



## LESSON 4 FOR LEADERS

### INVITATION

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

### LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** God Helps Us Love and Forgive Others

**SCRIPTURE:** Colossians 3

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

Forgiveness. Now there's a word that's easier said than done. When someone does something that hurts or offends us, we have a decision to make: to forgive or not to forgive. Why is that so hard?

The funny thing is that as we read through the Gospels, we see Jesus setting the example of love and forgiveness. Then in Colossians 3:1–2, Paul reminds us to set our hearts and minds on things that are in heaven rather than be distracted by worldly things. Yet sometimes, the things of the world can feel so big and sound so loud. Maybe it's the temptation to hold onto resentment or to pay back gossip with more gossip. But God has something better in mind.

It's important to remind ourselves that we don't live the way we used to live before beginning a relationship with Jesus. We're not that person any longer. Jesus changes us. He has forgiven us. Because of this, we can set aside unforgiveness and exchange it for love.

Take a few moments to read Paul's two lists in Colossians 3:5–14: The things to put off and the things to put on.

What do you need to put off and put on this week? Remember, God is the One who empowers you. You need only to submit your heart and mind to Him; He does the rest!

—Tom Bump

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**DID YOU KNOW?**

**FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS**

**WHO?**

There were Jews who lived in Colossae, but the recipients of the letter of Colossians appear to be mostly Greek and non-Jewish Christians. Paul builds them up by contrasting their former way of life—following pagan religious standards—to their new way of life in Christ.

**WHAT?**

Christians in Colossae were facing mixed religious teaching (see especially [Colossians 2:16–23](#)). But in contrast to the empty promises of mysticism, God’s hidden purposes have already been revealed in and through Jesus.

**WHERE?**

Colossae was a small city in Phrygia. As part of the Roman Empire, its residents looked to Rome as their source of peace, wealth, and security. The letter to the Colossians paints fruitfulness and hope in heaven as far greater than these things ([1:3–6](#)).

**WHEN?**

There seems to have been a major earthquake in the Lycus Valley where the city of Colossae was located, perhaps around AD 60. It makes sense to think that Paul would have been writing to the city and its Christian church before this tragedy

**CONNECTING TO GOD’S BIG STORY**

The glory of God that once filled the temple has now filled the people of God. Followers of Jesus are God’s temple ([1 Corinthians 3:16–17](#)). The indwelling Holy Spirit makes God’s people holy—set apart for God. Their conduct is meant to reflect this.



## Curiosity

### LESSON 4 **EARLY CHILDHOOD**

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

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## Put on Love

**SUPPLIES:** magnetic wooden dress-up dolls and/or toy baby dolls, all with doll clothes

Greet the kids warmly and welcome them to church.

**Welcome! I'm so happy that you are here today! Let's play with dolls and think about how we can be loving toward others!**

Provide a variety of dolls. Magnetic wooden dress-up dolls and/or toy baby dolls, both with doll clothes, would be good options for this activity.

Share with the kids that in God's big story today, we will learn that we should "put on tender mercy and kindness as if they were your clothes. ... And over all these good things put on love" ([Colossians 3:12, 14](#)).

Encourage the kids to play together with the dolls and put the clothes on the dolls. As you play with the kids, narrate your actions. For example: **I'm putting on the baby's hat! Can you put on the baby's hat? Do you see the baby's shirt? I like the doll's pink dress! Do you like it?** Allow the kids to respond.

**The Bible says we can put on kindness like we put on clothes. The Bible also says we can put on love kind of like we put on clothes. We'll learn more about that today!**



9:00 Service

## Belief

### LESSON 4 **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:  
**God, please give us ears to hear and understand Your Word today! Through the power of Your Holy Spirit, help us love and forgive others as You love and forgive us. With Your help, we want to live in peace with others. 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 Colossians 3:12-15 and/or the summary included below:

##### Colossians 3:12-15

<sup>12</sup>You are God's chosen people. You are holy and dearly loved. So put on tender mercy and kindness as if they were your clothes. Don't be proud. Be gentle and patient. <sup>13</sup>Put up with one another. Forgive one another if you are holding something against someone. Forgive, just as the Lord forgave you. <sup>14</sup>And over all these good things put on love. Love holds them all together perfectly as if they were one.

<sup>15</sup>Let the peace that Christ gives rule in your hearts. As parts of one body, you were appointed to live in peace. And be thankful.

##### Summary:

Today as you listen to God's big story, pay close attention and listen for the words peace, love, and forgive. When you hear those words, you can do a motion for those words. For the word peace, you can put your hands together like praying hands. For the word love, put your hands on your heart. For the word forgive, brush your right fingertips along your left palm. Let's practice!

## 9:00 Service

A follower of Jesus named Paul wrote letters to Christians, and one of them is a letter to the Colossians. Paul said, “You are God’s chosen people. You are holy and dearly **loved**. So put on tender mercy and kindness as if they were your clothes. Don’t be proud. Be gentle and patient” ([Colossians 3:12–13](#)). Instead of choosing to do things our own way and living in sin, followers of Jesus fill their hearts with mercy and kindness. They live like Jesus and have **peace**.

Because God **forgives** us, we must **forgive** others and live at **peace** with others. Paul says, “Put on **love**. **Love** holds them all together perfectly as if they were one” ([Colossians 3:14](#)). When we place our faith in Jesus, God helps us live in **peace** and **love** and **forgive** others.

### 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 (NIRV)

**Leader Tip:** As kids discuss faith, hope, and love, refer to these definitions as needed:

“Faith is being sure of what we hope for. It is being sure of what we do not see” ([Hebrews 11:1](#)). To have faith is to trust with our hearts; this trust is shown through our actions.

Hope is a confident expectation that God will do what He said He will do. It’s more than wishful thinking—it’s certainty that God will come through. Love is not just a feeling but selfless actions that put others before ourselves.

Love is who God is. As Jesus-followers, we can be filled with God’s love so that Christlike love becomes what describes us best!

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

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

- **How do you know God loves you?**
- **How do you show love to your family and friends?**



## Identity

### LESSON 4 **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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#### Activity: Sticky Note Love

**SUPPLIES:** sticky notes (1 per kid), writing utensil (prep only)

Ahead of time, draw a heart on each sticky note. You'll need one for each kid.

**We are going to play a game! I'll give everyone a heart, and when I tell you to go, you will move around the room, stick the heart anywhere you want, and then say, "God helps us love!"**

Repeat the game with more hearts as long as the kids are interested. Move around the room with the kids while saying, "God helps us love!"

#### Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish their activity, pray with them, thanking God for His forgiveness.

**God, thank You for forgiving us and loving us. Thank You for helping us forgive and love others. We are grateful for Your gift of peace to us. Thank You, God. 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 love others as God loves you, forgive others as God forgives you, and live in the peace of Jesus today and all the days of your life.