# Discipleship Series: Love and Action

# Session 1: Pay it Forward

*Read Before You Lead:*

The aim of this session is to encourage love and generosity towards others, knowing that it is Jesus who has given the most that anyone ever could.

*Please use this as loose structure - if it feels right to spend longer on an activity or discussion or completely change something - do what is best for your group.*

**Catch Up Time (10mins)**

Go around the group and ask the young people to share what’s a loving thing someone has done for them.

**Icebreaker: Buddy, I Love You Game**

**Aim of game:**To make the person who is “it” to smile or laugh.  
  
1.  Have everyone sit in a circle.  
  
2. Have one person from the group be “it”. The “it” person sits in the middle of the circle and must try **not to smile or laugh** throughout the round. The rest of the group takes turns to ask the person in the middle ridiculous question or do funny things/faces/noises. Each time someone in the group asks a question/or finishes doing their crazy something, the “it” person can only respond by saying the phrase “Buddy, I love you, but I just can’t smile.”   
  
3. If the person succeeds and makes the “it” person smile/laugh, then that person is “it” for the new round. If the person doesn’t succeed, the next person down in the circle attempts to make the “it” person smile or laugh. If the “it” person is able to not smile/laugh throughout all of the remaining people, the person wins the game.

**Short Intro (5mins):**

Today we’re going to explore what being ridiculous love and generosity could look like in our lives. We probably would all agree that loving people is important, it’s what Jesus commanded us to do! But putting love into action that sometimes costs us… that can be harder!

**Bible Study (6mins):**

Look up these bible verses and read them together. How does God show his love for us? What does his love mean for us?

1 Peter 1:22-2:10

Romans 8:31-32

**Discuss: How can we make love a Verb? (A doing word)**

Then look up:

1 John 3:16-18, John 13:35, James 1:27

**Activity (10mins):**

Who has heard of **“Pay it forward**”? (See if anyone has and ask them to explain, otherwise an explanation is below)

*It’s an idea that comes from a novel, and subsequent film (Pay it Forward- show trailer if you want to) which tells the story of a young boy who does 3 good deeds for others in need. All the child asks in return is that they pass on a good deed to three other people and keep the cycle going. This has taken off that it is now a worldwide movement of performing random acts of kindness to 3 or more people and asking those people to do the same. Last year, people in 75 countries took part in Pay it Forward Day, inspiring 10 million acts of kindness.*

Action: Hand out pieces of paper and ask the young people to think of 3 generous deeds/acts of kindness they could do this week. Challenge them (and yourself) to do them and Pay it forward!

**Discussion (5mins):**

Questions to consider:

When was the last time you remember being generous to another person? How did it make you feel?

What can hold us back from being generous and putting our love into action? How could we challenge that this week?

**Prayer and Ministry (5mins):**

Pray for the desire to be generous to grow in the young people and for boldness to do their acts of kindness. You could ask the young people to raise their hand if they want to increase in their generosity and love towards others. You can then pray for them individually.

# Session 2: Compassion

*Read Before You Lead:* This session seeks to define compassion by looking at the way Jesus showed compassion and apply that to young people’s lives.

**Memory Verse:** “I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of my brothers and sisters you were doing it to me” Matthew 25:40.

**Catch Up Time (10mins) - Suggested Icebreaker:**

Encourage your young people to share something from the week. See if they did their pay it forward action!?

**Ice-Breaker:** Word Association - everyone has to go around the circle and say a word they associate with ‘Love’, you cannot the repeat words. The only catch is- you have to say your word in a robot voice

**Short Intro (5mins):**

Question – did anyone in the group choose the word “compassion” to say in that ice-breaker? Do you we associate compassion with love? If yes, why do we associate the two together? (leave room for answers).

What is compassion? We’re going to be looking at that today.

**Activity (10mins+):**

Depending on your group, please adjust this activity as appropriate:

These scriptures show where Jesus teaches on compassion or shows compassion:

**Matthew 20: 29-34, Matthew 25:34-40, Luke 10:30-37**

Depending on the number of young people in your group, divide everyone into three groups and give each group one of the passages of scripture. Ask the group to either:

* Dramatise/act out the scripture, making clear what compassion looks like in the scripture, or
* Turn it into a song, rap, or spoken word
* Take the scripture and a big piece of paper and write/draw what it says about compassion

Then read the scripture together and be able to feedback to the group how compassion is shown in the scripture.

Then ask them what a modern equivalent could be; what does compassion look like today in those scenarios. If appropriate, and if time allows, ask them to go back into their groups and adapt whatever they had learnt/seen about compassion from Jesus into a modern context, setting, scenario, etc.

Then gather everyone back to watch the modern adaptations.

**Discussion (10mins):**

When have you shown compassion to someone?

