

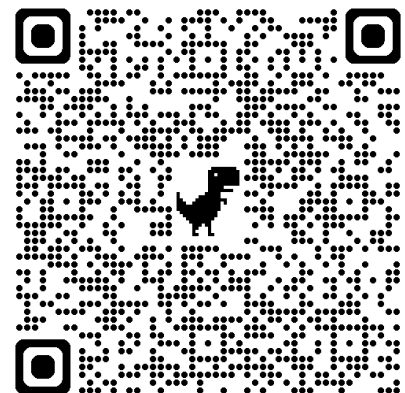


LOVE IN ACTION: 4-Week Children's Ministry Curriculum teaches a deeper, biblical concept of love beyond feelings and gifts. Over four weeks, it teaches children aged 6-12 how Jesus exemplified love through actions that included everyone, forgave freely, and put others first. This course challenges common ideas of love and guides children through Jesus' teachings about true affection and kindness.

Main Idea True love acts courageously and selflessly, following Jesus' example to transform the world one heart at a time.

Memory Verse: 1 John 3:18

Gospel Connection Jesus showed the ultimate love by dying for us, turning our hearts towards God. When we follow His steps, loving even those who are hard to love, we live out the Gospel, showing that Jesus' way changes us and the world.



You are viewing week 1 as a sample lesson. Use this link to purchase the full series.

<https://sundayschool.store/products/love-in-action-4-lesson-valentines-curriculum>

LOVE IN ACTION: 4-Week Curriculum Outline

Week 1: Mirror, Mirror?

- **Bible Story:** The Speck and the Plank – Matthew 7:1-5
- **Main Idea:** Before judging others, we must examine our own hearts and actions.
- **Gospel Connection:** Confessing our own sins is a crucial part of putting our faith in Jesus. Believers should be quick to admit their faults, not measuring themselves by their own perfection but by God's love and grace. This understanding frees us to live humbly and extend grace to others.

Week 2: Wait, Love Who?

- **Bible Story:** Loving Your Enemies – Matthew 5:43-48
- **Main Idea:** Love reaches out even to those who are hard to love.
- **Gospel Connection:** Jesus loved us even when we were against Him. His love on the cross teaches us to love everyone, showing us the true power of God's love in action.

Week 3: Losing Count

- **Bible Story:** The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant – Matthew 18:21-35
- **Main Idea:** Forgiveness is not just a one-time act; it's a continual choice that mirrors Jesus' forgiveness.
- **Gospel Connection:** Jesus forgives us again and again. By forgiving others, we reflect His endless mercy and open our hearts to God's transformative love.

Week 4: No Limits

- **Bible Story:** Greater Love Has No One Than This – John 15:9-17
- **Lesson Main Idea:** True love means putting others first, even when it's hard.
- **Gospel Connection:** Jesus laid down His life for us, the ultimate act of love. When we sacrifice for others, we follow His example and spread His love to the world.





1 John 3:18 NIV

Dear children, let us not love
with words or speech but
with actions and in truth.



1 John 3:18 KJV

My little children, let us not
love in word, neither in tongue;
but in deed and in truth.



1 John 3:18 ESV

Little children, let us not love
in word or talk but in deed
and in truth.



1 John 3:18 NLT

Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions.



Week 1 – Mirror, Mirror?

Bible Story: The Speck and the Plank (Matthew 7:1-5)

Additional Scriptures: James 1:23-25, Galatians 6:1-5

Lesson Main Idea: We can look inward before judging others.

Gospel Connection: Confessing our sins is part of putting our faith in Jesus. We can admit our faults, not measuring ourselves by our perfection but by God's love and grace.

Video Bible Stories: Use this link to access recommended Bible story videos and bonus content for this curriculum series. https://linktr.ee/love_in_action_lessons



Introduction Game – Mirror, Mirror?

SUPPLIES NEEDED: Mirror (hand-held size), Timer

TEACHER: Welcome to our new series, LOVE IN ACTION! We all have those special friends we can't wait to see at school or invite to our birthday parties. It's natural to want to give gifts and be extra nice to the people who make us feel good.

