



ELEMENTARY LARGE GROUP

LESSON 4 LIVING IN PEACE

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Helps Us Love and Forgive Others

SCRIPTURE: Colossians 1; 3

GOD'S BIG STORY: Paul reminds believers that we're called to love and forgive others and that our faith in Christ and His presence in us through the Holy Spirit help us do both.

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: What's something you do every day that you can't do on your own?
- Curiosity Questions
- Interactive Object Lesson: With a Little Help from a Friend
- Declaring God's Wonder
- Prayer of Invitation
- God's Big Story: Hear It, Watch It, Experience It!
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- Responding in Worship
- Blessing Your Kids



INVITATION

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

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SCRIPTURE: Colossians 1; 3

WORD OF WONDER: 1 Corinthians 13:13

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 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.

Large Group

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

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As kids arrive...

Around 20 minutes before service begins, display series theme loop. Play high-energy music in the background.

LG Leader walks around the room on mic and greets kids by name as they enter the room. Be sure to move to their level and introduce yourself to any new friends. Welcome kids by name and greet them with enthusiasm. Be extra intentional about hearing and responding to what they say.

SLIDE: SERIES THEME LOOP

Welcome Question

Consider using a **30 or 2:00 Countdown** to let leaders and kids know it's almost time to begin!

At Your Start Time...

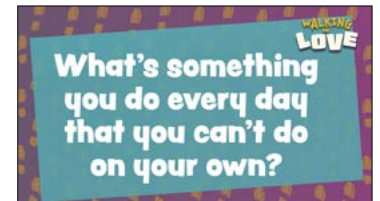
SLIDE: WELCOME QUESTION

At your service start time, call attention to the Welcome Question on the screen and invite Small Group Leaders to begin: **"What's something you do every day that you can't do on your own?"**

"Maybe the daily help you thought about involves finding clean socks or fixing a healthy dinner, but we need help in other ways too. The Bible tells us to love and forgive others, and today we'll talk about how we can get help doing both. Today we're discovering that, with the help of one special friend, we can live in peace with others by loving and forgiving them as He loves and forgives us. That special friend is God. "

SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH

Today's Wonder Truth is **GOD HELPS US LOVE AND FORGIVE OTHERS**. Let's explore that further now!"



Small Group

While kids are in small group, consider sitting in the groups for a few minutes each. Engage and interact as is appropriate.

Countdown

After about 15 minutes of small group, give a 5 minute warning and begin the countdown.

VIDEO: COUNTDOWN

"Hey everyone! Welcome to our Large Group Worship time! My name is _____ and I'm excited to take this time to worship God, review what we just read, and talk about ways we can respond to what we are learning about God! I have a little game for us first today!

Declaring God's Wonder

SLIDE: DECLARATION

Read each line boldly and invite kids to repeat after you.

Thank You, God, that You are good! (Kids repeat.)

You made me on purpose, for a purpose. (Kids repeat.)

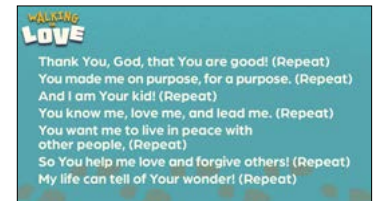
And I am Your kid! (Kids repeat.)

You know me, love me, and lead me. (Kids repeat.)

You want me to live in peace with other people, (Kids repeat.)

So You help me love and forgive others! (Kids repeat.)

My life can tell of Your wonder! (Kids repeat.)



Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use your own words with these as a guide if needed: **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.**

Worship

Consider sharing some about the songs you are going to sing. What they mean, why we sing them, why they are meaningful and important to you!

"We're going to stand and sing together! One way that we show love to God is to worship through song! So stand up, sing loud, and join in the motions with us. God loves to hear us sing praises to Him! These songs are very special because we got to sing them for Adventure Week VBS! Everyone stand up and dance and sing with your whole heart!"

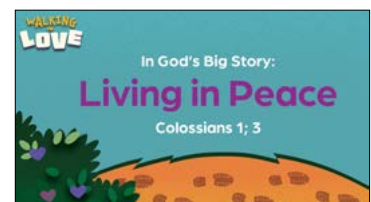
WORSHIP VIDEOS: BREAKER ROCK BEACH, PRAISE

God's Big Story

SLIDE: TITLE SLIDE

Let's watch part of God's big story directly from the Bible. Then we'll experience more of history!

