



## LESSON 1 GOD'S AMAZING LOVE

### LESSON AT A GLANCE

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

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

**GOD'S BIG STORY:** Paul and John remind the early Christians that no matter what hardships they face, God loves them. As Jesus-followers, we can know that nothing can separate us from God's love.

**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

### CURIOSITY

### BELIEF

### FAITH

- Welcome Question: Who's someone you love who lives far away?
- Curiosity Questions
- Discussion Questions for Younger and Older Kids
- Small Group Prayer Time
- Word of Wonder: 1 Corinthians 13:13
- Word of Wonder Activity
- LARGE GROUP
- Responding in Worship: Shout the Truth!



[Walking in Love Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

### INVITATION

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

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**WORD OF WONDER:** 1 Corinthians 13:13

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).

### Small Group

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

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### Pre-Service (15–20 min)

**RESOURCES:** [Coloring Page](#)

Small group leaders should be seated in place in their small groups 20 minutes prior to service time. Have play stations with various board games, activities, or use games from the extra Games & Activities Guide to keep children occupied and engaged WITH you. This time is important to build relationships, welcome new kids, and keep structure in the room - you should be an active participant with them!

Learn the kids names, and make sure they all know yours too!

Warmly welcome new friends, and introduce them to your group.

*Allow quieter kids who don't engage with the board games to color. Involve them in the curiosity questions.*

**While kids are playing in their opening activity groups..**

Pose the following "I'm curious" questions. Say "I'm curious..." before each question and give kids a chance to think about and answer each one. After each question, consider having kids share their ideas with a neighbor before you call on one or two of them to share with the group.

**I'm curious ...**

- **What does the word love mean?**
- **How do you know that God loves you?**

**Leader Tip:** Some kids may not have loved ones far away or may have strained family relationships. Encourage them to share about someone who loves them but doesn't live far away. And remind them that God is always near to them and loves them—He is never far away!

### Small Group Begins: Welcome Question 2–3 min

**SUPPLIES:** whiteboard, poster paper, or butcher paper, writing utensils

As kids arrive, invite them to write/draw the answer to the Welcome Question:

**"Who's someone you love who lives far away?" Set out sheets of paper and colored pencils."**

Right at your service time, move into Small Group time by sharing your own answers and allowing kids to talk about their answers.

## Small Group Discussion: Younger Kids 5–8 min

Invite kids to grab their Bibles, and help them find Romans 8 and 1 John 3. Explain to them that Romans is in the New Testament, after the four Gospels and Acts, while 1 John is closer to the back of their Bibles. Consider giving each kid two sticky tabs to mark the passages. Encourage adult volunteers to help kids find the passage.

**Read Romans 8:37–39 and 1 John 3:16–18 aloud.**

- **Where did the first Christians meet for church?**
- **What kinds of trouble do you think the first Christians had?**
- **Did Paul say that Christians would never have any hard times? What did Paul say about hard times?**
  
- **What can separate us from God's love?**
- **How does God's love change us?**
- **What did you notice about God's love from the Bible today?**
- **Why do you think God loves us so much?**
- **What are some ways you can show other people God's love?**

**"God has shown us such amazing love, and He wants us to share His love with others. Everyone needs to know that God loves them and that nothing can separate them from His love! Let's spend some time praying for people in our lives who need God's love."**

**Leader Tip:** The word love can mean a lot of things. If needed, encourage kids with a reminder that Christlike 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!

## Prayer Time: Younger Kids

Invite kids to share some prayer requests for people in their lives who need to know God's love. Ask a few volunteers to pray that friends and family would know that nothing can separate them from God's love.

## Small Group Discussion: Older Kids 8–12 min

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles (1 per kid)

Invite kids to grab their Bibles, and help them find Romans 8 and 1 John 3. Explain to them that Romans is in the New Testament, after the four Gospels and Acts, while 1 John is closer to the back of their Bibles. Consider giving each kid two sticky tabs to mark the passages. Encourage adult volunteers to help kids find the passage.

**Give a brief overview of the history and context using the info on page 3 of this guide.**

Ask a volunteer to read Romans 8:33–35 aloud to the group. Then invite another volunteer to read Romans 8:37–39 aloud. Then read 1 John 3:11–18 to the group.

- **What types of places did the first Christians use for church buildings?**
- **Where did Paul send the letter he wrote to people about God's love?**
- **What kinds of trouble do you think some of the first Christians faced?**
- **What did you notice about God's love from the Bible today?**
- **Why do you think God loves us so much?**
- **In what ways has God shown you His love?**
- **When are times you need to trust that God's love never leaves you?**
- **Who are some people in your life who need to know about God's love?**

**"God's people have not been promised an easy life. But we have been promised God's faithful love. He loved us enough to die for us, and nothing can separate us from His love. Let's take some time to pray together and thank God for His great love."**

**Leader Tip:** The word *love* can mean a lot of things. If needed, encourage kids with a reminder that Christlike 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!