But what if we started thinking about being kind to everyone, not just our favorite friends? What if we tried to be kind even to those who might be a bit hard to get along with? That's what Jesus teaches us, and that's what we're exploring in our "LOVE IN ACTION" series.

This week, we're starting with a really important idea: before we worry about what others are doing wrong, we need to take a good look at ourselves first. Let's kick things off with a fun game to help us practice positively looking at ourselves!

Now, let's play a game called "Mirror, Mirror." In this game, we'll use this mirror to help us see ourselves the way Jesus sees us—not just on the outside, but on the inside, too.

How to Play:

1. I'll pass the mirror around. When you get the mirror, you'll have 10 seconds to look at yourself.
2. While you're looking, I want everyone else to think of one positive thing to say about the person holding the mirror. It can be something you admire about them or something kind they've done.

3. After everyone has a turn, we'll talk about what it felt like to hear nice things about ourselves and how we can think positively about others too.

TEACHER: Wasn't it nice to hear good things about yourself from your friends? It feels good when people see the best in us. Jesus knows we're not perfect, but He loves us unconditionally and wants us to see and bring out the best in others, too. This week, let's try to look at our own hearts first and ask Jesus to help us be as kind and forgiving to others as He is to us. Remember, before we think about a speck in someone else's eye, we should check for the planks in our own!

Object Lesson – Filtered Water

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

- ☐ A jar of dirty water
- ☐ A water filter (can be a simple pour-through pitcher or a demonstration water filter setup)
- ☐ A clear glass

TEACHER: Today, we will learn about something very important using this jar of dirty water and a water filter. Look at this water. Would anyone want to drink it right now? No, right? It's not clean. But watch what happens when we pour it through this filter.

[Teacher pours the dirty water through the filter into the clear glass.]

See how the water coming out is much cleaner? The filter removes all the dirt and leaves us with clean water that's safe to drink. This filter is like what happens when we ask Jesus to help us see our own hearts clearly. Sometimes, our thoughts or feelings can be a bit murky—like this dirty water. We might have unkind thoughts about others or be quick to judge them.

Just like this filter cleans the water, Jesus helps us filter out these unkind thoughts and bad feelings. When we pray and read the Bible, Jesus helps us understand where we need to change. He helps us focus on what's pure and good. And just like this clean water, He makes our hearts clean when we confess our faults and choose to follow Him.

Now, why is it important to have a clean heart? Because a clean heart helps us see others the way Jesus sees them—with love and forgiveness. And when we see others that way, it's easier to be kind and to help rather than judge.

Remember, our main idea today is that before we worry about what others are doing wrong, we should ask God to help us clean our own hearts. This way, we can be sure we're living in a way that pleases Him and shows His love to the world.

Bible Story – Look at Ourselves First

TEACHER: When we think about Valentine's Day, we often focus on showing love to others. But today, we're going to talk about something that might surprise you – how to love others better by first looking at ourselves! It's kind of like using a mirror, but instead of checking if our hair looks good, we're checking our hearts and actions. Are you ready to discover what Jesus taught about judging others and examining ourselves?

Imagine you're playing with your toys, and your little brother or sister comes in and makes a mess. Your first thought might be, "They always mess up my stuff!" But what if, before getting upset, you remembered times when you accidentally messed up someone else's things? That's what we're going to learn about today – how Jesus wants us to look at our own actions before we judge others.

We're going to read from a part of the Bible called the Gospel of Matthew. Matthew was one of Jesus' closest followers, and he wrote down many of Jesus' teachings to help people understand how to live God's way. This part we're going to read is from a famous speech Jesus gave called the Sermon on the Mount. He was teaching a large crowd of people about how to live a life that pleases God.

READ: Matthew 7:1-2

Jesus is starting with a pretty strong statement here. He's telling us not to judge others. But what does that mean? It doesn't mean we can't tell the difference between right and wrong. Instead, Jesus is warning us about being too quick to criticize others without first looking at our own behavior.

Think about it like this: have you ever had a friend point out a small mistake you made, but then you noticed they often make the same mistake? That's the kind of thing Jesus is talking about. He wants us to be careful about how we judge others because we might be judged the same way.

