



Children's Lesson – April 29, 2020

GOD IS LOVE!

BACKGROUND FOR CAREGIVERS

Bible Passages – Acts 11:19–30 (The Church in Antioch)

In Acts 11, the disciples were called Christians for the first time. The word “Christian” came from the term “Christ Ones.” The title was given to them by outsiders to identify or perhaps mock them. Even so, the early Christians felt the name was fitting, and they adopted it as their own.

Before this, early believers identified themselves as “The Way” and adopted the symbol of the fish as an identifying symbol. The image of a fish was an excellent way to distinguish fellow Christians from persecutors.

Upon meeting another person on a path, early Christians drew an arc in the sand with their toe. If the other completed the image of a fish by drawing a second arc, both were assured of their brotherhood. This gave them a sense of safety and camaraderie in the midst of great persecution. Early Christians also wrote the word *ichthys*, which means “fish” in Greek. The word *ichthys* formed an acrostic (a word composed by the first letter of several other words) that read: “Jesus Christ, God’s Son, Savior.”

Even today, the *ichthys* is an icon for the modern church, though now more commonly known as the “Jesus fish.” It is still widely used to identify fellow brothers and sisters—the “Christ Ones”—who desire to spread the good news of God’s love.

When we read the account of the first church plant in Antioch, a question

emerges: What do we know about God? It seems overwhelmingly clear in this passage that God loves all people and wants them to know Him. God used a scattering of believers to spread the message, and more and more people heard about Him. He affirmed the goodness of preaching to the Gentiles. He used the church in Antioch to send Paul and Barnabas on missionary journeys throughout the Roman Empire (the whole civilized world at the time). God clearly always had a plan to give everyone an opportunity to enter into a relationship with Him.

God is LOVE!

KEY VERSE

The Lord (point both hands to heaven)
is ready to help all those (extend two helping hands)
who call out to him. (cup your hands around mouth)

Psalms 145:18

BIBLE STORY

Today we are going to talk about how much God loves all of us!

Just before Jesus returned to heaven, He asked His friends to share God's love with everyone. God wants the whole world to know Him! Something very special happened when Jesus' friends shared the good news about God with others. People decided to love God too! (show picture of heart).

Look at this heart. A heart can remind us of God's great love – and that **God is LOVE!** Can you say that with me? **God is LOVE!**
People decided they wanted to follow Jesus because they were told

the good news that **God is LOVE!** Every time you hear those words, give yourself a big hug (demonstrate hugging self). Let's give it a try... **God is LOVE!** (hugs)

The good news that **God is LOVE** (hugs) was going around the world. Jesus' friends shared that **God is LOVE** (hugs) and when people heard all about God and that **God is LOVE** (hugs), they wanted to follow Him too! Isn't that awesome?

Then those people began to share God's love with others (show picture of group of people). Soon Jesus' friends heard all about what was happening and how the news was spreading and they were so happy that more and more people were choosing to love God.

There were some men in the Bible that were very happy and excited that people were learning that **God is LOVE** (hugs) and the church was growing bigger and bigger. Their names were Barnabus and Paul. They shared the Word of God, the Bible (show picture of Bible – or a use real Bible) and collected money (show picture of money) and food to give to others when they needed it. They were showing God's love to others by caring for them.

God works through people to show His love – and He can work through YOU, too! When you learn about God's love, you can be filled with God's love and then share that **God is LOVE** (hugs) with others!

Who can you think of to share God's love with this week?

PRAYER

Let's pray and thank God for His great love:

Dear God,

Thank you that you love everyone!

Thanks for giving us your Word, the Bible,
so we can learn about your love for us.

Help us to share your love with others.

