



## 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.*

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#### Curiosity Activity: Magnetic Love

**SUPPLIES:** magnets (2), paper clips

Hold up one of the magnets. **What this is?** Allow kids to respond. **This is a magnet, and its magnetic force is strong.** Hold up paper clips. **What are these?** Allow kids to respond. **Do you think I can pick up paper clips with just the palm of my hand, without grabbing the paper clip?** Demonstrate for kids by holding your hand over the paper clips. **They won't stick to me!**

**What about this magnet? Let's see what happens when I put the magnet over the paper clips.** Demonstrate using the magnet to pick up the paper clips. **Wow! This magnet is strong enough to pick up the paper clips. Let's try one more thing.**

Remove the paper clips from the magnet and pick up the other magnet. Align the magnets so they are still separated but, when brought together, will connect. **Do you think this magnet will do something to the other magnet?** Allow kids to respond. **Let's try it out!** Push the magnets together and demonstrate the magnetic force bringing the magnets together. **These magnets stick together! It's hard to separate them.**

**That reminds me of today's Wonder Truth that nothing can separate us from God's love. Just like these magnets stick together, God's love sticks to us—nothing can keep us from the love God has for us!**



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## 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

<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.

1 John 3: 16-18

<sup>16</sup> We know what love is because Jesus Christ gave his life for us. So we should give our lives for our brothers and sisters. <sup>17</sup> Suppose someone sees a brother or sister in need and is able to help them. And suppose that person doesn't

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take pity on these needy people. Then how can the love of God be in that person? <sup>18</sup> 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 (NirV)

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?**



## Faith

### LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

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

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#### Craft: Sandy Hands

**SUPPLIES:** white cardstock (1 sheet per kid), small die cut hands (2 per kid), glue sticks, colored sand, plastic tablecloth

Give each kid a sheet of cardstock. Set out clean paintbrushes and glue (or glue sticks).

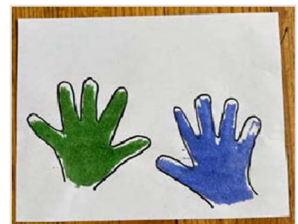
**Glue your hands to the paper, then spread some glue inside the hand.**

Help kids who may need assistance. Pass out colored sand and show kids how to lightly shake it over their hands.

**You can use these shakers to put sand on the glue on your papers. When it dries, the sand will stick to your hands. The handprint reminds us of God's love because God's love sticks with us, and nothing can separate us from His love!**

Help kids put the sand on their papers.

**Take your picture home as a reminder that nothing can separate us from God's love!**





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## 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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#### Closing Activity: Obstacle Course

**SUPPLIES:** painter's tape path (from God's Big Story)

**Wonder Ink RESOURCES:** [Stop Signs Sheets](#) (from God's Big Story)

Direct kids back to the path that was used to help tell God's big story earlier in the lesson. Place the Stop Signs back along the obstacle course if you moved them.

Does anyone remember what this crooked, zigzag path meant today? Allow kids to respond.

Our life is not going to be easy all the time. God tells us that in the Bible. Sometimes, we may face difficult things or sometimes we get sick. Sometimes we will have times of not feeling loved by our friends. But we know that God will always love us, and nothing can separate us from His amazing love. We also know that the best way to tell others about God's special love is by showing compassion and being kind to others!

Let's go back through this obstacle course, and every time we reach a crooked or curved part of the path, we can say together, "Nothing can separate us from God's love!"

Lead kids through the obstacle course, helping them to stay on the path, even when it is hard.



#### Make It Inclusive!

During the obstacle course activity, if you have kids who have mobility challenges, be ready to pair them up with a buddy so they can still participate by moving through the obstacle course with the group.

### 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



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