READ: Matthew 7:3-4

Now Jesus is using a funny example to make His point. He talks about someone trying to help a friend remove a speck of sawdust from their eye while having a big plank of wood in their own eye! Can you imagine how silly that would look?

Of course, Jesus isn't really talking about wood in people's eyes. He's using this example to show how we often focus on small faults in others while ignoring bigger problems in ourselves. It's like noticing your friend didn't clean up their crayons while your whole room is a mess!

READ: Matthew 7:5

Here's the main point Jesus is making. He's saying we should deal with our own faults first before trying to correct others. When we do this, we'll be in a better position to help others with their problems.

Let's think about how we could do this. Maybe before telling your sister to clean her room, you make sure your own room is tidy. Or before getting upset at a friend for interrupting, you might think about times when you've interrupted others.

Now, let's look at a couple more parts of the Bible that talk about this idea. These come from letters written by some of Jesus' followers to early Christian churches, helping them understand how to live out Jesus' teachings in their daily lives.

READ: James 1:23–25

James, who was Jesus' brother, wrote this letter to encourage Christians scattered in different places. He compares God's teachings to a mirror. When we look into God's Word, it shows us the truth about ourselves. But James says it's not enough just to see our faults – we need to do something about them!

READ: Galatians 6:1–5

Paul, who wrote this letter to Christians in Galatia about 20 years after Jesus lived, gives us practical advice on how to help others with their faults. He says we should do it gently, always remembering that we might make mistakes too. And he reminds us that each person is responsible for their own actions.

LESSON SUMMARY: In our lesson "Mirror, Mirror?", we've learned that Jesus wants us to be careful about judging others. Instead, He teaches us to:

- Look at our own actions and attitudes first
- Be honest about our own faults and mistakes
- Work on improving ourselves before criticizing others
- Help others gently, remembering that we're not perfect either
- Use God's Word like a mirror to see the truth about ourselves

Remember, this doesn't mean we can never point out when something is wrong. But it does mean we should always start by examining our own hearts and actions. When we do this, we're better able to love others the way Jesus loves us!

GOSPEL CONNECTION: The amazing thing about Jesus is that He knows we're not perfect, yet He loves us anyway. In fact, the Bible tells us that Jesus came to save us because we couldn't fix our own faults. This is the heart of the Gospel – that God loves us so much He sent Jesus to take the punishment for our sins, even though He was the only one who never did anything wrong. When we believe in Jesus and accept this incredible gift of forgiveness, it changes how we see ourselves and others. We become more aware of our own need for God's grace, which helps us be more understanding and forgiving towards others. So remember, you are deeply loved by God, not because you're perfect, but because Jesus is perfect for you. And as you experience this love, you can share it with others by being quick to forgive and slow to judge. That's what it means to live out the Gospel and look at others through the lens of God's love!

Discussion Questions & Prayer

TEACHER: You all did such a great job listening and thinking about today's lesson! Remember, our main idea today is that before we judge others, we need to examine our own hearts and actions. Now, let's talk about what we learned in some small groups to really understand how we can apply this to our lives.

