

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 (NirV)

CURIOSITY

BELIEF

FAITH

- Play Stations:
 - Sticky Art
 - Magnetic Tiles Building
 - God's Amazing Love Coloring Sheet
- Curiosity Activity: Magnetic Love
- Word of Wonder: 1 Corinthians 13:13
- God's Big Story / Snack
- Circle Time: Sticky Love
- LARGE GROUP
- Responding in Worship: Shout the Truth
- Game: Roly-Poly



[Walking in Love Preschool Spotify playlist](#)



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).

LESSON 1 **EARLY CHILDHOOD**

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

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)

Play Stations

SUPPLIES: contact paper, scissors (prep only), painter's tape, assorted craft supplies (craft sticks, pom-poms, googly eyes, etc.), magnetic tiles, coloring utensils

RESOURCES: [God's Amazing Love Coloring Sheet](#)

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 get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas of what we'll be learning about today?"

Play Station: Sticky Art

Set-up: Cut a large piece of contact paper and tape it to the table using painter's tape around the edges, ensuring that the sticky side of the contact paper is facing up. Set out craft supplies (craft sticks, pom-poms, googly eyes, etc.) near the contact paper. If you have a large group, you can create several stations like this.

Play: Encourage kids to use the craft supplies to create art on the contact paper by sticking them onto it. Point out that this paper is extra sticky! Tell kids that it reminds you of God's love. God's love is strong enough to stick with us no matter what!

Play Station: Magnetic Tiles Building

Set-up: Set out magnetic tiles on a flat surface.

Play: Encourage kids to build a structure using the magnetic tiles. Comment about how the tiles seem to be strong and stick to each other because of the magnets. Tell kids that it reminds you of God's love. God's love is strong and sticks with us no matter what happens.

Play Station: God's Amazing Love 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 a heart.

Curiosity Activity: Magnetic Love

SUPPLIES: magnet tiles from above, 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!"

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bible

"Practice the Word of Wonder several times using the motions. Then, divide the group into groups of three and help them create pretend trains by standing behind one another and placing their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them. Assign each kid in a train a word: faith, hope, 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 (NirV)

We already said today's Word of Wonder a few times. Let's play a game to help us remember it. I will say part of the verse, and when I pause, if the word I assigned you is the next word in the verse, shout it out!"

Begin saying the words of the verse and pause before saying "faith," "hope," and "love," allowing kids to fill in those words. **The three most important things to have are faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of them is love.** After kids have gotten the hang of it, say it again and encourage them to walk around the room in their small trains while filling in the words of the verse.

Rotate kids around within their groups so each kid has a chance to say the word "love."

That was so much fun! Let's form one big train and all say the Word of Wonder together! Help kids connect their trains into one line, and guide kids to say the Word of Wonder with you.

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

- **THE THREE**—Hold up three fingers.
- **MOST IMPORTANT THINGS TO HAVE**—Make a “check mark” motion in the air.
- **ARE FAITH,**—Make prayer hands.
- **HOPE**—Hold hands out with palms upward.
- **AND LOVE.**—Place hand on your heart.
- **BUT THE GREATEST OF THEM**—Hold up pointer finger as number one.
- **IS LOVE.**—Place hand on your heart.
- **1 CORINTHIANS 13:13**—Hold your hands together in front, palms together, as if opening a book.

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?**

God’s Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bible

Hold up a Bible and show the kids. Tell them today’s story comes from the books of Romans and 1 John in the Bible. Open a Bible and show them where the story is found.

Bible Time Rhyme

Say the Bible time rhyme (with motions) each week before the Bible story to remind kids that what they’re about to hear is part of God’s big story.

I open my Bible and what do I see? (Hands together then opening palms up, like opening a book.)

God’s big story, waiting for me! (Point to yourself.)

“Let’s read part of God’s big story, which comes from the books of Romans and 1 John in the Bible.”

Read Romans 8:35, 37–39 from an NIV Bible.

Circle Time: Sticky Love

SUPPLIES: construction paper (6 sheets), scissors (prep only), marker (prep only), paper clips (7), basket, u-shaped magnet

Before the kids arrive, use scissors to cut out six hearts from the construction paper. Number the hearts 1–7 with a marker. Attach a paper clip to each heart and place the hearts in a basket.

