

# Love, Don't Judge

Romans 14:1-15:4

**October Memory Verse:** Romans 12:10 "Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves."

- Continue practicing this verse.
- Try making it a competition to see who in your family can memorize it first and say it for everyone else.
- Challenge your kids to say it to someone outside of your family this week.

**Opening Activity:** Choose one or two that seem most appropriate for your children to start the lesson. Feel free to work them into the lesson if your kids tend to get antsy and need an activity to regroup.

- Practice saying this month's memory verse together, along with other verses you have memorized. Say it in funny voices, say it as loudly or as quietly as you can, say it while standing on one foot. If your kids are writers, have them write it down on a pretty or cool piece of paper to hang in their bedroom. Come up with motions that you can do while saying the verse, too.
- Pray together as a family for any needs you or others have. Remember to thank Him for His blessings and what He is doing in your lives, too.
- Put some snacks (such as fruit, vegetables, crackers, etc.) out on a plate and ask each of your kids to pick one. Talk about why they picked the snack they did. Mention that the passage we're about to read talks about how some people pick one food over another. But we don't judge people who choose a different food. We still love them!

NOTE: This passage talks about how some believers don't eat certain foods while others do. This was mostly due to personal conviction/preference or their personal faith history. For example, Jews would not eat pork, but Gentiles would. Even after salvation, a Jew would likely not eat pork because of their culture. If your kids don't understand this concept, you could compare it to a vegetarian vs. someone who eats meat. Vegetarians often just prefer to not eat meat. And that's okay!

**Lesson:** As you teach God's word this week, remember that He is using your faithfulness to accomplish His good purposes... whether it seems like it in the moment or not! Don't lose heart and don't give up. The seeds you are planting NOW will yield fruit.

- Provide a quick recap to your kids: "We are learning from the book of Romans about how to live in a way that pleases God. Romans was written by a missionary named Paul who loved Jesus and wanted others to love Him, too. We have learned so many different things already, but I think it's important to remember that God cares more about our hearts than our hands. He wants us to be kind and obedient in our hearts. Jesus helps us do that!"
- Introduce the passage: "Today, we are reading from Romans 14:1-15:4. This passage talks about how we are to love people, and not judge them, when they do things that are different than us."
- Read the passage. As you do, pause to clarify words or passages. You could read the passage from The Message or another kid-friendly translation to make it more understandable to kids.
  - *Key Concept: Don't judge people who live differently than you do. Love them!*
- Review the passage:
  - To start, explain that Jews only ate certain things based on the Law God gave in the Old Testament; Gentiles didn't follow those limitations. Sometimes Gentiles would look down on the Jews for not eating certain things. They would judge them. Paul says to love people instead of judging them.
  - Key points: Expand on these as needed to help your kids understand.
    - It is not our job to judge people for what they eat or don't eat, do or don't do, wear or don't wear. God will judge people.
    - Instead of judging people, we should do our best to do whatever we can to live at peace with others. We shouldn't make other people sin by our own choices.
    - Don't make such a big deal about something that it turns people away from God.
    - God will convict us of what we should and shouldn't be doing. Obey Him, knowing that other people will have different convictions.
- Connect the Gospel: "When God created people, He made them good and with free will. The first people God made, Adam and Eve, disobeyed God. Now, everyone sins, too. The punishment for sin is separation from God forever. God sent His Son, Jesus, to earth. Jesus lived a sinless life. He died on a

cross, taking the punishment for our sin. He rose to life three days later, showing that He won over sin and death. If we ask Jesus to forgive our sins, He will. Then we can spend eternity with Him in heaven."

- Close the lesson: "Remember that last week, we talked about how we should look for ways to serve Him and other people? I think today's lesson is about that, too! If we love God, we'll want to help other people follow Him. We won't do anything to hurt them, judge them, or turn them away from God. Let's keep practicing how we can love other people."
- Pray, then do some of the activities below, as appropriate for your family.

**Activity Ideas:** These are designed for use at the end of the lesson or throughout to break up the "sitting still" times. Be in tune with what your kids need in order to make this lesson the most effective for them.

- Color the page below as a fun and relaxing activity for your kids to wrap up the lesson.
- Have your kids help you make or bake something in the kitchen. It could be prepping lunch, baking muffins, or simply getting a snack ready for the day. Talk about how we can choose what we eat. If someone chooses something else, that's okay! God loves them and we can love them, too.
  - If you bake something, consider sharing some of it with a friend or neighbor!

Loving God Means

Loving Others Too

