



## LESSON 1 FOR LEADERS

### INVITATION

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

### LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** Nothing Can Separate Us from God's Love

**SCRIPTURE:** Romans 8; 1 John 3

**WORD OF WONDER:** 1 Corinthians 13:13 (NirV)

Have you ever considered the power in the word nothing? No, just me? OK, let me explain why I think the word nothing is powerful.

First, read [Romans 8:33–39](#).

Paul's words in [Romans 8](#) were meant to encourage the early Christians to stay strong in their faith. He wanted them to realize that God was with them even in the hardest of times. Paul understood the power of the word nothing.

Let this lesson's Wonder Truth really sink in: *Nothing* Can Separate Us from God's Love.

*Nothing*. Maybe you're having a week where you wish you could separate yourself from certain situations (or even people!). Yet, even those things can't separate you from God's love.

Not troubles, not hardship, not persecution or famine, nakedness, danger, or sword. *Nothing* can separate us from God's love. Replace the words in this list with things from your own life and context. Perhaps your list sounds something like this: "Not volunteer or budget shortages, not falling short on goals, not lack of recognition. *Nothing* can separate me from God's love." Read your list out loud as a declaration of faith.

Paul experienced the power of nothing firsthand, and my prayer for you today is that you too understand just how connected you are to the Father's love—so connected, in fact, that *nothing* can separate you from Him!

Rest in the power of the word nothing this week. Receive God's overwhelming, inseparable love for you, and share it with the kids you lead.

—Tom Bump

Children's Ministry Leader, Author, and Coach

Contributor to Wonder Ink

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS**

**WHO?**

Under the Roman Empire, many people joined clubs and voluntary associations devoted to common religious, economic, or social causes. Early Christians followed some of this pattern when they formed “assemblies” in homes. The same Greek word is often translated as *churches*.

**WHAT?**

Paul mentions the threat of natural disasters. Ancient Rome had a housing density beyond even the densest modern cities. Cities were plagued by food shortages, infectious diseases, fires, and building collapses. Average life expectancy was under 30.

**WHERE?**

Christians in the capital of Rome faced many difficulties. The emperor Claudius expelled Jews from Rome around AD 50 (see [Acts 18:2](#)), and this would have included Jewish Christians such as Priscilla and Aquila, close friends of Paul.

**WHEN?**

Paul wrote his letter to Rome before being brought there as a prisoner in the early AD 50s. There are a wide range of dates proposed for [1 John](#). The books of Romans and [1 John](#) reflect a concern for the first generation of churches.

**CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY**

Jesus told His followers to place a radical trust in the heavenly Father's daily provision ([Matthew 6:25–34](#)). The church community endures trials together. Come what may, God sustains the church, and He will not allow it to fall to the powers of darkness ([Matthew 16:18](#)).



## Curiosity

### LESSON 1 **EARLY CHILDHOOD**

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

#### LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** Nothing Can Separate Us from God's Love

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## Magnet Exploration

**SUPPLIES:** magnetic tiles

Greet the kids warmly and welcome them to church.

**Welcome! I'm so excited that you are here today! Today we're going to play with magnets. Do you want to try?**

If you prefer, you can also set up tiles and magnetic objects they will stick to in one area for kids to explore. Be sure all items are big enough not to be a choking hazard.

**Magnets stick to one another. It reminds me of how God's love sticks with us! That's what we're learning about today.**



9:00 Service

## Belief

### LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

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

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#### 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: **Dear God, thank You for this day when we can come together and learn more about You. Please lead us as we look at Your Word. Thank You for sending the Holy Spirit to reveal Your love for us in today's part of Your big story. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

#### God's Big Story

**\*\*Note to leaders:** There is no story in our picture Bibles for today's lesson. You can read the verses below as well as use the summary included.

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 passage below - Romans 8; 1 John 3  
God's Amazing Love

Romans 8:38-39

<sup>38</sup> I am absolutely sure that not even death or life can separate us from God's love. Not even angels or demons, the present or the future, or any powers can separate us. <sup>39</sup> Not even the highest places or the lowest, or anything else in all creation can separate us. Nothing at all can ever separate us from God's love. That's because of what Christ Jesus our Lord has done.

## 9:00 Service

I John 3: 16-18

**16** We know what love is because Jesus Christ gave his life for us. So we should give our lives for our brothers and sisters. **17** Suppose someone sees a brother or sister in need and is able to help them. And suppose that person doesn't take pity on these needy people. Then how can the love of God be in that person? **18** Dear children, don't just talk about love. Put your love into action. Then it will truly be love.

Summary:

**Hold up the stop signs included in the belief bag at the appropriate times and have kids repeat "Nothing can separate us from God's love!" after you read each sign.**

Today we're going to be talking about God's love. God loves us so much! And today we will learn that there is truly not anything that can separate us from God's love. Paul, an apostle who led the early church, wrote letters to remind the people that nothing could separate them from God's love.

The early church did not meet in buildings. Different people gathered in homes to learn, worship, and become more like Jesus. Even though the people didn't have buildings to meet in for church, they loved God and knew that nothing could separate them from His love.

The early Christians faced many troubles, but they knew that God loved them and was with them. They shared their food and prayed for each other during troubled times.

Paul said no evil or enemy of God could take away God's love. Paul reminded them God's love will never change.

Another follower of Jesus, John, called God's people the children of God. He told early Christians that God's love changes people and helps them make right choices. God's love is meant to be shared.

Jesus showed us amazing love when He died to save us all. We can love others by showing compassion and helping one another. This shows God's love to others. We can remember that no matter what happens, nothing can separate us from God's love.

### Word of Wonder

#### WORD OF WONDER

**The three most important things to have are faith, hope and love. But the greatest of them is love.**

—1 Corinthians 13:13 (NIV)

Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you.

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

- What did this verse tell us are the three most important things to have?
- When have you felt God's love for you?



9:00 Service

## Identity

### LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

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

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## Sticky Art

**SUPPLIES:** contact paper, scissors (prep only), painter's tape, assorted small objects (craft sticks, pompoms, pipe cleaners, etc.)

Before the activity, cut a large piece of contact paper and tape it to the table using painter's tape on the edges. Make sure the sticky side of the contact paper is facing up. Set out craft supplies (craft sticks, pom-poms, pipe cleaners, etc.) near the contact paper.

Encourage kids to use the craft supplies to create art on the contact paper by sticking the supplies to the paper.

**Wow! This paper is extra sticky! This sticky paper reminds me of God's sticky love. Nothing can separate us from God's love!**

Allow kids to continue to stick objects to the contact paper.

## Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish their activity, pray with them, thanking God for loving us all the time—through the good times and the bad times.

**Dear God, thank You for loving us no matter what happens in our lives. Thank You for Your promise that nothing can ever separate us from Your great love. Help us remember this and trust in You even when things are hard. 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 God's great love for you this week, and may you remember to show God's love to others. Whatever might happen, know that nothing can ever separate you from God's love!