Gather kids to sit in a circle. **Today we have been learning about God’s love. What are some things you have learned about His love?** Allow kids to respond. **God’s love is so special because it will never leave us! We can never be separated from God’s love. Let’s talk more about that in our activity.**

Place the basket of hearts in the middle of the circle and give the first kid the u-shaped magnet.

When it is your turn, you can go to the basket and use the magnet to pick up one of the hearts. Tell me what number is on your heart, and then I will ask a question. Ready?

Guide kids to use the magnet to select a heart from the basket. Refer to the Discussion Questions below as they select hearts. For groups with more than seven kids, you can place the hearts into the basket again and have kids answer the questions once more.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **Where did the first Christian churches meet?** *(in houses)*
- **What were some of the difficult circumstances the early Christians faced?** *(not having church buildings, not having enough food, being treated badly, sadness, fighting)*
- **What can separate us from God's love?** *(nothing)*
- **How does God's love help us?**
- **What makes you feel loved by God?**
- **How did Jesus show us what real love is like?**
- **How can you show other people God's love?**

There will be hard things that happen in our lives. That doesn't mean that God has forgotten us or doesn't love us. Nothing can ever separate us from God's love! Let's talk to God now in prayer!

Invite kids to share prayer requests and praises and to pray for each other. Some kids may not be comfortable praying out loud. That's OK! Encourage them to pray silently and to thank God for His love, which never leaves us.

Head to Large Group!

Responding in Worship: Shout the Truth

SUPPLIES: blanket, whiteboard, dry-erase marker

RESOURCES: music from the [Walking in Love Early Childhood Spotify playlist](#)

Gather kids together.

Write the words “God’s Love” on the whiteboard in large letters. Draw a heart around the words.

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 or when we get upset or get in trouble. Let’s think about different situations in our lives, and then remind ourselves that nothing can separate us from God’s love.

Invite the kids to sit on the floor in front of the whiteboard.

Have the kids close their eyes and imagine they are at the park. Ask them to imagine something difficult that might happen while at the park. Trouble with friends? Feeling lonely? Being afraid of a certain playground toy? Being upset when it’s time to go home? Falling down and getting hurt? If kids are comfortable, they can share one thing with someone next to them or with the whole group. If they’d rather not share, reassure them that’s OK too.

When we are at the park and having a hard time, is God’s love still with us? Invite kids to respond. Hold up the blanket in front of the whiteboard so that the words “God’s Love” are covered. Invite a kid to come up and pull the blanket down. As she does, invite the kids to shout out, **“Nothing can separate us from God’s love!”**

Now encourage the kids to think of a time at home when they might feel sad, discouraged, or lonely. **Maybe you have a sick family member or an older brother or sister is being unkind.** Repeat the activity by having kids share and then having one kid pull down the blanket as you shout, **“Nothing can separate us from God’s love!”**

Continue the activity with a few more scenarios that the kids in your ministry may experience—with friends, at church, during sports practice, etc.

Close your time by worshiping together using music from the [Walking in Love Early Childhood Spotify playlist](#).

Active Game: Roly-Poly

SUPPLIES: cones or small cups (at least 6), soft ball

Before the activity, use the cones to arrange a circular play area for kids to fit inside.

We heard in God’s big story that hard and bad things might happen, but even the bad things won’t be able to separate us from God’s love. Does anyone remember some of the hard things from the story? Allow kids to respond.

No matter if there is trouble, hunger, hard times, or hurt—we can never be separated from God’s love. Life will not always be easy, but we can trust and be thankful that God’s love is always with us.

Direct kids to gather in the middle of the circle made by cones. Have a few other leaders spread out around the outside of the circle.

I will roll the ball into the circle. As I roll the ball, I will say an example of hard or troubling times. Try to avoid the ball touching you. But, if the ball does come to you, the only way you can move it outside the circle is to say, “Nothing can separate us from God’s love!” while rolling the ball out.

Begin rolling the ball into the circle while saying a phrase from the following list:

- Your family moving to a new place
- Your friends ignoring you
- Not getting invited to a party or friend’s house
- Falling down and scraping your knee
- Losing your favorite toy
- Someone in your family getting hurt or sick
- A storm damaging your home

We might go through other things in life that are difficult too, but no matter what happens, we’ll always have God’s love!