VIDEO: GODS BIG STORY



LESSON 4 LIVING IN PEACE

EXPERIENCE IT! SCRIPT

SUPPLIES: Apostle Paul costume, Bible, colored paper (6 sheets, each a different color; optional), tape (prep only, optional), DIY time machine or streamers (optional)

RESOURCES: [God's Mystery Clue Sheets \(1 set\)](#)

Walking in Love Experience It! Script Background:

During the Walking in Love Series, the Apostle Paul takes a break from his missionary work in the first century and walks forward in time to share God's message with the kids in your church! (Join kids in suspending disbelief and welcoming this enthusiastic time traveler!) The Walking In Love Experience It! Scripts have been designed independently of each other but can also be used as a cohesive unit. If choosing to utilize more than one Experience It! Script during the Walking in Love Series, try to have the same dynamic volunteer act out the part of Paul each week. (If this isn't possible, then have the volunteers playing the part of Paul wear the same costume.) This will help keep kids engaged while creating anticipation and excitement from week to week.

- Consider of these directions for Paul's costume: 1. First century-inspired clothing, such as a simple tunic with a rope tied around waist. 2. Silly, mismatched outfit, such as a Hawaiian shirt, hat, and scarf.
- To create the illusion that Paul has taken a walk forward in time from the first century, and appeared on your ministry stage consider creating a time machine or dressing up a doorway with streamers for Paul to enter through.
- Two opening options are written into today's Experience It! Script. If your church used the Experience It! Script in a previous Walking in Love lesson, choose Option 1. If today's is the first Walking in Love Experience It! Script you plan to use, select Option 2.

In today's Experience It! Script, kids will search the room for clues to solve the mystery at the heart of God's big story. Ahead of time, print the God's Mystery Clue Sheets back to back. There will be six two-sided pages total. The clue number should be on one side of each page and the corresponding clue on the other side. Consider printing each page on a different color paper and keeping track of which clue is on each color. (It will be easier for kids to find clues one at a time if they know what color paper they're searching for.) Fold pages half, and then hide them throughout the room or tape them in spots for kids to retrieve.

Opening: (Use if you utilized the Experience It! Script in the previous Walking in Love lesson.) *Apostle Paul enters stage right, stumbling as if he has tumbled through time and landed in church. Paul looks around and smiles with excitement to see a room full of kids who have come to hear God's Word!*

PAUL: Hello! It's great to be back with you today in (pause) what year is it again?
Pause for kids to answer. That's right! It gets a little confusing sometimes when you go on a walk through time. If we didn't meet last time, my name is Paul. Many people refer to me as the Apostle Paul because I am a Jesus follower and missionary. I dedicated my life to Jesus and helped the early church get started. Today I'm visiting you from the first century.

If Paul is in a silly costume, say: I want to apologize for my clothes. I had no idea how I should dress here in the 21st century. How did I do? Do you think I'll blend in dressed like this? Pause for kids to respond.

Begin Lesson 4 Script:

PAUL: Today I'm going to tell you about a mystery at the heart of God's big story. It's a mystery that I once revealed to a group of people who weren't even Jews. *Speak in a slow dramatic voice: Who would like to help solve this mystery?*

Display the God's Mystery Slide. For over one thousand years, God blessed the world through a holy people, the family of Abraham. And through Abraham's family, God's Son Jesus, a Jew, was born. Now Jesus had died, risen, and returned to heaven, and God's church was sharing His love with the world.



Alright, listen up ... I walked through time to have some fun. I need you to look around the room and find Clue #1. *Invite kids to explore the room or instruct them to remain seated as they look for and point to the first clue. If Clue #1 is printed on a particular color paper, tell kids to look for that color. Ask a kid to bring it to you.*

Let's read what's inside our first clue. *Open the clue and read it slowly: The mystery is this: "Christ is in you. He is your hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27).* Look up from the clue and speak directly to kids. **Do you know what this clue means? Jesus is for the whole world! When a person receives Jesus, she becomes linked together with Him. And when God looks at followers of Jesus, He sees the glory and majesty of Christ the King. They become the glory of Jesus—the very thing that makes God majestic and wonderful and worthy to be praised. Through the Holy Spirit, they carry the presence of God with them.**

That's an exciting truth! But as Christ followers, what should we do? Let's link arms together and look for Clue #2! *Invite kids to link their arms with another kid, just like we are linked with Jesus, while exploring the room for the second clue. Or instruct kids to remain seated with arms linked as they look for and point to the second clue. If Clue #2 is printed on a particular color paper, tell kids to look for that color. Ask a kid to bring it to you.*

Slowly and with dramatic flair open Clue #2. Let's listen to what we as Christ followers need to do: "You have been raised up with Christ. So think about things that are in heaven" (Colossians 3:1). Pause and look up from the clue. What is heaven? Well (read from the clue again) ... Heaven is God's space where He exercises complete authority. "That is where Christ is. He is sitting at God's right hand. Think about things that are in heaven. Don't think about things that are only on earth" (Colossians 3:1–2).