AMEN

WORSHIP SONGS

- God's Love Is For You (Lyric Video)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mOp1qJOMoVM>
- God's Love Is Big (Pulse Children's / Youth Ministries)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-lFSTnFMN0g>
- God So Loved (Hillsong Worship Kids)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BdzWhNp4cjk>
- God Loves Us So (Weird Animals VBS – slow song)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9NnlGZMEj00>

CRAFT

GOD IS LOVE CROSS PICTURE

Supplies Needed:

- Download and print red heart with verse and Bible point

- White card stock paper – or plain white paper
- Glue sticks
- Painters tape
- Glue sticks/Scissors
- Water colours, paint brush, cup for paint water **OR**
- Crayons

Caregivers:

- Prepare the white paper by using painters tape to make a cross
- Tell child that God is LOVE! God sent His son, Jesus, to die on the cross for us. Today you are going to make a picture to remind you that God loves you and we need to share the good news of God's love with others.

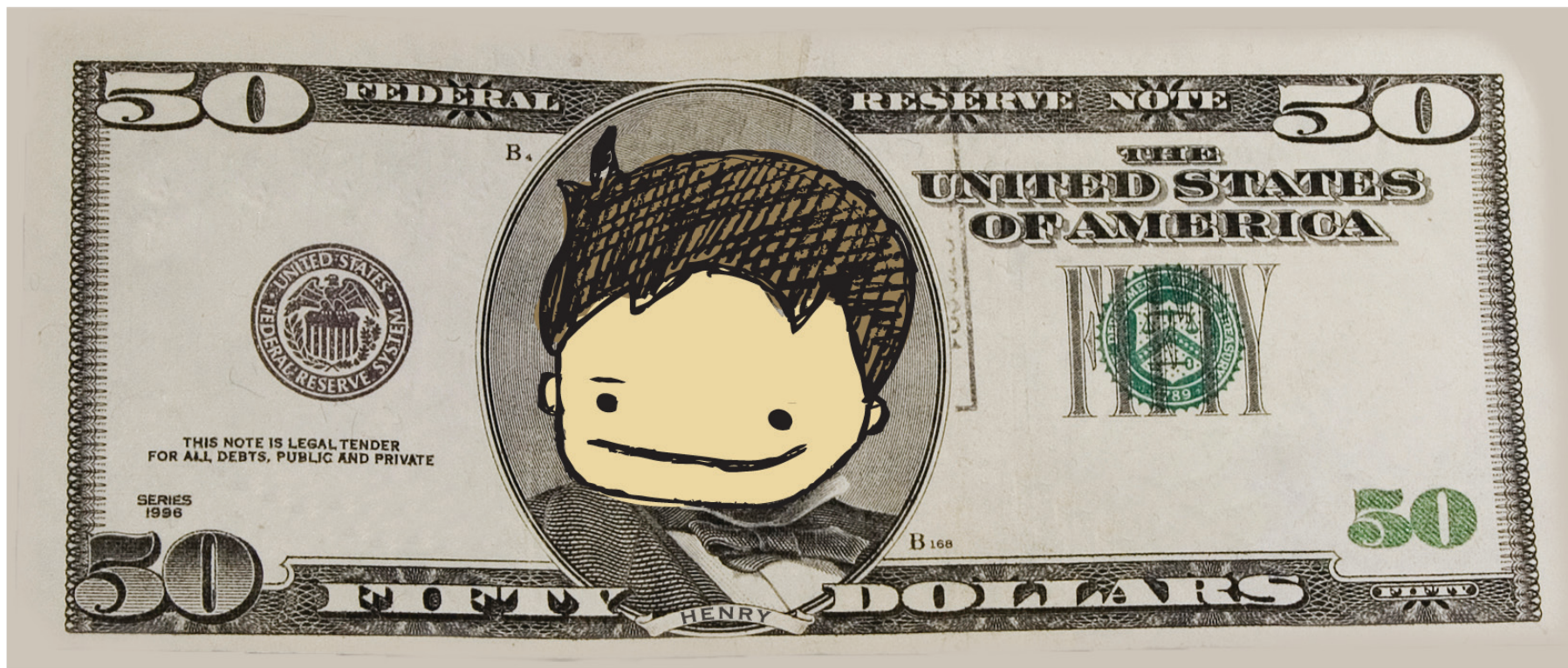
Children:

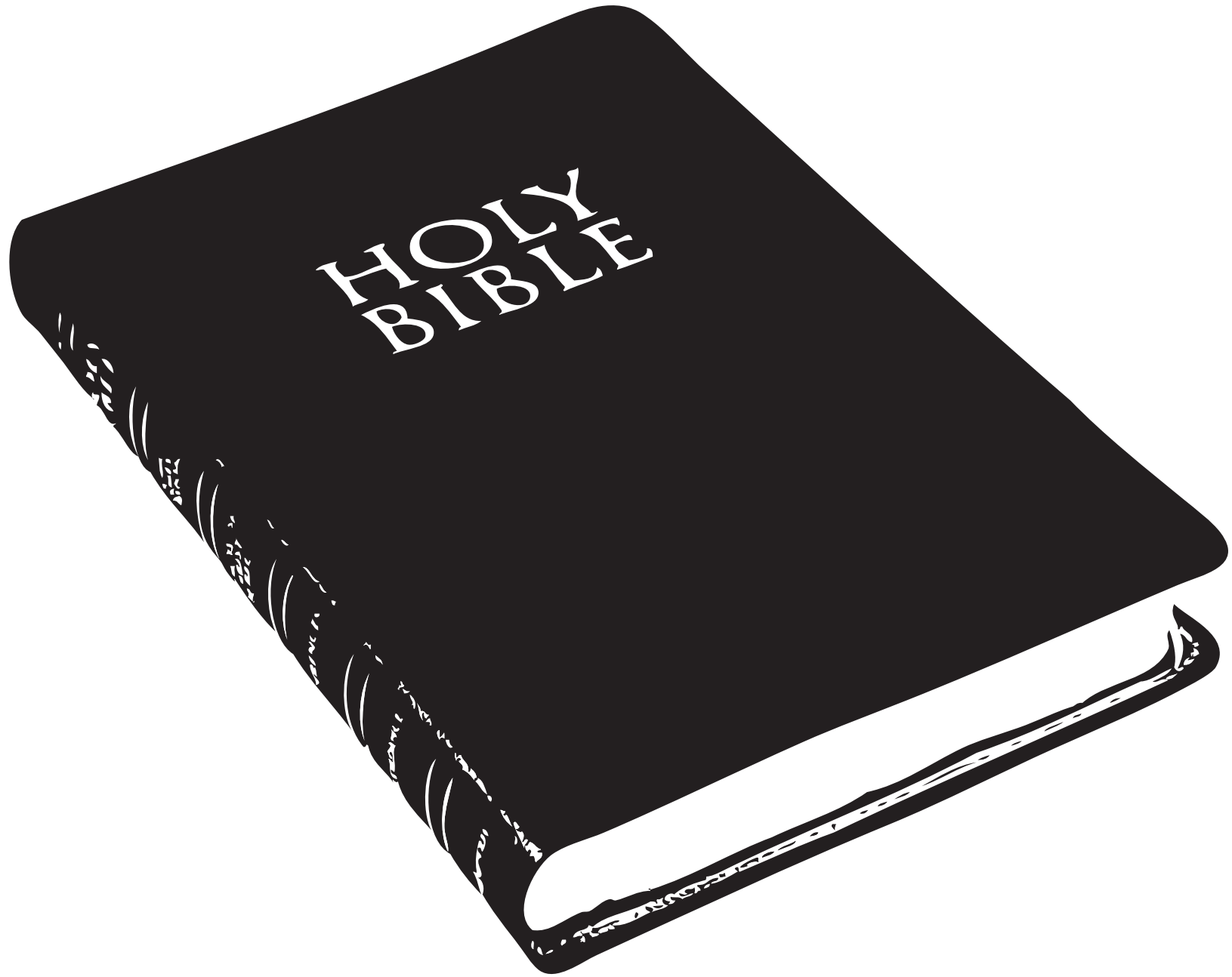
- Paint or colour the white page, covering all the white spaces.
- Once the paper is dry, ask your parent/caregiver to remove the cross.
- Glue the heart (with verse and Bible point) onto your picture.

As you show others your craft, say, “**GOD IS LOVE**”!









God Is Love

"I am always with you."
- Matthew 28:20

"I am always with you."
- Matthew 28:20

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