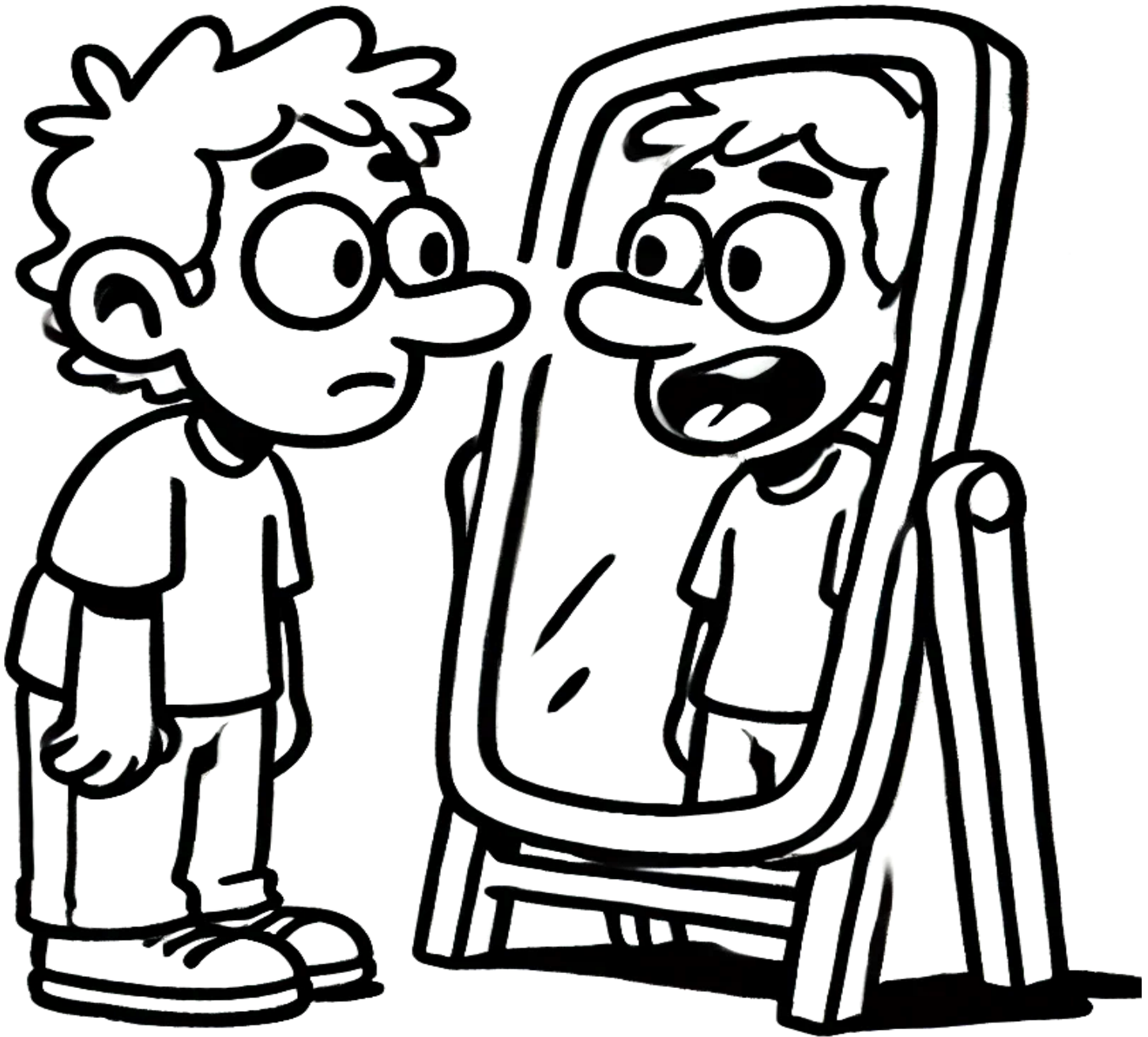
Discussion Questions:

1. Can you think of a time when you noticed something wrong someone else was doing but realized you were doing something similar? What did you learn from that?
2. Why do you think it's important to look at our own actions before talking about others' mistakes?
3. What is one thing you can do this week to be better at seeing your own actions clearly? Maybe asking for help from a parent, praying about it, or keeping a diary?

Now, does anyone have any prayer requests they would like to share? If there is anything you're thankful for or need help with, we can pray together.

Dear God, thank you for loving us and teaching us how to love others. Help us to see ourselves clearly, just like Jesus wants us to. Help us to be kind and not judge others quickly. Please listen to our prayer requests, and thank you for all the good things in our lives. We love You, and we want to show Your love to everyone around us. Amen.

