CHARIS YOUTH

Series: Winning in Life

Lesson 2: Love

About This Lesson

This lesson focuses on a second key to winning in life: love. We are shown the greatest example of love by Jesus leaving heaven to die on a cross to pay for the sins of the world. When we follow His selfless love, we will find that it is easier for us to offer forgiveness to others, to show kindness, and to be a peacemaker.

Note: For the teaching outline, prepare a large ball of string or yarn with a small (1/4-inch) mark of bright red or colored tape on it.

Key Takeaway: Receiving and living in God's love is a key to winning in life.

Key Verse: 1 John 3:16 *By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

Teaching Outline:

I. GOD LOVES YOU AND WANTS YOU TO KNOW HIM

A. Eternity is a long time to be wrong.
   1. Take the ball of long string or yarn and pass it from person to person until everyone is holding the string. Explain that the string represents eternity. Have someone identify where the small red mark or tape is on the string that represents our time here on earth. Point out that in comparison with eternity, our time on the earth is incredibly short.

B. Everyone has an opinion about God.
   John 17:3 *And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.*

1. Some of those opinions include:
    a. "There is no God."
    b. "You can't really tell if there is a God. "
    c. "God is Allah- Buddha- Krishna- Marx- Science- Reason- Conscience- the Government."
    d. "Whatever you want God to be is true for you."
    e. All these are the wrong answers.
2. There is one true God, and He wants us to know Him. That's why He came in the person of Jesus. JESUS IS LORD!

C. There is a God who loves you! He cares about you. He wants to have a relationship with you.
John 3:16 *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.*

II. WHEN YOU LOVE GOD, YOU WILL SEE OTHERS THE WAY HE SEES THEM
Matthew 22:36–40 *"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?"* *[37]* *Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.'* *[38]* *This is the first and great commandment.* *[39]* *And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'* *[40]* *On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."*

A. The greatest commandment is to love God with all your heart, soul, and mind. This commandment is the greatest because this is where eternal life is found! Eternal life comes from knowing God and having a relationship with Him by believing in Jesus as your Savior.

B. The 2nd greatest commandment is also essential: love your neighbor as yourself. Your love for God will be reflected in your love towards others.
Leviticus 19:18 *You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.*

- Don't take vengeance. It's not up to you to execute justice. Forgive, move forward, and trust that God will make things right.
- Don't hold a grudge against others because you are holding onto something that is stealing from your purpose and joy in life!

C. When you know that God loves you and you walk in love with others, you will experience victory in life. You will be winning in life!

III. IDENTIFY WITH GOD'S LOVE AND GRACE!
1 Corinthians 15:10 *But by the grace of God I am what I am.*

A. When you have God's winning key of LOVE, it will unlock these 3 doors for you to be successful:
   1. FORGIVENESS: Ephesians 4:32–5:2 *And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you. [1] Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. [2] And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.*
   2. KINDNESS: Proverbs 31:26 *She opens her mouth with wisdom, and on her tongue is the law of kindness.*
   3. PEACEMAKER: Matthew 5:9 *Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.*

B. God wants you to know Him, and you can know Him through receiving forgiveness of your sins. Lead the young people in a prayer of salvation.

Bottom Line:
Receiving God's love leads me to win in life by helping me forgive others, be kind, and be a peacemaker.

Small Group Time:

1. In the opening illustration, the long string represented eternity, and the small mark (or tape) represented our time here on the earth.

- Does knowing that our life here is relatively short change how you want to live?
- How does knowing God loves you and wants to help you affect your life?
- Do you know of someone who doesn't really know God or doesn't know that He loves them? What are some ways you can help them and point them to Jesus? (pray for them, be kind to them, tell them

about Jesus, invite them to church, ask if you can pray for them in person)

2. In Matthew 22:36–40, Jesus said the greatest commandment is to love God, and the second is to love your neighbor.
    - Which of these do you find harder, and why?

3. In 1 Corinthians 15:10, we read, *"By the grace of God I am what I am."*
    - What do you think it means to find your identity in God's grace rather than people's opinions?

Declaration:

"God's love leads me to win in life because it affects my attitude, resilience, and vision for the future."

Youth Weekly Journal:

Handout, Email, or Download

- **Question:** How will you live a life of love this week?
- **Pray:** Ask for a revelation of God's love to you so you will know that you know God loves you and is for you, not against you.
- **Read:** The "Love Chapter" of the Bible is 1 Corinthians 13. Read it each day and ask the Holy Spirit to show you something new about love as you meditate on the chapter.
- **Live It:** In 1 John 3:16, we read, *"By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."* We also know that love is a fruit of the Spirit. This week, show love by "laying down your life" and setting aside your desire for revenge, holding a grudge, being unloving, or getting even.
- **Create:** Think about what love means to you and write a love letter to God. Think about all the ways He shows His love to you and thank Him.

EXTENDING THE LESSON

Icebreaker Question: If you could live a week at a different age, what age would you choose, and why?

Opening Activity Suggestion: Choose songs to sing about God's love to help young people focus on worshiping God and reflecting on His love for them. Remind the young people that God is the Creator, and He created love. Point out that the world mistreats God's original intent for love and uses it selfishly. When the youth understand God's pure love, it will help them be winners in life.

Opening Affirmation: "God wants me to win in life and has given me His playbook. God's keys to winning in life are faith, love, humility, generosity, and diligence."

Giving Time: 1 Chronicles 29:3 *Moreover, because I have set my affection on the house of my God, I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house, my own special treasure of gold and silver.*

God did not allow King David to build the temple because he had been a man of war. David's son, Solomon, was chosen to build the temple. David gave money and materials to build the temple. Although he couldn't make it, his role was to finance it. Each of us has a role in building God's kingdom. Your role now can be to give to God's work that is being done around the world.

BEYOND – ADDITIONAL APPLICATION FOR CHURCH OR HOME

Challenge: This week, challenge the young people to practice showing God's love to others through forgiving, being kind, and being a peacemaker. Have them choose a loving response to someone and share it next week. See whether the youth chose forgiving, kindness, or peacemaking as the most popular way to show God's love to others.

Biblical Worldview: The world's view of love is far different from God's pure, selfless love. Young people are bombarded with celebrities, influencers, and peers who share their ideas of love. Encourage the youth to show God's love through their words and actions, and help others see that God's love is what will help them win in life.

Outreach/Missions: One of the most loving things to do is to share Jesus with someone. Gather in small groups and spend time praying for one another, asking for the courage and boldness to tell friends and family about Jesus and His offer of forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Also, pray specifically for the people on your heart to tell about Jesus and ask God to prepare their hearts to receive the Good News about Jesus.