## Prayer Time: Older Kids

Invite kids to share some prayer requests for themselves or others, especially if they're feeling sad or lonely or afraid. Pray over them, reminding them that nothing can separate them from God's faithful love for them. He's always with them!

## Older Kids – Notes Page

\*\*Complete the Notes Page with kids. Helping them to fill out all of the spaces. This is an important way for parents to see what their kids are learning each way and have meaningful conversations at home!

## 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)

### Word of Wonder

**SUPPLIES:** Bibles (1 per kid)

**"The Word of Wonder for the Walking in Love series is 1 Corinthians 13:13. The whole chapter of 1 Corinthians 13 is all about love, and verse 13 helps us remember that God loves us and we can love others."**

Help kids find 1 Corinthians 13:13 in their Bibles and display the Word of Wonder Slide on the screen. Read the verse several times together, using actions.

When you read *three*, kids can hold up three fingers. When you read *faith*, kids can point to the sky. When you read *hope*, they can all give big smiles. When you read *love*, they can make a heart sign with their hands or pretend to give themselves a hug. You might also consider allowing kids to come up with their own motions for these key words.

Discuss these questions:

- How would you define **faith**? **Hope**? **Love**? Why do you think this verse says that love is greater than faith and hope?
- When have you felt God's love for you?

### Word of Wonder Activity

**SUPPLIES:** large reusable or paper bag, tape, whiteboard eraser, whiteboard, dry-erase marker

**RESOURCES:** Faith, Hope, and Love Sheets

Ahead of time, print one set of the Faith, Hope, and Love Sheets and place them in a large reusable or paper bag. Write the Word of Wonder on the whiteboard in large letters.

Invite kids to read the Word of Wonder aloud from the whiteboard. Then ask a volunteer to come up and choose a sheet from of the bag. Ask her to figure out which word from the verse she thinks the image goes with best. She can then erase the word and tape the sheet to the whiteboard in its place. Then invite the kids to recite the Word of Wonder again saying the correct word where the image is.

Invite another kid to come up and choose a sheet, erase the word where he thinks the image belongs, and then tape the sheet to the whiteboard. Invite the kids to say the verse again.

Continue until all the sheets have been used and the kids can recite the Word of Wonder together.



**Leader Tip:** 1 Corinthians 13:13 includes three key terms that are important for kids to understand. Refer to these definitions as needed when discussing the verse:

“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!

## Large Group!

### Responding in Worship: Shout the Truth!

**SUPPLIES:** blanket; whiteboard; dry-erase marker; tape, paper, and pencils (optional)

**RESOURCES:** [Walking in Love Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Gather kids together. Write the words *God’s Love* on the whiteboard in large letters.

**We’ve talked a lot today about how nothing can separate us from God’s love. But sometimes it’s hard to remember that truth when things are hard at school or at home or with friends. Let’s take some time to think about different situations in our lives, and then remind ourselves that nothing can separate us from God’s love.**

Invite kids to sit on the floor in front of the whiteboard. Encourage them to close their eyes and imagine they’re at school. What’s something that’s difficult for them at school? Taking tests? Trouble with friends? Feeling lonely? If kids are comfortable, they can share one thing with someone next to them or with the whole group. If they’d rather stay quiet, assure them that’s OK too.

**Leader Tip:** For Older Kids Rather than holding up a blanket to cover the whiteboard in the next section, have your older kids write on paper their answers to the above question and tape them over the words *God’s Love*. Then continue with the remaining instructions.

**When we’re at school and having a hard time, are we separated from God’s love?** Invite kids to respond.

Hold up the blanket in front of the whiteboard so the words, *God’s Love* are covered. Invite a kid to come up and tear the blanket down. As he does, ask kids to shout, **“Nothing can separate us from God’s love!”**



Now encourage kids to think of a scenario at home where they might feel sad or discouraged or alone. Repeat the activity by encouraging kids to share and then tear down the blanket as you shout, **“Nothing can separate us from God’s love!”**

### **Make It Inclusive!**

Some of your kids may come from foster or adoptive family structures. Their experience of separation, family, and home will be very different and often challenging. If you know of kids in these situations, take some time to connect with them one-on-one and personally remind them that God’s love is always with them no matter what.

Continue the exercise with a couple more scenarios—with friends, at church, during sports practice, etc.

Close by worshiping together using music from the [Walking in Love Elementary Spotify playlist](#).