

Children's Message for May 9, 2021

For today's lesson, we have to pretend. Pretend we're sitting in a big circle, so close to each other we could pass something from hand to hand. Can you picture that?

Okay, now see this pretend tennis ball I'm holding? I'm going to pass it to the person on my right, and s/he'll pass it along to the right, all the way around the circle until it gets back to me. Here we go.

Good job! That worked so well we'll try to pass 2 tennis balls, one right after the other. Here goes.

Wow, you kids are good at this! Let's try it with 10 tennis balls. Here's the first one, now the second, then . . . Oh no! I didn't bring the other 10 balls! I guess this is the end of our pretending.

But the story we'll hear about Jesus today is something we don't have to pretend. Jesus is telling his disciples—his friends—what he expects them to do after he's been crucified and after God raised from the dead. He tells them that he loves all of *them* with the same love God has for *him*. He wants them to love *each other* the way he has loved them.

It's sort of like passing around our pretend tennis balls—but there's no *pretending* about the love of Jesus. God loves Jesus. Jesus gives that love to his disciples. Then they give it to each other, and then to other people.

But what happens if the disciples run out of love (like I ran out of tennis balls)? What if they don't have any love to pass around? Jesus tells them where *he* gets *his* love: from God.

We humans can run out of love, can't we? Just like running out of tennis balls. But *God* never runs out of love. God always has more love to give us. So if we keep close to God, the way Jesus did, then we'll always be able to receive more love for ourselves, and more to pass along to others. That's the good news for today!