

## THE PASSWORD

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*[Jesus said,] "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples,  
if you love one another."*

—*John 13:35*

### INTRODUCTION

Sometimes it's important to be able to tell who's who. In sports, players can tell who's on their team by the color of their jersey. In a war, soldiers can tell who's on their side by the style of their uniform. Officials in airports look at people's passports so they can tell which country they're from. You might even wear a band on your wrist or a tag on your swimsuit so the lifeguards can tell you belong at the community pool. Well, Jesus wants everyone in the world to know who his followers are, so he gave them a way to make sure people could tell. But it's not something his followers have to wear or a little card they have to show. It's something they have to *do*. If you don't know what it is yet, better pay attention. You want to be recognized as one of Jesus' followers, and people are going to be checking your ID!

Today's devotion is based on John 13:35, in which Jesus said, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." The devotion is called "The Password."

### DEVOTION

Sitting up in the tree house in his backyard, Jack heard a knock. "What's the password?" he asked.

Willie's voice answered. "Terabithia."

Jack got up and lifted the door latch. "Hey, Willie," he said.

His friend entered, carrying a large bag of potato chips. "Hey. What's going on?"

Sitting down again, Jack said, "Nothing yet. You see Trevor?"

Willie plopped into a chair. "No, but he knows I've got these, so he'll be here." As he ripped open the bag, another knock sounded.

Jack called out, "What's the password?"

They heard silence, then Trevor's voice. "I forgot. Wait a minute ... Oh yeah. Terabinthia."

Willie groaned, saying, "It's not Terabinthia! You gotta say it right."

The door started rattling. "Come on, guys! Why do we need a password, anyway? You know it's me!"

Jesus gave his disciples a kind of password. It's a sign that proves they're his followers. But it isn't something they say; it's something they do. Everyone can tell who Jesus' true disciples are by the way they love each other. Do you know the password? If you do, show it!

**DID YOU KNOW?**

The Gileadites used a password to tell friend from foe after a battle. The password was “Sibboleth.” If a man said the word right, the Gileadites knew he was one of them. (See Judges 12:4–6.)

**QUESTIONS**

1. If you weren't carrying your Bible, wearing a necklace with a cross on it, or stepping out of a car with a fish symbol on it, would people be able to tell that you're a Christian? How?
2. How can *you* usually tell if a person is a follower of Jesus or not?
3. Which of the following three things has the most power to convince people that you really are a follower of Jesus—what's on your T-shirt, what you say, or what you do? Why is it the most powerful?
4. What do you think was the reason why Jesus chose *love one another* as his password? Why didn't he choose *obey the Ten Commandments* instead?

For a clue, either have the children look up Galatians 5:14, Romans 13:9–10, and Matthew 22:34–40 or read these passages to them.

5. If all Christians showed love to one another the way Jesus told them to, how would someone who was wondering whether he or she wanted to become a Christian be affected? Do you think this was one of the things Jesus had in mind when he chose his password?