



## 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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#### Curiosity Activity: Draw and Erase

**Set-up:** Set out small chalkboards with chalk or whiteboards with dry-erase markers as well as erasers and paper towels.

**Play:** Show the kids how to draw and erase. Encourage them to try drawing shapes or writing letters or numbers. When the kids erase, make a comment about how their drawing has been wiped away and the board looks new and clean.



10:45 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 it 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 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!

## 10:45 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 (NIV)

**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.*

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#### Game: Put on Love Relay Race

**SUPPLIES:** various clean clothing items (large shirts, jackets, robes, hats, gloves, scarves, etc.)

Divide the group into equal teams. Have the kids line up with their team on one side of the room. On the other side of the room, place a pile of clothes. Make sure the piles all have the same number of clothing items.

**Let's have a relay race! Remember that in Colossians, Paul said to "put on tender mercy and kindness as if they were your clothes ... And over all these good things put on love." We can pray and ask God to help us put on mercy, kindness, and love each day.**

**For our relay race, the person at the front of the line will run to the pile of clothes, put on a clothing item, and then run back to his team. The next person in line will then run to the pile, put on a clothing item, and return to the team. We can race to see which team can put on all the clothes from the pile first.**



10:45 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.*

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#### Responding in Worship: Guided Prayer

Gather kids together and explain that you will be leading them in a guided prayer. **We'll say a prayer together as we think about how God forgives us and helps us forgive and love others. Can you repeat after me? Say the words I say and mimic the motions I make.**

**Dear God,** *(Kids repeat.)*

**Because You** *(point up)* **are forgiving, I** *(point to yourself)* **can forgive.** *(Kids repeat.)*

Pause and encourage the kids to continue repeating after you and mimicking the motions. Pause between each statement.

**Because You** *(point up)* **are loving ... I** *(point to yourself)* **can love.** *(Kids repeat.)*

**Because You** *(point up)* **are merciful ... I** *(point to yourself)* **can show mercy.** *(Kids repeat.)*

**Because You** *(point up)* **are kind ... I** *(point to yourself)* **can be kind.** *(Kids repeat.)*

**Because You** *(point up)* **are gentle ... I** *(point to yourself)* **can be gentle.** *(Kids repeat.)*

**Because You** *(point up)* **are patient ... I** *(point to yourself)* **can be patient.** *(Kids repeat.)*

**Because You** *(point up)* **are peaceful ... I** *(point to yourself)* **can be peaceful and live at peace with others.** *(Kids repeat.)*

While kids are still in a prayerful moment, suggest they quietly think of someone they need to forgive or love and ask God to help them with that. Close the prayer time by thanking God for His great love, forgiveness, and peace.

## 10:45 Service

### 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.



## 10:45 Service