." *(hold up the cup without the cross).* "Can you name someone you love?" *(If the children need a little jumpstart, suggest their mommies and daddies. After that, just let them throw out names/suggestions - they do not need to raise their hands and take turns, just let them have fun shouting out the names of people/animals they love. Make eye contact with the children and say, "okay", as they shout to you and pour some water into the cup. You will continue pouring a little bit of water into the cup for each suggestion until the cup is full.)* "Wow! Look at our cup, we have filled it up with everyone that we love! That is awesome! Look how full this cup is!" *(Walk around, holding the cup low enough for the children to see, and show them that it is full of water. Now switch to a quieter voice.)* "But what would happen if I took this cup, and tipped it over?" *(Hold the cup over someone's head, either a child or an adult volunteer, and start to tip it without letting any water pour out – you just want to make your point that it could spill out. Switch back to your regular voice.)* "That's right, if I tipped this cup full of love over, all of the water, all of the people we love, would just pour out and my friend here would get very wet. Should I tip the cup all the way over???" *(Allow the children to tell you not to tip it over – some of them might encourage you to pour the water out and get the friend wet – kids are great!)* "Right, my friend here would get very wet. That's because we haven't added God's love into the mix. Remember, the Bible says that we need to love each other with the love that comes from God. And when we love with God's love, His love will hold us all together. Only God's love has the power to do that." *(Put the water bottle down and get the cup with the cross on it. Now you have the cup of water in one hand and the cup with the cross in the other. Make sure you have the cross facing the kids so they can see it.)* "Look at this cup." *(Hold up the cup with the cross on it.)* "What do you see on this cup?" *(Allow responses)* "That's right, a cross. And what does that cross make you think of?" *(Allow responses – some children will say 'God' and some will say*

'Jesus'.) "Right! God and Jesus. This cross reminds us that God loves us so much that He was willing to let His only Son, Jesus, die on the cross for us, to take away our sins. Did Jesus stay dead?!" *(Allow responses)* "That right – Jesus is alive! So whenever I see a cross I think of the love that comes from God and Jesus and that is the love that holds us all together. That is the love that we should use to love each other. So if I take my cup with all of the people I love" *(hold up the cup of water)* "and I add God's love" *(hold up the cup with the cross)* "then I know that God's love will hold us all together." *(Now pour all of the water into the cross cup at one time. The water-gel starts to absorb the water immediately – within seconds you will have a solid instead of a liquid.)* "There! Now I have added God's love so that I am loving others with the love that God has given to me..." *(As you say this part, tip the cup over above someone's head. The children will think that the water is going to pour everywhere, but it won't because the water-gel has converted the water to a solid. Hold the cup upside down over someone's head for just a few seconds to let the kids take in this unbelievable sight, then hold the inverted cup over your hand and gently squeeze the sides of the cup. The gel'd water should release from the cup and plop into your hand sort of like a jello-mold. Use a very quiet voice to help get their attention.)* "...I know that God's love will hold us all together." *(Hold up the solid gel in the palm of your hand for the kids to see.)* "The Bible tells us that when we love others with the love that comes from God, God's love will hold us together and we are so much stronger with a love that holds us together. Isn't that amazing?" *(If you want, let the kids touch the gel, but model how to use just one finger as the "touching finger" to touch very gently.)*

"Let's say a prayer together and thank God for His love that holds us together. Put your hands together, bow your head, and close your eyes – we want to give God all of our attention when we pray. God, thank you for loving us. We know that it is your love that helps us love each other and your love that holds us all together. Help us to love each other every day with the love that comes from you. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen."

## February Take Home Activity:

Supplies: Ziploc sandwich baggies (1 per child), paper hearts (6 per child), copy paper for parent note (3 parent notes fit on 1 page), red or pink copy paper for hearts (4 hearts fit on 1 page)

Prep: Print the parent note on copy paper (see Appendix for PDF to print 3 notes per page)  
Print the hearts on red or pink copy paper (see Appendix for PDF) (4 hearts print on each page and you will need 6 hearts per child)  
Cut the individual hearts (6 hearts per child)  
Put the parent note and 6 hearts in the baggie and send the baggies home with the children.

### Parent Note:

God is the source of our love – He loved us enough to sacrifice His Son for us. The Holy Spirit gives us the power to love; He lives in our hearts and makes us more and more like Christ. God's love isn't a secret that is kept hidden from us. We are exposed to His love each and every day. In fact, God never hides His love from us—even when we forget to look for it!

Have fun with these paper hearts. "Hide" them around your home for your children to find. Remember to hide the hearts in plain sight because God never hides His love from us. Sometimes a simple little game is a great way to illustrate a message from the Bible for children. Learning about God can and should be fun!

***For we know how dearly God loves us, because He has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with His love. (Romans 5:5, NLT)***