



LESSON 3 FOR LEADERS

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Teaches Us to Love Everyone

SCRIPTURE: [Matthew 5](#)

WORD OF WONDER: [from Matthew 5:8](#)

Kindness. It's a buzzword. We see it on T-shirts.

Choose kindness!

Kindness matters!

Kind is the new cool!

It's easy to be kind when people are kind to us. It's not so easy when they drag our name through the mud or talk behind our back.

Jesus takes kindness to a new level.

Jesus says to love.

Love your enemies.

Pray for your enemies.

Really? Is that even possible? Read [Matthew 5:43–45a](#).

Can you imagine wearing a T-shirt that says, "Love Your Enemies," while screaming at the driver who cut you off on the road? Not a good look! I get it. It's a tough thing to do.

When we love our enemies, it doesn't mean the hurt doesn't exist, but we choose to love because God loves us. We choose to pray for our enemies instead of hating them because God loves us. We choose to show mercy instead of being cruel because God loves us. As followers of Jesus, we choose to be like Him and trust Him to be in charge and show us how to love others with His mercy and grace.

As you lead kids today, remember some of them have been hurt deeply by others.

- How can you invite kids to let God care for their hurt?
- How can you help kids understand what loving their enemies looks like?

—Stephanie Rhyne

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DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Jesus is the Son of God and the “exact representation” of the heavenly Father ([Hebrews 1:3, NIV](#)). He tells of the Father’s mercy and care for the world. God is unwavering in patience; God’s people can love enemies if they trust God to handle evil.

WHAT?

“You have heard that it was said ...” ([Matthew 5:43, NIV](#)) is Jesus’ way of introducing a quotation from the Law of Moses. He heightens rather than diminishes the demands of the Torah, giving authoritative commentary on the way God’s people must behave.

WHERE?

Jesus’ early ministry is set in the small villages of Galilee. Pharisees and Sadducees—influential and religious Jews—would be less likely to travel all the way down from Judea. But large crowds are nonetheless coming from all the surrounding regions ([Matthew 4:25](#)).

WHEN?

By this early point in Matthew’s narrative, Jesus already has enemies. Herod slaughtered babies to try to kill Him. And as an adult, Jesus carried on the legacy of John the Baptist, who was arrested and would soon be executed ([Matthew 14:3–12](#)).

CONNECTING TO GOD’S BIG STORY

Jesus had enemies, but His greatest enemies turned out to be the powers of sin and death (see [1 Corinthians 15:20–28](#)). To be like Jesus and like our Father in heaven, we must seek the welfare of people we perceive as enemies.



Curiosity

LESSON 3 **EARLY CHILDHOOD**

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

Curiosity Activity: Loving Actions

We're learning today that God can help us love everyone! God loves everyone, and He wants us to love them too, even people who aren't nice to us. Let's practice doing some actions that remind us we can love others! When I call out an action, you can act it out on your own or with a friend.

Call out the following actions (and encourage the kids to act out each one). Make sure they ask permission before touching or hugging another child and remind them that if someone doesn't want to be touched, that's OK!

- **High-five**
- **Fist bump**
- **Double high-five**
- **Handshake**
- **Help someone up who has fallen down**
- **Share a toy**
- **Give a hug**

It's easy to be kind and loving to those who are nice to us, but Jesus teaches us we can love everyone! We'll learn more about that today!

Our Wonder Truth today is **JESUS TEACHES US TO LOVE EVERYONE.**

Encourage the kids to do the following motions while you repeat the Wonder Truth. Older toddlers can say the words with you as they do the motions.

- **JESUS**—*Point up.*
- **TEACHES US**—*Shake your index finger as you point out.*
- **TO LOVE EVERYONE.**—*Hug yourself.*



Belief

LESSON 3 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Guide kids into knowing God more deeply, exploring His big story, and marveling at His wonder.

Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words:
God, thank You for being with us today. Please help us listen closely as we learn more about loving everyone. Thank You for giving us the Holy Spirit to guide us in being more like You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

God's Big Story

Pull out the Bible.

Ask: What is this called? *The Bible*

Ask: Why is the Bible important? *Because it is God's word. Everything in it is true. It really happened.*

TELL THE BIBLE STORY

Read from

The Big Picture Bible p216
"The Sermon on the Mount"

Word of Wonder

WORD OF WONDER

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see the face of God.

— Matthew 5:8

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

- Who first said the words from our Word of Wonder?
- How can God help us have a pure heart?



Identity

LESSON 3 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Create space for God to remind kids they are known, loved, led, and their lives can tell of God's wonder.

Stamp a Heart

SUPPLIES: die cut hearts, ink pad with washable red and pink ink, wet wipes

We use heart shapes to remind us of love. Let's use our fingerprints to decorate some hearts to remind us that Jesus teaches us to love everyone.

Give each kid a heart shape. Place the kid's index finger on the ink pad. Guide the child to stamp his fingerprint inside the heart shape several times. Reapply ink from the ink pad if needed. Use wet wipes for cleaning.

Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish their activity, pray with them, thanking God for His great love and His help He gives to us to love everyone.

God, thank You for our special time today to learn more about You. Thank You for loving us so much, no matter what. Please help us show love and kindness to everyone this week. Thank You for giving us Your Spirit to guide us in following You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands were open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: May you feel the love of God as you choose to love everyone this week.