The New Command

**Aim:**  What does it mean to ‘love one another’

**Occasion:** 4th Sunday after Easter

**Scripture:** John 13:31 -35

**Game:** (older children) If you love me honey smile!

**What to do:** Have all the children sit in a circle on the floor. Ask for a volunteer. The volunteer goes into the middle of the circle and chooses someone from the circle. They then must say to the person: If you love me honey, smile!   
The person must then try and reply without smiling: I love you honey, but I just can’t smile!   
If they smile, they swap places with the original volunteer and find someone else to ask: If you love me honey, smile!   
If they don’t smile, the original volunteer finds someone else to ask: If you love me honey smile.   
The object of the game is to get people to smile!

**Game:** (Younger children) Drop the clanger!

**You will need:** Something to be the clanger. E.g. a saucepan, a set of keys etc something that makes a noise!

**What to do:** Get the children to sit in a circle. Ask for a volunteer. Give the volunteer the ‘clanger’ and get them to walk around the inside of the circle. They are to pick someone to join them who then stands up, holds the volunteer’s hand and continue around the circle. The new person then chooses someone else who in turn gets up and holds their hand and continues around the circle making a long chain of people.

Meanwhile, the person holding the clanger is to choose when they want to ‘drop the clanger’. When they do, everyone in the chain is to run and sit back down in the circle. The last to sit down then becomes the person with the clanger for the next round.

**Story:** The New Command (John 13:31 -35)

After Judas had gone, Jesus said: Now the Son of Man will be given glory, and he will bring glory to God. Then, God will bring glory to the Son of Man, and will do it very soon.

My children, I will be with you for a little while longer. Then you will look for me, but you won’t find me, I tell you just as I told the people, “You cannot go where I am going.”

But I am giving you a new command. You must love each other, just as I have loved you. If you love each other, everyone will know that you are my disciples.

**Talk:** In today’s story, Jesus was telling the disciples about what was going to happen to him at Easter. It sounded a little confusing didn’t it? (pause for answers) well; I think that it would have been confusing for the disciples too!

But Jesus did tell them something that was really clear: You must love each other, just as I have loved you. Can anyone tell me what they think that means? (Pause) Well, I think what Jesus meant was that we should treat other people how we would like to be treated. That means that if you like people to listen to you when you talk, then you should do the same when people are talking to you.

Can you think of any other times when it would be important to treat others the same as you want to be treated? (Pause)

Well, today we are going to make some pass it on cards to remind us to treat people how we would like to be treated. We might even make enough to hand out to people in church today!

**Questions:**

* What do you think it means to be ‘given glory’?
* Why should we ‘love each other’? What happens if we don’t?
* Can you think of some examples of how you could ‘love each other’?

**Activity:** Pass it on to your neighbour cards

**You will need:** card, the template, pens and crayons etc to decorate

**Preparation:** for younger children, you may want to prepare the cards for them and just let them decorate them

**What to do:** Give each child a set of nine memory cards to decorate, and a piece of coloured card. Glue the sheet to the card. Then decorate the nine cards (see the suggestions below).

Cut out the individual cards. Let the children keep three each: One for themselves, and two for friends. Get them to give the rest to you, the leader.

Depending on the structure of your church service, the cards you have collected that the children decorated can be given out to the adult congregation, either in the service, or as they leave the service, or at morning tea.



**Decoration ideas:**

**1. Glitter card**Spread the card with either glue or double sided cellotape.   
Cut out the shape in the middle of the pass it template   
Stick the pass it template over the glued card.   
Spread glitter over the glued part.   
Cut out the finished card.

**2. Cellophane card**

Spread the card with glue or double sided cellotape.  
Stick a piece of cellophane to the glued card.   
Cut out the shape in the middle of the pass it template.  
Glue the reverse side of the template and then stick it over the cellophane.   
Cut out the finished card.

**3. Sticker/collage card**

Spread the card with glue.   
Stick the template over it.   
Decorate with stickers or bits of magazines.