Let's Look in Our Own Hearts



Word Search Puzzle

ACTION - BIBLE - CLEAN - EXAMINE - FAULT - FORGIVE

FRIEND - GOD - HEART - JUDGE - KINDNESS - LOVE - SPECK

L	H	V	Q	Y	F	M	I	B	E	G
Y	O	W	J	E	X	A	M	I	N	E
O	B	W	S	P	E	C	K	B	F	F
Q	A	C	T	I	O	N	L	L	H	R
J	Y	G	L	J	U	D	G	E	E	I
X	Q	F	O	R	G	I	V	E	A	E
Q	K	I	N	D	N	E	S	S	R	N
T	E	P	I	G	F	A	U	L	T	D
Y	J	W	B	N	X	R	G	O	J	W
I	T	J	Q	L	M	R	L	V	U	I
G	M	H	G	I	A	J	F	E	Z	F

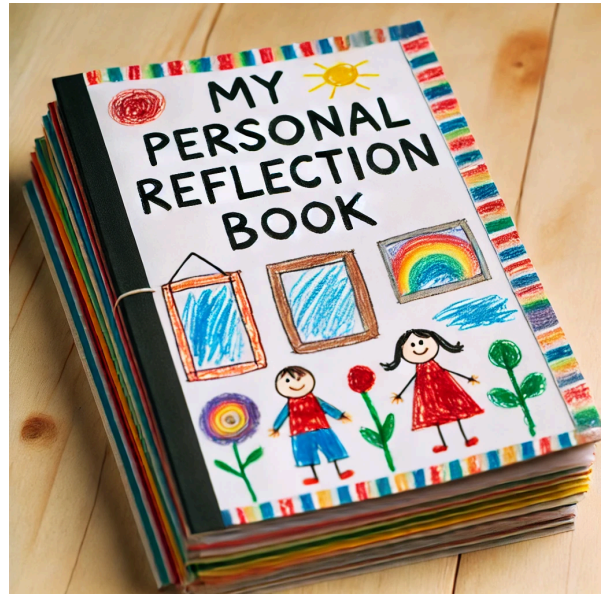
Word Search Answers

L	H	V	Q	Y	F	M	I	B	E	G
Y	O	W	J	E	X	A	M	I	N	E
O	B	W	S	P	E	C	K	B	F	F
Q	A	C	T	I	O	N	L	L	H	R
J	Y	G	L	J	U	D	G	E	E	I
X	Q	F	O	R	G	I	V	E	A	E
Q	K	I	N	D	N	E	S	S	R	N
T	E	P	I	G	F	A	U	L	T	D
Y	J	W	B	N	X	R	G	O	J	W
I	T	J	Q	L	M	R	L	V	U	I
G	M	H	G	I	A	J	F	E	Z	F

Craft Activity – Personal Reflection Book

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

- ☐ Construction paper
- ☐ White paper
- ☐ Crayons or markers
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Stapler or glue
- ☐ Stickers (optional)



TEACHER: Today, we're going to make something special called a "Personal Reflection Book." This book will help us remember to look at our own hearts and actions first, just like we learned in our lesson. It's a fun way to think about how we can be better friends and followers of Jesus.

Directions:

1. Start by taking a piece of construction paper. This will be the cover of your book. Fold it in half to make a small book.
2. Next, take a few sheets of white paper and fold them in half to fit inside your construction paper cover. These will be the pages of your book.
3. Use the stapler or glue to attach the white paper inside the construction paper cover. Now you have a little book!
4. On the cover, write "My Personal Reflection Book" and decorate it with crayons, markers, and stickers.

5. On the first page, draw a picture of yourself. Think about the good things you see in yourself, just like we did in the mirror game.
6. On the next few pages, write or draw things you can do to be kinder and more forgiving to others. Remember to think about your own actions first, just like Jesus taught us.
7. Use the last page to write a prayer asking Jesus to help you see your own heart clearly and to be a better friend and follower.



Week 1 – Note for Parents

Today, we explored Jesus' teaching about self-reflection before judging others. Our main idea was: "Before judging others, we must examine our own hearts and actions." We discussed how Jesus used the metaphor of removing a plank from our own eye before helping with a speck in someone else's.

This lesson is part of our "Love in Action" series, which focuses on demonstrating Christ-like love in practical ways. We encouraged children to look inward first, fostering empathy and understanding.

As adults, we can also benefit from this wisdom. In our daily interactions, taking a moment for self-reflection before criticizing others can lead to more compassionate and constructive relationships.

We're excited to continue this journey of love and growth with your family!
