

Loving Our Siblings

Gather your children around a table, or over the phone.

Ask: **What do you like to play or do with your brother(s) and/or sister(s)?**

If you have a single child, ask: **What do you like to do with your best friends?**

Help your child list at least five things.

Say: **During the next few weeks, we will be spending a lot of extra time with each other. That gives us the chance to do a lot of those really fun things together. But sometimes when siblings are together for a lot of time, they might start to get on each other's nerves or hurt each other's feelings. Loving our siblings isn't easy all the time, but God gives us opportunities to practice loving people through loving our siblings. Today we are going to explore how God's love is big enough for all of us and how we can share his love with our siblings, even when it's hard.**

Ask: **How many brothers and sisters do you think Jesus had? How do you think they acted toward each other?**

Say: **The Bible doesn't tell us a lot about Jesus' brothers and sisters, but it does tell us about his friends who followed him and learned from him. Jesus had disciples who he spent a lot of time with. Peter was one of Jesus' closest friends. But when Jesus was arrested, Peter pretended that he didn't know Jesus! Peter said he didn't know Jesus—not once, not twice, but three times.**

Ask: **How would you feel if at a time when you really needed them, your close friend or sibling said they didn't know you, or weren't your friend or brother/sister?**

Read: John 21:15-19.

Ask: **Why do you think Jesus asked Peter that question three times (not once, twice, or four times)?** *It was just like the three times that Peter said he didn't know Jesus!*

Ask: **Who are the "sheep" Jesus was talking about?** *The "sheep" are people who trusted Jesus.*

Ask: **What do you think Jesus meant when he told Peter to feed his sheep? Was he supposed to cook all of Jesus's friends dinner every day?** *No 😊 Jesus knew he would not be with his friends forever and asked Peter to take care of them by continuing to teach them and remind them of how much Jesus loved them.*

Say: **Jesus didn't get mad or wish Peter wasn't his friend. Instead, he loved and forgave him for saying he didn't know Jesus. Jesus chose him to be the person to take care of all of his followers after he went to heaven.**

Ask: **How can we treat our siblings like Jesus treated Peter?**

Say: It's easy to say we love our family members, but what does love really look like? Loving brothers and sisters and close friends can be hard. Sometimes we act the worst and say the meanest things to the people we love the most, and we hurt our friends and family with how we treat them. But if we follow Jesus' example, we forgive others when they hurt us, and always offer another chance.

Read: 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Choose one phrase that each person in your family does really well. For example, "Sarah is patient and kind. Jacob does not insist on his own way."

Activity Options

Choose one (or all) of the following options to do together.

1. You will find a printable cut out family attached to this email.
 - a. Print out one copy per family member.
 - b. Fold the paper into four sections.
 - c. Cut out the main person - this will make a chain of people.
 - d. Cut a heart in each person.
 - e. Talk about how when we are still upset and angry with our family we are held together with the love of Christ, which is in our family!
2. Make a list of five things that you love about your siblings *or* five things that your siblings do really well. Read it to your siblings!
3. Choose one way that you can share love with your siblings every day this week. Making it super sneaky makes it even more fun! Some examples to get you thinking: make a card, do a chore for them, color a picture and hang it up in their room, or give an unexpected hug. See how creative you can be!

Prayer

Join hands as a family, and pray together. An example you can say is: **Dear God, thank you for our family. Help us to be patient and kind to each other and to the people around us. Help us not to be jealous, boastful, proud, or rude to each other. Thank you for each person you have put in our family. We love each of them, and we love you. In Jesus' name, Amen.**