



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: Me Too!

We are all different. Some of us like to go outside and some of us like to play inside instead. Some of us love to play with cars and some of us like to play with dolls. It's exciting that God made us so different!

But we have a lot that is the same. For instance, some of us probably like the same colors or games or animals.

In this game each of you will get a chance to share something that is your favorite. If someone else likes the favorite thing you share, they can stand up and say, "Me too!" Choose one child to go first and allow each kid a chance to share a favorite thing.

Leader Tip: Younger kids may have difficulty thinking of something that is their favorite. Help guide kids with topics if they get stuck.

You can call out categories and have the kids share their "favorite" from each category:

- Candy • Food
- Color • Song
- Game • Movie

Make It Virtual!

This game could also be played in a virtual setting with children raising their hands to indicate "Me too!" to a topic.

Great job! Sometimes it's easier to feel comfortable around the people who are most like us—the people we have the most in common with. Sometimes it seems harder to love people who are different from us.

But we all have something that is the same. We are all created by God and loved by Him!

When we remember that God loves all of us, it's easier for us to love everyone too. Today we are going to learn about an important lesson Jesus taught His followers about loving others, even when it's hard. Today's Wonder Truth is **JESUS TEACHES US TO LOVE EVERYONE.**



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.

—from Matthew 5:8

Great job saying that Word of Wonder! Let's play a game! On the count of three, find a friend and say the Word of Wonder together. Ready? One, two, three, go! Let kids find a friend to say the verse with. After they have finished, direct them to do one of the following: (Remind kids that if someone doesn't want to be touched, that's okay.)

- High-five
- Fist bump
- Double high-five
- Handshake
- Spin around and then make a heart with hands

Leader Tip: If you have an odd number of kids, be ready to jump in to form a pair if needed so everyone is included.

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?



Faith

LESSON 3 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Help kids see the wonder of God's story and how it connects to their own story.

Craft: Paper and Ribbon Hug

SUPPLIES: construction paper hands (2 per kid), coloring utensils, ribbon (12" per kid), glue

Today, we have been learning that Jesus teaches us to love everyone. Everyone is a lot of people, but the Holy Spirit can help us love everyone. Let's do a craft while we think of who we can show love to this week. We'll make a hug! You can take your paper hug home as a reminder that God can help us love everyone!



Give each kid 2 construction paper hands. The kids can write their names on the hands, as well as the name of someone they love.

Next, use glue to attach the hands to each end of the ribbon. Set the items aside to dry. Show the kids how to extend the hands to wrap around themselves like a hug.



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.

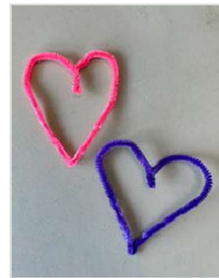
Responding in Worship: Praying for Others

SUPPLIES: Wiki Sticks (1 per kid), basket or bowl

Give each kid a Wiki stick. **What have we been learning about today?** Allow kids to respond. **We know that Jesus loves us. We also know that Jesus teaches us to love everyone. Who are some people we can love?** Allow kids to respond.

We are going to make heart shapes out of our wiki sticks. Can you take the two ends and bend them toward each other? Demonstrate bending the wiki sticks into a heart shape and twisting the two ends together to form a closed heart. Help any kids who need assistance.

Now let's hold our hearts close to our chest and think about someone we can show love to this week. This week, I think I am going to show extra love to (fill in with your own personal example). **Who are you going to show love to this week?** Allow kids to freely respond.



Leader Tip: Some kids will be ready to share, and others may not be ready to share aloud. Encourage, but don't push kids to share. Let them feel free to share or simply listen to others.

Sometimes it can be hard to love someone and show kindness to that person. But Jesus promises to help us do that. We just have to ask for His help. You can talk to Jesus by praying to Him anytime and anywhere!

I am going to pass around this basket. As I pass it around, you can place your heart in the basket as a way to tell Jesus you want to allow Him to help you love others this week. Pass a basket around, allowing kids to quietly place their heart shapes in it.

10:45 Service

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.

10:45 Service