

For Sunday 20th September 2026

Passage: 1 Corinthians 13



St Peter's

COLCHESTER

St Peter's Kids Resources

Welcome to the resources for St Peter's Kids.

Each Sunday, Seekers and Diggers will normally explore the same Bible passage or theme as the rest of the church, in ways that are right for their different ages.

Our hope is to help the children:

- engage seriously with the Bible;
- grasp one clear central truth;
- understand why it matters;
- respond appropriately to God;
- enjoy being together and build good relationships.

How to use these resources

These are resources, not a script. Please use your knowledge of the children and your own strengths as a leader, and feel free to adapt what is here. You certainly do not need to use everything suggested.

A simple, engaging conversation about the Bible can be far more valuable than an elaborate activity. The aim is always to help the children understand, remember and respond to God's word.

Seekers and Diggers

- Seekers – Reception to Year 2: keep things short, concrete and interactive, using repetition, movement, visual material and questions they can genuinely answer.
- Diggers – Years 3 to 6: give children real opportunities to read the Bible, notice things in the text, think, question, discuss and respond. Aim for material that stretches them without feeling childish.

What about craft?

Craft can be a great way to reinforce the Bible teaching or help children respond, but it is entirely optional. If you enjoy using craft and it genuinely helps the session, please do. If it does not, there is absolutely no need to include it.

Summary

- Paul has been teaching about spiritual gifts, but now shows the Corinthians something even more important: however gifted we are, without love our gifts achieve nothing.
- Key verse: "Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude." (13.4-5)
- Aim: To help the children see that Christian love is not mainly a feeling. It is a way of treating other people – patiently, kindly, humbly and persistently – and it matters more than being impressive, talented or noticed.

Things to notice in the passage

- Chapter 13 comes in the middle of Paul's teaching about spiritual gifts and life together as a church. It is not primarily a passage about weddings or romantic love.
- In verses 1-3, Paul deliberately imagines some extraordinary gifts and acts of commitment. Without love, he says, they amount to nothing.
- Verses 4-7 describe what love actually looks like in ordinary relationships. Paul talks about patience, kindness, envy, boasting, pride, rudeness, selfishness, anger, forgiveness, truth and perseverance.
- This means love is much more than saying that we care about someone. It changes how we behave towards them.
- Many of the things Paul says love does not do fit the problems in Corinth: people were comparing themselves, competing for status and using their gifts selfishly.
- Verses 8-13 remind us that many things which seem important now are temporary. Love belongs to what lasts.
- The chapter ends with faith, hope and love – "but the greatest of these is love."

Possible approach for Seekers

For Seekers, keep the focus very simple: love changes how we treat people.

You might begin with familiar situations and ask, "What would love do?"

For example:

- Someone else gets to go first.
- Somebody knocks over the thing you have just built.
- A child is sitting on their own.
- Someone annoys you.
- You have something another child would like to use.
- Somebody gets something wrong.

Then introduce Paul's words:

- "Love is patient. Love is kind."
- Explain patient very simply: love can wait and does not immediately get cross when things do not go our way.
- Explain kind: love looks for ways to do good for another person.
- You could add one or two of Paul's negatives: love does not boast and is not rude.
- Avoid trying to teach every phrase in verses 4-7. Two or three concrete ideas, well understood, will be much more useful.
- Keep returning to: Jesus wants us to love other people, and love changes how we treat them.

A good closing question might be:

- Who could you be especially patient or kind with this week?

Possible approach for Diggers

With Diggers, it would be worth helping them see why chapter 13 appears between chapters 12 and 14.

You might begin by asking:

- What makes somebody an impressive Christian?

Let them suggest answers, then look at verses 1-3.

- What impressive things does Paul imagine someone being able to do?
- What surprising thing does he say about all of them if love is missing?
- Why might somebody be very gifted and yet still behave badly towards other Christians?

Then investigate verses 4-7.

You could divide the phrases into two columns:

LOVE DOES...

- is patient
- is kind
- rejoices with the truth
- bears
- believes
- hopes
- endures

LOVE DOES NOT...

- envy
- boast
- become proud
- behave rudely
- insist on its own way
- become easily angry
- keep a record of wrongs
- rejoice at wrongdoing

Ask:

- Which of these are easiest?
- Which are hardest?
- Which might be hardest when we are tired, irritated or think we are right?
- Which phrases challenge the way children sometimes treat friends or siblings?
- Which phrases would make the biggest difference to a church family?

It may also help to ask:

- What is the difference between being "nice" and the kind of love Paul describes?

Paul's love is stronger than simply being pleasant. Sometimes patience costs us something. Kindness may mean helping someone we would not naturally choose. Not insisting on our own way means giving something up.

Finish by looking briefly at verses 8-13:

- Which things will not last forever?
- What does Paul say will remain?

- Why, then, is love more important than trying to look impressive?

Connecting it with St Peter's

There are lots of ways this chapter could connect with ordinary church life.

You might think about:

- being patient when someone is slower than we are;
- making space for somebody who is new or less confident;
- being glad when somebody else does something well rather than feeling jealous;
- serving without needing to be noticed or thanked;
- not always insisting that things happen our way;
- forgiving instead of repeatedly reminding somebody of what they did wrong;
- speaking kindly when we disagree;
- noticing people whom others might overlook.

It may be helpful to remind the children that the church needs gifts, but gifts are meant to be used lovingly. Being talented, knowledgeable, confident or helpful does not excuse us from treating people well.

The question is not simply:

- "What can I do?"

but:

- "How can I use what God has given me in a way that genuinely loves other people?"

Possible activities

- What would love do? Give the children realistic situations and ask what patient, kind love might look like in each one.
- Love sorting: take phrases from verses 4-7 and sort them into "love does" and "love does not".
- Scenario cards: give Diggers situations involving jealousy, boasting, irritation, being overlooked, unfairness or disagreement. Ask which part of verses 4-7 speaks most clearly to each one.
- Rewrite the situation: describe a conflict first without love, then ask the children to retell it showing patience, kindness and humility.
- Memory challenge: learn "Love is patient and kind" together, adding actions if helpful.
- Quiet reflection: invite children to choose one phrase from verses 4-7 which they particularly want God to help them live out this week.
- Craft: if useful, create something based around "Love is patient and kind", but keep the emphasis on what those words actually mean in relationships rather than simply decorating the verse.

A note for leaders

Because this passage is so familiar, it is easy to make it sound sentimental. Paul is actually describing a demanding, self-giving kind of love.

It may help to avoid presenting the session as simply: "We should all try harder to be loving."

The deeper Christian pattern is that God has loved us, and his love reshapes the way we treat others. Depending on the age of the group and the time available, you may want to connect this with Jesus – whose patience, kindness, humility and self-giving love show us most clearly what love looks like.

The goal is not to leave children feeling, "I must become a perfectly loving person," but to help them see both how important love is and where Christians learn that love.

Prayer

You might encourage the children to pray quite specifically from verses 4-7:

- Thank God for the ways he has shown us love.
- Ask him to help us be patient when other people frustrate us.
- Ask him to make us kind and generous.
- Ask him to help us be glad when other people do well rather than becoming jealous.
- Ask him to help us forgive rather than keeping a record of wrongs.
- Ask him to help us love people even when it costs us something.

Further resources

- [BibleProject – 1 Corinthians](#)
- [Mustard Seeds](#)