

A MESSAGE FOR THE CHURCH



Week One - To Ephesus

A Note to the Parents/Teachers

The book of Revelation can be a confusing and even scary book to many people. But it doesn't have to be! And it wasn't meant to be. Remember, it begins with "The revelation of Jesus Christ" (1:1) and ends with "Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!" (22:20). It's about the hope we have in Jesus restoring us into the Kingdom of God! Still, there are clear warnings for those who refuse Jesus. Let that be our focus as we lead our kids through these letters to the Church.

- **Big Idea:** Acts of love and understanding of truth go hand in hand.

Starter

- **Evidences of Grace**

Ask kids to share ways they've seen God at work lately. Anything, big or small, which is good is from God. When a kid shares, encourage everyone to thank God together.

- **Question**

Is it more important to be right about something or to care for someone? Do you think both are possible?

Sing Together

Story - from Revelation 2:1-7

One of Jesus' followers, named John, got a message from Jesus in his old age. This message wasn't just for John, though. It was to be shared with all of the believers, everyone who wanted to follow Jesus as King. So John wrote it down. And even though he wrote it for the people who lived back when John was alive, the Spirit of God used John's writings to continue to give this message to everyone who would follow Jesus. That means, this message is still for God's Church, today — for you and I.

But it started with seven specific cities where specific people lived. Jesus had a specific message for each of them. He told John,

“Write this to the messenger of the church in Ephesus: the One who holds the seven stars (messengers of the church) in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands (churches) says this:

“I see what you've done — your hard work and your refusal to quit. I know you can't stomach evil, that you weed out the phony teachers. I know your persistence, your courage in my name, and that you have not worn out.

“But I do have this against you: you have walked away from the love you first had. Remember where you were and see how far you have fallen.

Turn back! Do the works you did at first. No time to waste, for I'm well on my way to removing your light if you don't turn.

You do have this to your credit though: You hate the Nicolaitan practices, which I also hate.

“Anyone with their ears open, listen! Listen to these words the Spirit is speaking to the churches. To those who overcome, I will let them eat freely from the tree of life, in God's paradise!”

A long time before this letter was written, John was most likely in the city of Ephesus when he wrote a letter to the church warning them of false teachers (1 John 4:1). It seems that the Ephesian church had taken that warning seriously and were doing well determining what was true and what was false. But somewhere along they way, they forgot that God's truth should lead us to love Him and to love one another. That was the greatest of the commandments, according to Jesus! It was the whole reason the laws were given long ago to God's people — so that humans would love God and show His love to others, the way God intended the world to be. Love for God and others was never meant to be separated from obeying God's word and believing truth.

[Dialogue Questions - you may use some or all]

- Why do you think Jesus wanted to give a message to the church in Ephesus? What did he want to tell them?
- Why do you think the Ephesians forgot their acts of love? What did they seem to get focused on instead?
- Do you think this letter to the Ephesian church long ago is an important message for our church today?
- How does the truth of Jesus bring us to love God and others more?

Breakout Time

- **Prayer:**

God, thank you for your word and your truth. May it lead us to know your love so that we will love one another more fully. In Jesus' name, amen.

- **Craft:**

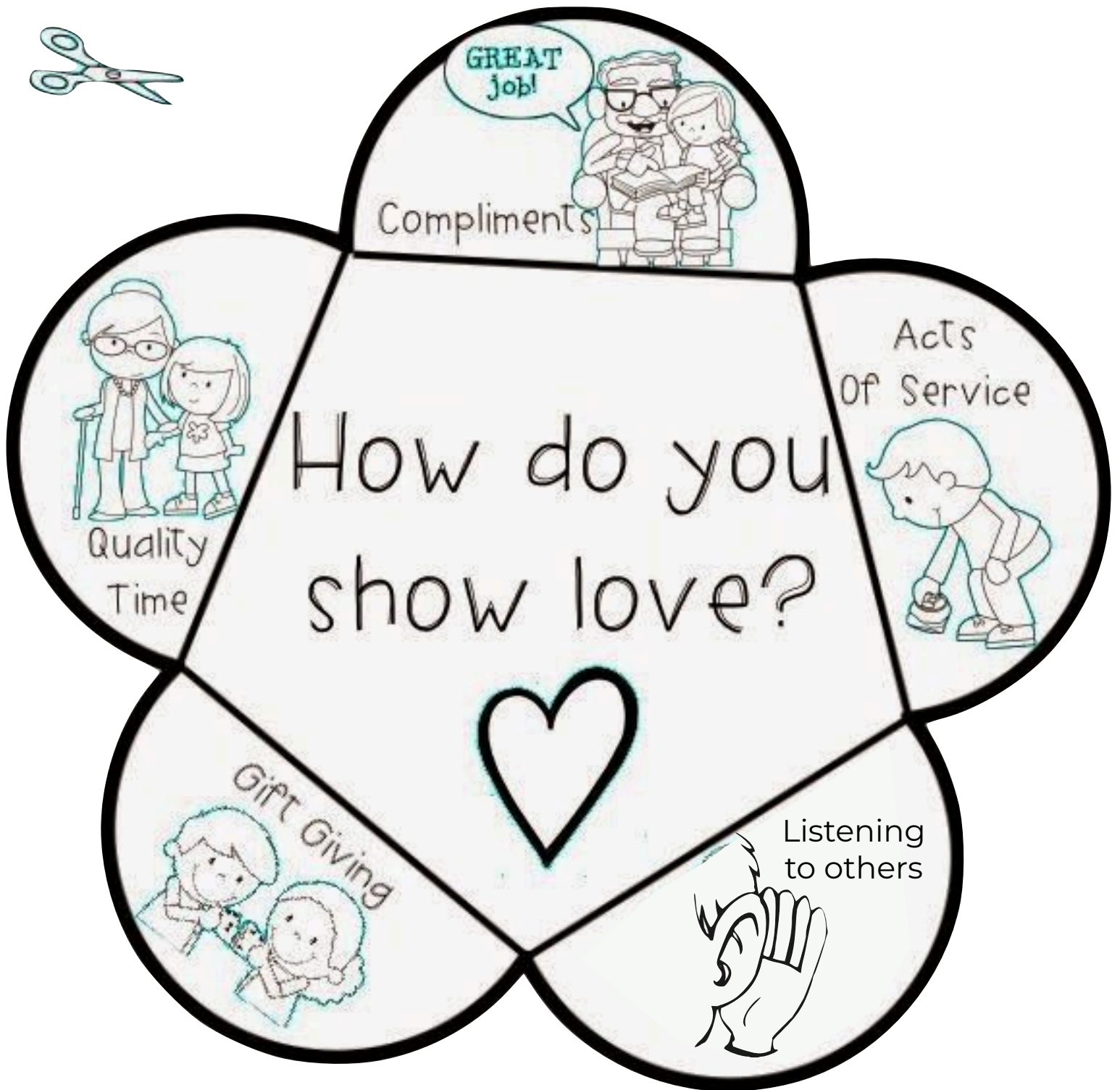
- Use the activity sheet attached.

BLESS Activity

For kids to do during the week

Because this Story is true, we want to be faithful to live in it. We ask Spirit to help us Bless, Listen, Eat, Speak, and Sabbath (rest & celebrate) in ways that tell the good news of God's Story.

This week, focus on the **Bless** rhythm. How can you love one another by blessing someone in Missio or in your home this week?



Color and cut out the flower. Fold over the petals and write how you would show love or bless someone.