Look up from the clue and speak directly to kids. For those whose lives have been completely changed by Jesus, it's as if they already died with Jesus and rose from the dead with Him. The wrong things in their lives are gone for good. Christ's followers are the glory of Jesus. They're completely changed—made new—through the Holy Spirit.

Now, what do you think? Is Jesus only for you and me? To find the answer we need Clue #3! *Invite kids to explore the room or instruct them to remain seated as they look for and point to the third clue. If Clue #3 is printed on a particular color paper, tell kids to look for that color. Ask a kid to bring it to you.*

Make It Inclusive!

If there are kids in your environment who struggle with mobility, consider bringing the clue to them and giving them the opportunity to either read the clue or hold it while you read.

Open the third clue. **OK, let's find out whether Christ is only for you and me.** Read from the clue. **Someday Christ's glory will appear to everyone. All the world will know that Jesus is King and Lord! When that happens, God will be fair to judge every right and wrong thing that has been done. But God's people, those who are connected to Jesus, are transformed—completely changed—even now!**

Look up from the clue and directly at kids. **Oh wow! I don't know about you, but I want to know more! So let's search quickly for Clue #4!** Invite kids to explore the room or instruct them to remain seated as they look for and point to the fourth clue. If Clue #4 is printed on a particular color paper, tell kids to look for that color. Ask a kid to bring it to you.

Open Clue #4, then smile and nod. **Oh, yes. I gave these instructions to a group of Christians living in Colossae** (read directly from the clue): **"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). Set down the clue and speak directly to kids. **What this means is that instead of choosing to do things our own way and putting on sin and selfishness, followers of Jesus clothe themselves with mercy and kindness. They imitate Jesus, for they really are the glory of Jesus.**

Because God forgave us, there's something we must do. You'll discover the answer within the next clue. Who can find Clue #5? Invite kids to explore the room or instruct them to remain seated as they look for and point to the fifth clue. If Clue #5 is printed on a particular color paper, tell kids to look for that color. Ask a kid to bring it to you.

Open the fifth clue and read it: **Because God forgave us, we can forgive one another and live at peace with them. "Put on love. Love holds them all together perfectly as if they were one"** (Colossians 3:14). **We honor God when we choose to show love. That means we seek the absolute best for everyone around us, setting aside our needs and our desires.**

OK, the last part of our mystery is found in Clue #6. It's the most important, so I hope it sticks! Invite kids to explore the room or instruct them to remain seated as they look for and point to the sixth clue. If Clue #6 is printed on a particular color paper, tell kids to look for that color. Ask a kid to bring it to you.

Open and read the final clue: **Because we can be certain that God will be fair to all people—including us—we don't have to get even or try to win each argument. When we place our faith in Christ, God helps us love and forgive others.**

Look directly at kids. **Wow! Isn't this an incredible mystery? God helps us love and forgive others! You all did a great job finding clues and listening to the mystery at the heart of God's big story. I hope you'll share these amazing truths with everyone you meet!**

It's time for me to walk back in time to the first century where I'll continue to share these incredible truths too! Grace and peace to all of you! Walk offstage.

Connecting the Wonder Truth

SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH

Pose the following question to kids to help them connect the Wonder Truth to God's big story:

"Our Wonder Truth today is **GOD HELPS US LOVE AND FORGIVE OTHERS. Where did you see our Wonder Truth in action in the story?"**

Allow kids to answer freely.

In the Old Testament, God's people watched as the glory of God filled the temple. Now the glory of God fills His people! As followers of Jesus, we're God's temple (1 Corinthians 3:16–17). The Holy Spirit living in us makes us—God's people—holy and set apart for God. And with God's help, our thoughts and actions can reflect this as we love and forgive others!"



Responding in Worship

SLIDE: RESPONDING IN WORSHIP

Talk about ways we can respond to what we are learning with next steps such as tithing, prayer, asking questions, and worship. Encourage kids to ask their SG leaders any questions they were wondering during the lesson.



*****Introduce this next song and invite kids to respond and participate in worship. There ARE motions to this video for AWWBS, kids may do the motions if they know them, or just worship and reflect.**

WORSHIP VIDEO: NAME ABOVE ALL NAMES

Blessing Your Kids

Speak a blessing over your kids, as a group or as individuals. If you bless kids individually, insert each name into the blessing.

Blessing: May you love others as God loves you, forgive others as God forgives you, and live in the joy and peace of Jesus today and all the days of your life.