When had someone shown compassion to you?

Why is it important to be compassionate?

Why is sometimes difficult to be compassionate?

**Prayer and Ministry (5mins):**

Pray for an increase of compassion in the young people’s hearts and pray for any specific situations in the world or community.

# Session 3: What is Interceding?

*Read Before You Lead:* This session follows on from the previous talk on compassion. When we have compassion, when we care about people or a situation, this can prompt us to pray and intercede on behalf of them! In the small group we are going to explore what the young people care about, and then the main talk will unpack further what it means to intercede.

**Memory Verse:** “And this is the confidence we have towards him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.” 1 John 5:14.

**Catch Up Time (15mins) - Suggested Icebreaker**

Get everyone to stand up and form a circle. Every young person must take turns stepping into the middle of the circle. When in the middle, everyone else has to say something nice/positive/encouraging about the person in the middle. Take turns until everyone is done.

**Short Intro (5mins):**

Was it nice to hear those things about yourself? Was it good to share those things?

Speaking encouragement to each other is one of the easiest and kindest things we can do, and it is the same with praying for other people too!

How easy to find it to remember to pray for someone you know or care about?

Sometimes the reason we find it difficult is because we are not spending enough time exercising “compassion” – what we spoke on last week.

**Activity (10mins):** find pictures/postcards/newspaper articles that represent different situations and needs going on in the world i.e human need, environmental need etc.

This activity challenges the young people to think beyond themselves and notice other people and causes they can pray for and stand with.

Spread the photos on the floor and ask the young people to look at each one, and then pick up the one that grabs their attention the most.

Go around the room and ask each young person to share:

* What they noticed in the picture/ What the picture makes them think of
* How it makes them feel
* What they would want to be different in the picture
* Then, as a group, all at the same time, pray for the situation in the photo that most grips you.

By taking time to notice the world around us; our friends, family, the environment, animals, etc, certain things will start to grab our attention more than others. You might start developing a “heart” – compassion and desire for change for someone or something.

This is good! This is how God can communicate with us and prompt us to pray and partner with his heart for that person/situation too!

**Discussion (10mins):**

Is there a situation/issue (not related to yourself) that you have a heart for/care about now?

What should we do when we have been moved emotionally by something?

**Prayer and Ministry (5mins):**

Encourage the young people to lead the prayer time for the causes on their heart. You can encourage everyone to pray out loud at the same time or tell them to get into groups and pray. You can also find creative ideas for prayer stations here: <https://www.prayerspacesinschools.com/topten>

# Session 4: I have a voice

*Read Before You Lead:*

This session explores the idea that God everyone and anyone, regardless of age, to share his heart. The idea is to envision the young people to believe that God can use them just as much as anyone else, to be his witness in the world.

**Memory Verse:** “Do not say “I am too young.” You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you” declares the Lord. Jeremiah 1:7-8.

# Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. 1 Timothy 4:12

**Catch Up Time (15mins) - Suggested Icebreaker:**

Encourage everyone to share one piece of news from their week.

*Icebreaker- Talking Game*

Get everyone to think of a number between 1 -20, then ask everyone to go around and say their number. The person who said the lowest/highest (mix it up each go) then has to talk for 1 minute about a random subject you choose for them. If they can talk for 1 minute without stopping or saying “um” they win! Talking points could include:

* Favourite lesson at school
* Early childhood memory
* Why school grades are not everything
* Your dream job, dream day, dream house
* A crazy invention

**Short Intro (5mins):**

Who found that it’s easier to talk about something they’re already passionate about, rather than something random and odd?

Can you think of anyone who’s done a famous, powerful speech?

Encourage the young people to share their experiences of speaking/giving messages.

**Activity (10mins): (you need a large piece of paper, pens)**

As a group, on a large piece of paper brainstorm the names of children/teenagers who have impacted the world, the UK, or smaller scale the local community. *People to consider: Malala, Great Thunberg, Emma Gonzalez, Anne Frank, Louis Braille + plus teenager celebrities too, like Billie Eilish, Millie Bobby Brown etc.*

Decide the ways in which these children changed the world.

Turn to Jeremiah 1:7-8 and explore together the way God chose to use young Jeremiah and ask how this message could be applied to their lives.

**Discussion (10mins):**

Does God use people who are young?

Which other bible characters were very young when God called them? Ideas could include: Samuel, David, Daniel, Mary, Timothy.

What is the benefit of being young? What’s hard about being young?

Who can you reach as you are?

What message or gift do you think God has given you to share?

**Prayer and Ministry (5mins):**

Pray for the young people to receive deeper confidence in who God has made them to be. You may want to play a worship song and create a soaking time, for the young people to sit and reflect on who God has made them to be.