



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

Children's Ministry Leader, Author, and Coach

Contributor to Wonder Ink

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.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Helps Us Love and Forgive Others

SCRIPTURE: [Colossians 3](#)

WORD OF WONDER: [1 Corinthians 13:13 \(NIRV\)](#)

Play Stations

SUPPLIES: dolls with clothes (could be paper dolls, magnetic wooden dress-up dolls, or toy baby dolls)

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: [Living in Peace Coloring Sheet](#) (1 per kid)

Greet kids warmly as they arrive and briefly explain the play stations. Invite them to play at any of the play stations.

Welcome to church! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help you get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas about what we'll be learning today?

Play Station: Put on Love

Set-up: Provide a variety of dolls with clothes, such as paper dolls, magnetic wooden dress-up dolls, or toy baby dolls.

Play: 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" ([Colossians 3:12](#)). Encourage the kids to play together with the dolls and put different clothes on the dolls.

Play Station: Living in Peace Coloring Sheet

Set-up: Print one copy per kid of the [Coloring Sheet](#). Set out the Coloring Sheets and coloring utensils.

Play: Let the kids color. The kids can also turn the sheet over and draw an outfit they like to wear.



9:00 Service

Belief

LESSON 4 **EARLY CHILDHOOD**

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

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Helps Us Love and Forgive Others

SCRIPTURE: Colossians 3

WORD OF WONDER: 1 Corinthians 13:13 (NIRV)

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

¹² 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. ¹³ Put up with one another. Forgive one another if you are holding something against someone. Forgive, just as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these good things put on love. Love holds them all together perfectly as if they were one.

¹⁵ 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.

9:00 Service

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!

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?**



Faith

LESSON 4 **EARLY CHILDHOOD**

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

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Helps Us Love and Forgive Others

SCRIPTURE: Colossians 3

WORD OF WONDER: 1 Corinthians 13:13 (NIRV)

Craft: Live in Peace Handprints

SUPPLIES: light-colored construction paper (1 sheet per kid), glue sticks, writing utensils, red paper hearts (1 per kid, about 2" each), washable ink pads, wipes, "Peace" label

Ahead of time, collect supplies and precut red paper hearts. Have wipes nearby if you use the paint or ink option. Pass out a sheet of construction paper to each kid.

Today, we're going to make a craft that will remind us of peace, love, and forgiveness. First, glue your heart in the middle of the paper. Then you will put the Peace sticker in the middle of your heart. Last, we will help you put your hand prints on each side of the heart using our ink pads. The kids can color or decorate the rest of their paper if desired.



Great job, everyone! What do the hands make you think of? Allow time for responses. The hands make me think of prayer and peace. We can pray and ask God to help us live in peace with others by loving and forgiving them. Speaking of love ... which part of your craft reminds you of love? Allow time for responses. Yes! The heart makes me think of love. We can thank God for peace, love, and forgiveness!



9:00 Service

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.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Helps Us Love and Forgive Others

SCRIPTURE: Colossians 3

WORD OF WONDER: 1 Corinthians 13:13 (NIRV)

Closing Game: Love Tag

SUPPLIES: heart-shaped stickers or sticky notes (1 per kid), writing utensil (optional)

Gather enough heart-shaped stickers or sticky notes for each kid to have one. If using the sticky notes instead of heart stickers, you can draw a heart on each sticky note.

To finish our time together today, we're going to play a game! I will give everyone a heart, and when I say, "Go," you will move around the room, stick the heart on someone, and say, "God helps us love and forgive!"

Once all the kids have tagged someone else with their sticker or sticky note, repeat the game until the group time is finished.

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.